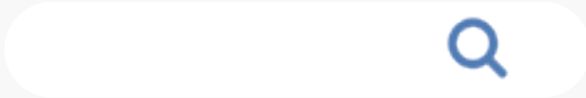




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Dedicated Sustainability Staff: Could Your Business Benefit?

Wednesday, January 8, 2014 by [Carrie Anton](#)

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Do you have **greener goals** for your business in the coming year? Then it may be time to dedicate a **sustainability** staff position or an entire team toward putting forth your best efforts. Moving toward **zero waste**, encouraging employees to **recycle** more, and reducing overall trash costs are just a few of the benefits that come with a socially responsible waste management game plan. But trying to tackle these actions when work priorities are already mounting could result in missed opportunities and possibly missed revenue.

Sustainability for One, Not All?

It may seem counterintuitive to dedicate one individual or group toward your organization's sustainability goals. After all, shouldn't all employees and management be on board in order to make a positive change? While this is true, the idea isn't to make the green staff work in a silo, but instead have them identify and facilitate changes in ways that are efficient for current processes or even improves upon old processes.

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For example, if an employee recognizes a way to reduce **packaging waste**--and thus save the company money while also making an environmental improvement, who should he tell? His supervisor or manager? If so, that person will likely run it up the chain of command until someone eventually gets around to it. Sure, there are bottom-line benefits to reviewing and implementing this small change, but given how busy people are each day, researching "extracurricular projects" doesn't always make it to the of the to-do list.

The same scenario could result in a much more proactive--and speedier--response if there was a dedicated sustainability staff to whom the employee could share his idea. From there, research, data, and statistical information can be generated to identify if in fact this change can be put into effect.

Limit Your Liabilities and Your Costs

If your organization is a generator of hazardous materials, regulations must be followed in order to handle dangerous materials in the proper ways. While this is something you could take onto the daily duties of a current staff member, you put your company at risk for liabilities if waste is not handled correctly. Additionally, there are strategies that can be put in place for the green staff to create less hazardous waste, recycle hazardous waste, or possibly do away with it completely.

As an outside consultant, Mark Hope, CEO of **Pegasus Sustainability Solutions**, has been filling the role of green staff member for many companies in different industries and sees the potential for business cost savings in sustainable practices. "Traditional lean concepts speak of the 'Eight Wastes of Lean,'" says Hope. "When thinking about sustainability, our company

adds a ninth waste: waste from processes, packaging, production errors, and expired materials. It also considers wasted energy, water, and other natural resources. Eliminating waste results in reduced cost since businesses pay for all of the components of waste--from purchasing through disposal.”

Positioned for Success

The type of sustainability role(s) you employ depends on factors such as the kind of business you operate, the size of your staff, your customer base, and the types of waste you generate. Ideally, look for an expert able to address the needs of your organization, while at the same time put new ideas to work.

“The potential to use environmental and social performance to drive deep innovation is great,” says Hope, who believes this innovation can come from the green staff or outside experts such as those available through [HazardousWasteExperts.com](https://www.hazardouswasteexperts.com).

“Work with someone who can think creatively about the fundamental nature of business and discover ways to reconfigure the whole system by which your business creates value and delivers to customers.”

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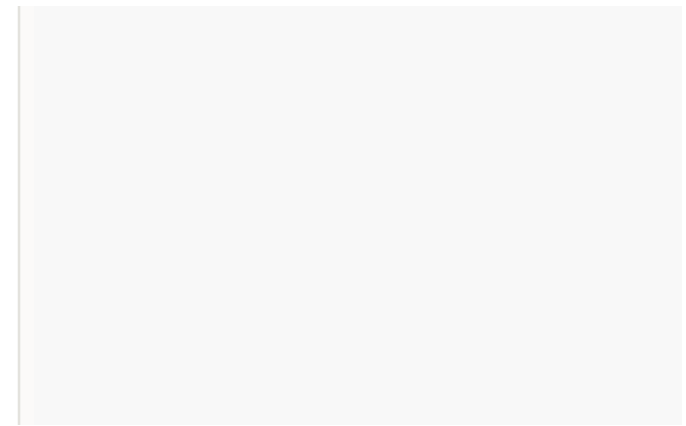
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