

## Writing a Sustainability Plan

A Sustainability Plan can take many forms. Depending on the size, type and capacity of your organization, your Sustainability Plan could be a two-page document that focuses on a long-term vision and broad goals, or a one hundred-page document that outlines specific targets, quantitative indicators and a detailed timeline. What is important is that your organization takes the first step to holistically managing the impacts – both positive and negative – that your organization has on the environment, community and economy.

### **STEP ONE – DEVELOP A VISION**

The first step in sustainability planning is to envision what your organization could be like in ten, twenty or fifty years. How would it enhance the community? How would it contribute to the local economy? How could it be a good environmental steward? Creating a vision of your ideal organization will help guide you on your path to a sustainable future.

### **STEP TWO – EVALUATE CURRENT IMPACT**

Once you have envisioned the future of your organization, you must then determine how your current operations match up with your vision. Evaluating the level and significance of your current impacts will allow you to properly focus your efforts.

### **STEP THREE – SET GOALS & TARGETS**

Using your vision and current impacts as a guide, determine what long-term goals you have for your organization. Then use these goals to determine what interim-targets you need to set to send you towards your goal.

### **STEP FOUR – PLAN & ACT**

Now that you have your goals and targets, it's time to determine what specific actions will get you there. Break it down to specific activities, practices or policies and then make sure someone is responsible for each item. Over time these small steps will help your organization achieve its long-term vision.

# **BEST Business Center**

## **Sustainability Plan (SAMPLE)** **FY 2007-2008**

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### **1.0 Vision**

At \_\_\_\_\_ we believe that a sustainable business is dependent on economic vitality, social equity and a healthy natural environment. We do not see these goals as mutually exclusive, but inextricably linked. As business leaders we are committed to develop sustainable business practices that meet the needs of the present without compromising the welfare of future generations. We pledge to develop strategies that enable us to move toward sustainability while enhancing the value offered to our customers.

## 2.0 Activities and Impacts

Activities	Impacts ( <i>Negative and Positive</i> )	Significance*		
		(S)	(C)	Total
<b>Purchasing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Office supplies</li> <li>▪ Professional service contracts</li> <li>▪ Electronics</li> </ul>	<i>Consumption of fossil fuels; climate change;</i> <i>Diminish air quality;</i> <i>Use or non-renewable resources;</i> Supporting Environmentally Preferable product markets;	3	4	12
<b>Energy Use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Electricity and Natural Gas use</li> <li>▪ Green power use</li> </ul>	<i>Consumption of fossil fuels; climate change;</i> <i>Diminish air quality; Diminished public health;</i> Expansion of new renewable electricity sources in OR;	4	4	16
<b>Travel</b> (vehicle and air) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daily meetings</li> <li>▪ Conferences and workshops</li> </ul>	<i>Diminish air quality;</i> <i>Climate change;</i> Supporting mass transit and sustainable transport systems	3	4	12
<b>Water Use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bathroom &amp; Kitchen</li> </ul>	<i>Consumption of aquifer reserves (summer);</i> <i>Contribution to combined sewer overflow;</i>	2	2	4
<b>Waste Generation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Office activities</li> <li>▪ Events</li> <li>▪ Publications &amp; Reports</li> </ul>	<i>Consumption of natural resources;</i> <i>Use and release of toxic substances;</i> <i>Consumption of fossil fuels; Climate change;</i> <i>Consumption of landfill space;</i>	4	4	16
<b>Recycling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Office paper &amp; supplies</li> </ul>	<i>Consumption of fossil fuels;</i> Conservation of natural resources; Reduced use and release of toxic substances; Reduced contribution to climate change; Conservation of landfill space;	4	4	16

\* Total Significance = Scale of Impact (S) x Level of Control (C)

Scale of Impact: 1 = Little to no impact.  
 3 = Moderate impact.  
 5 = High or long-term impact.

Level of Control: 1 = Little to no control over this activity or impact(s).  
 3 = Moderate control over this activity or impact(s).  
 5 = High control over this activity or impact(s).

### **3.0 Long-Term Sustainability Goals**

#### **SUSTAINABILITY:**

- All employees receive training in sustainability principles.

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE:**

- Eliminate all greenhouse gas emissions produced as a result of our operations, employee travel and use of our products or services.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Eliminate use of virgin materials through conservation efforts, procurement policies that stipulate recycled materials, and promoting reuse.

#### **TOXICS:**

- Using the Precautionary Principle as a framework, we will replace toxic substance, materials and products of concern with viable non-toxic alternatives.

#### **GREEN BUILDING:**

- All construction projects meet LEED Platinum certification.
- All tenant improvements are LEED Platinum certification for Commercial Interiors (CI).

#### **WASTE REDUCTION and RECYCLING:**

- Send zero waste sent to landfill.
- Achieve one hundred percent recycling rate for recyclable materials.

#### 4.0 Interim Sustainability Targets (2007 Base-year)

Area	2008 Targets	2015 Targets	2025 Targets
Greenhouse Gases	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by XX%	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Energy	Reduce energy consumption by XX%  XX% of electricity is from renewable sources.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Water Use	Reduce water consumption by XX%	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Resource Consumption	Reduce copy/printer paper consumption by XX%  XX% of paper used meets the EPA procurement and recovered material guidelines.  XX% of print jobs use 100% post-consumer recycled content and/or process chlorine free paper	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Waste Generation	Reduce waste generation by XX% below XXXX levels.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Recycling	Achieve a XX% office-recycling rate.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Purchasing	XXpercent of all office supply purchases contain recycled content.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Toxins	XX% of cleaning products are non-toxic.  XX% of electronics are recycled.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Transportation	Reduce staff's single-occupancy vehicle miles traveled by XX%	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)
Employee Engagement	XX% of all All-Staff meetings contain a sustainable operations update or discussion topic.  Achieve XX staff volunteer hours for projects or programs that support economic, social or environmental sustainability.	(expand from 2008 target)	(expand from 2015 target)

## 5.0 Planned Actions, Timeline, Responsibilities and Measures

Target Area	Planned Actions	Intended Purpose	Measures of Success	Responsible Party(s)	Timeline
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Purchase carbon emission offsets for work related employee air travel.	Reduce contribution to climate change associated with employee travel.	Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in tons of carbon per year.	John Doe	June 2008
Energy Use	Replace low efficiency light bulbs with energy saving CFL's or T-5 florescent lights.	Reduce energy use at the office and its associated negative environmental impacts.	Reduction in energy use, in Kwh per year.	Jane Doe	December 2008
Paper Use	Establish individual and/or program specific copier/printer use data tracking system.	Improve capacity to track paper consumption at a meaningful level.	Reduction in paper consumption, in number of sheets of paper per year.	John Doe	June 2008
	Ensure all print jobs are done on 100% post-consumer recycled content or tree-free paper, if available.	Reduce use of virgin fiber, and associated release of toxins; Strengthen recycled paper and tree-free paper markets.	Percentage of 100% recycled or tree-free paper compared to total paper use.	All Program Managers	June 2008