

Training to improve environmental processes is vital to cement a sustainable future

Building a 'sustainable mentality'

Sustainable development means taking into account the social, economic and environmental impacts of business activities, not only for the present but also for future generations. Although many business leaders have already started to think about taking a “greener” approach, they often fail to realise the significant social impact their business can have both in the UK and globally. Taking sustainability seriously means that business leaders need to be responsive to the needs of a wide range of stakeholders and communities, all with competing interests.

To implement a sustainable management system within a business, employees need guidance and training so that they can contribute to the sustainability agenda, both appropriately and effectively. “Training is a key way to engage staff with the concept and benefits of sustainability,” says John Osborne, Product Marketing Manager for BSI Training, “By creating greater employee understanding, and assessing what the business stands to gain, an organisation can prioritise the areas to be addressed to promote sustainable development. Increasing the skill levels in your business is beneficial to all concerned. There is the benefit of personal and professional development for employees being trained, plus productivity gains for your business”.

“Organisations must review and consider the best methods of training available,” continues Osborne. “Different areas in a business can have a different impact on sustainability, whether it is economically, environmentally or socially, and training should be tailored to suit this.”

In an unpredictable economy, business improvement training is both highly topical and powerful since return on investment is measurable. Quantifiable financial targets such as cost reduction and profit increase can be easily identified. Courses on topics such as Lean Six Sigma teach business improvement methodology and can be tailored directly to your specific business objectives. In addition, these skills are easily transferable throughout your organisation, meaning that the cost of training one person can be shared across the wider workforce.

Similarly, training in quality management can help employees improve internal processes thus increasing efficiency and avoiding costly mistakes, which in turn contributes to overall cost savings within the organisation.

Measuring greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprints are important issues for businesses at the moment. Training employees to incorporate an environmental management framework into the organisation will demonstrate to customers that the business is taking sustainability seriously. The organisation can also gain a competitive edge and increase its customer base, resulting in increased revenue. Environmental management training programmes ensure that all members of staff start to think with a sustainable mentality and look at every way they can be environmentally sustainable to reduce costs and ultimately increase profits.

An example of a social impact which can affect an organisation's sustainability is health and safety. Implementing a health and safety management system, such as BS OHSAS 18001, provides a logical, comprehensive framework to justify, create and continually improve health and safety programme activity. By ensuring that all employees are up to speed on the new health and safety regulations and learning to integrate them into management processes, organisations can avoid legal action and costly payouts.

“Organisations must also ensure that the training in itself is as sustainable as possible,” states Osborne. “There are many sustainable methods of training available for businesses today which include eLearning and distance learning. Bringing training in-house can also reduce a company's carbon footprint as it saves having to transport members of staff around the country. Using a training provider that also has the same business values as your organisation can help continue the process of promoting sustainable values throughout the whole organisation.”

“There are endless benefits to organisations which have embarked on training in order to become more sustainable,” concludes Osborne. “Training ensures that employees at all levels receive knowledge to improve performance and ultimately take the company forward into a sustainable future.”

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About BSI Training

BSI Training is the leading supplier of training courses with unrivalled experience in standards-based management system and business improvement training. The company provides training to organisations of all sizes and across all business sectors.

BSI Training provides training and information on standards in many management disciplines including: Business Continuity; Sustainability; Health & Safety; Information Security; Integrated Management: Quality and IT Service Management. The BSI Training portfolio also includes a comprehensive range of business improvement training solutions.

Training is delivered via a variety of options including eLearning modules, distance learning, in-company training and open courses, along with individually tailored training solutions which can be moulded around an organisation's requirements.

Choosing BSI Training demonstrates to customers, competitors, suppliers, staff and investors that an organisation uses industry-respected best practices wherever possible.