

Group Presentations – Sustainability Analysis

Date: Monday, May 17th

You will work in groups of up to 4 people on these presentations. **Each group will have 10-14 minutes for their presentation.** Groups should prepare a PowerPoint presentation and all members should be prepared to speak during the presentation. There is no paper submission for this presentation, though you will submit a copy of your slides.

The goal of this presentation is for your team to analyze the current operations of an existing small business (or a single department of a larger business) and to identify sustainability-related problem areas for the business. Once the problem areas are identified, your group will outline an action plan for the business to follow if its decision makers wish for it to become more sustainable, primarily focusing on the simple, immediate changes (low hanging fruit) that would be available to them. Once you have identified these changes and explained the costs and the benefits that they offer (once you've got the business to buy-in to the first idea), you will outline potential problem areas for the business to look towards in the future (mid-to-long term options).

Your group should choose an organization that at least one of you is very familiar with: either a current or former place of employment, or a business that you visit often as a customer. The more you know about the business, the more you will understand about its operations, which will make identifying problem areas much easier.

Your presentation should cover the following areas, though you are welcome to add to it if necessary. This outlines the basics of what you should cover in your presentation.

1. Overview of your chosen organization
 - a. What does it do? Where does it operate? Who are the competitors?
 - i. If you've chosen a single department in a large organization, make sure to explain what the company does and what your chosen department does to support the company's vision and mission.
 - b. What green initiatives have already been implemented (if any) and what have the results been?
2. What are the problem areas for the business' operations?
 - a. Look towards resource usage (electricity, water, raw materials) and where there might be waste or inefficiencies.
 - b. Look throughout the supply chain if that's where most of the issues are and point them out, but remember that your goal isn't to green the entire supply chain: it's to get the ball rolling with simple changes that gain buy-in.

- i. If it's a clothing company, you should mention the dye process and the amount of water used, the gathering of the raw materials (cotton), the transportation costs to get parts of the final product from place to place.
 - ii. If the company is UPS or another delivery service, there will be plenty of concerns regarding the emissions of the vehicles themselves.
- 3. Come up with an action plan for the business to enact.
 - a. Outline the suggested changes, the order which they should be enacted, and the reasoning for these changes.
 - i. The order matters most because early wins can be used as proof of success before making more intensive suggestions.
 - ii. This is where you'll focus on **some** of the suggested changes for the issues identified in part 2. While you will mention long-term suggestions, your focus will be on the immediate issues that are easiest to deal with.
 - 1. Using the UPS example, a short-term solution won't be suggesting a partnership with a vehicle manufacturing company to help swap out the fleet vehicles with greener versions. This is a long-term goal that would be implemented **after** a company has gone through the easy changes and seen the benefits.
- 4. How would you get buy-in from executives/managers to make these changes? What benefits will they receive?
 - a. Put yourself in the manager's shoes (think back to the discussion on empathetic thinking, as well as sacrosanct beliefs). Why would this person enact your changes? How would you sell them on these changes? What's in it for them?
 - b. Assuming you've gotten buy-in and the changes were a success, how do you think that manager/executive would pitch your suggestions to others within the organization?
- 5. What kind of push back might the organization face from your suggested changes?
 - a. Think about both the many different groups of stakeholders, list some of the concerns that you'd have if you were in their position, and try to address these issues ahead of time.
 - b. If the upfront costs are high and the payback period is long, why would they follow your plan?
- 6. What areas should the company focus on for future changes (5+ years away), assuming your current plan is successful and spurs the company to continue making changes.
 - a. This is where you can list areas to look at once the simple changes have been made and buy-in from managers/executives has been achieved. At this stage, you've gained some trust with the first ideas and their success: What next?

While the outline is long, remember that the presentation is only 10-14 minutes. Each section will only be covered for a few minutes, so you will have to make some concessions on what information you want to cover. Do your best to cut any filler from the presentation. You will have some time in class each

week to work in your groups. The presentation order will be decided the week before the presentations through a random number drawing.