



**SustainableSolutions**  
CORPORATION

## Finding the Gold in Going Green

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Sustainability has many definitions, such as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This textbook definition has a global focus – but what does it really mean to a corporation or a building owner? Sustainability requires an evaluation and focus on economic, environmental and social performance. All three are connected and impact the other. Every organization is different and therefore has a different definition of sustainability.

Traditionally companies and building owners focus primarily on economic performance, when the economy or building market is strong, profits and sales are usually strong. There is typically little focus on environmental performance other than ensuring the organization is in compliance with environmental regulations. Most organizations do not clearly see their connection to, or the importance of, strong social performance. For many organizations strong social performance usually is focused on some type of community support (donations to boy scouts, United Way or other organizations) which is important but does not include a focus on all aspects of community connection.

In order for an organization to be truly sustainable it must focus on, and have, strong economic performance (i.e. earn a profit), strong environmental performance (i.e. reduce waste, emissions and energy use), and strong social performance (i.e. committed employees, customers and community connections). Multiple studies have shown that organizations that have sustained profitable growth also have strong environmental and social programs. In fact, environmental and social programs are critical to achieving peak economic performance. Focusing on these areas will help a company find the gold (cost savings) in going green.

A focus on environmental performance not only means complying with regulations but also looking to eliminate waste and inefficiency in the use of materials and energy. This untapped profit center offers opportunities to achieve significant cost reductions as well as enhancing overall profitability. The first step for any organization is to develop a system to measure their environmental



footprint and to obtain baseline data for aspects such as waste, raw materials, water and energy use. Our motto is “if you can’t measure it you can’t manage it”. Once a system is developed to measure baseline environmental performance the data can be used in combination with facility audits to identify opportunities for efficiency improvements and cost savings.

On the social side, an organization cannot function without committed and efficient employees. Likewise the organization cannot function without satisfied customers who purchase the organization’s product or services. Every organization is connected to the community because their employees, suppliers and customers are part of the community. The wages paid return to the community’s economy. Money exchanged between suppliers and customers not only drives the economy but also determines how profitable an organization will be. A company needs dedicated efficient employees, a supply chain to provide goods and services, and a loyal and growing customer base in order to have strong economic performance. A sustainable organization that provides services to the community through involvement and investment not only builds its brand and improves sales but also attracts the most qualified employees.

Sustainable Solutions uses an integrated approach and ecological thinking to develop sustainability programs that provide long term competitive advantage. The ultimate goal of sustainable development is to minimize environmental impact, maximize economic well being, and promote the social health of communities and people. We carefully evaluate each project and use our analysis system combined with the latest tools such as LEED, ENERGY STAR, and Environmental Management Systems to understand an organization. We then design programs, systems and processes needed to balance the environmental, economic and social welfare in a way that will best suit the organization to meet their specific sustainability requirements. To learn more about finding the gold in going green contact us today.

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