
Course Learning Outcomes for Unit VIII

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

5. Examine impact of corporate philosophy on pollution prevention.

Reading Assignment

In order to access the resource below, you must first log into the myCSU Student Portal and access the GreenFile database within the CSU Online Library.

Kashmanian, R., Keenan, C., & Wells, R. (2010). Corporate environmental leadership: Drivers, characteristics, and examples. *Environmental Quality Management*, 19(4): 1-20.

Unit Lesson

You are on the home stretch! Nice job getting to Unit VIII. Unit VIII sums up the course by focusing on corporate management philosophy. For a company to be at the forefront of environmental initiatives, the corporate focus on pollution prevention (P2) must be top-down. If upper management does not believe in P2, then P2 efforts made at lower levels are unlikely to be appreciated, rewarded, and even may result in re-assigning or firing of those individuals responsible for going "out on their own."

If the top management of a corporation promotes P2, then P2 will likely be an integral part of the corporation's operations. Many corporations have a vision statement or statement of corporate values. If the vision/values statement includes wording about P2, environmental stewardship, environmental leadership, respect for the environment, or similar phrases, then the company likely rewards P2 efforts.

It would be ideal to work for a company that has a culture that embraces P2. A company that embraces P2 recognizes that P2 can save money over the long term. These companies consider life cycle assessment (LCA) to analyze existing processes to make them more cost and resource efficient, and then they apply LCA in design of new processes. These companies conduct P2 audits to achieve the P2 goals listed in the Unit IV lecture:

1. Eliminate waste at the source by modifying production processes.
2. Reduce waste at the source by modifying production processes.
3. Promote use of less-toxic substances.
4. Implement conservation techniques.
5. Re-use materials rather than putting them into the waste stream.

Ideally, P2 is woven throughout the company. Source reduction of office materials, cups, paper, food, magazines, and other typical "throwaways" is sought after. In industrial processes, P2 audits are conducted to determine where source reduction is possible, where alternative non-toxic chemicals can be used, and where less energy can be used. If there are waste materials, the company will encourage reuse of the material. If reuse is not possible, then they encourage recycling and discourage landfilling.

A company that has a P2 culture will anticipate environmental regulations. To the degree that the company has business that is environmentally regulated, it will work with the local, state, and federal environmental regulators to achieve and go beyond requirements. The regulator is more likely to work with the company regarding alternatives for compliance in a situation where a company has an established history of working cooperatively with regulators when a new regulation is promulgated and may result in a large expense for the company at a relatively low environmental benefit. Since a corporation is ultimately in business to make a

profit, the likelihood of environmental fines is reduced if a company has a history of proactive P2 and cooperation with regulators. Increased profits and shareholder value are benefits of a P2 culture.

Throughout the course, you have learned about the 1990 Pollution Prevention Act, the focus on source reduction, how to conduct life cycle assessments, P2 audits, P2 in various industries, economics of P2, and corporate philosophy. The specific industry sections of the course have aimed to show how a variety of industry types can approach P2. P2 is used to save money as well as resources, operational expenses, and disposal expenses.

Through our coverage of pollution prevention in this course, we hope that you have learned a lot. The assigned reading for Unit VIII shows that pollution prevention is part of a corporate philosophy leading to a corporation-wide culture of P2. Many individuals who work for a P2-focused company – but not necessarily in the industrial part of the company where P2 is an everyday word – start to incorporate P2 into their personal lives. You, as a P2 professional, already have the P2 mindset. As you rise through the corporate hierarchy, every person you interact with, including those you supervise, will hopefully notice your commitment to a P2 culture. We look forward to your successful completion of this course and your impact on pollution prevention!

Suggested Reading

In order to access the resource below, you must first log into the myCSU Student Portal and access the GreenFile database within the CSU Online Library.

The following article explores the reasons why companies would adopt P2 programs:

Ervin, D., Wu, J., Khanna, M., Jones, C., & Wirkkala, T. (2013). Motivations and barriers to corporate environmental management. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 22(6): 390-409.