

Building a Sustainable Enterprise for Survival



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In today's time and marketplace, managing a sustainable enterprise is both complex and challenging. Entrepreneurs, directors and managers alike work on strategies to ensure that their businesses and startups thrive and flourish in this ever challenging business environment. We think of the "big boys" overwhelming the smaller ones and some smaller businesses will fall into buyouts by the bigger ones. In order to build a sustainable enterprise, there are essential principles that managers and bosses can adopt and observe to ensure that their businesses are sustainable in the long run.

Here are the 8 essential and guiding principles used for building a Sustainable Enterprise:

A. Suppliers, consumers and the important stakeholders such as environmental groups are increasingly being considered as whole systems part of the enterprise.

It involves everyone within the enterprise. How business operates either as a single entity or as a collective group of companies- all have a role to play in the success of the enterprise. Team spirit and cohesiveness to work as a unit comes into action. We have seen many times how this foundation has halted and disintegrate due to a lack of communication and team spirit amongst people who are responsible to hold the organisation together. So coming together, contributing your services and ensuring a "gung-ho spirit" attitude are all essentials in pulling together and driving on towards the success of the enterprise.

B. Increased transparency of the processes and materials by the companies via self regulation or via compliant sustainability reporting

This is one area that organisations should observe as a health check. Companies should be transparent about the processes of its operations and work with self regulatory bodies to ensure transparency in their reports. Such bodies like Association for Small Medium Enterprises (ASMEs) and

SMA (Singapore Manufacturers' Association) help companies with compliances and proper reporting procedures to adhere to.

C. Moving with product innovation and operational efficiency

As the saying goes, companies must innovate in order to progress and survive and managers must brainstorm new ideas and concepts. As competition is increasing everyday with new entrants into the market space as well as the threat of technological advancements, companies would definitely have a look at their product offerings, find ways to innovate, be flexible in their offerings and to top it up, provide a "wow" service to leave a lasting impression. This "wow" service would link to the operational efficiency of the processes within the organisation.

D. Working at the beginning of pipe solutions rather than end of pipe solutions

Working with a vision and carrying out the mission of the organisation, managers could start planning and implementing solutions that would bring the organisation nearer to where its goal and

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direction should be. This would be the start on how the shape of the organisation should be in the first place and what it takes to ensure its operational effectiveness in delivering its service to their clients.

E. Incorporating end-of-life at the beginning of the product design

Always have the end in mind. What the product offerings should be and how it can offer value to the clients. If the products or offering is nearing the end of its lifecycle, how will it take shape? Companies should innovate as mentioned earlier and work on this strategy. Have the end of life strategy at the beginning of the product design and work towards innovating its product and process line.

F. Complete life cycle analysis along the supply value chain

Complete a life cycle analysis of your organisations' product and service offerings. It's a good idea to list a series of questions and answers and brainstorm on ideas and concepts to innovate. Work on the product life cycle, its merits and benefits, its value and targeted clients.

G. Move towards renewable energy through solar and wind power

Resources and assets are keys to the success and sustainability of the enterprise. Working through with energy and strong vibes, organisations should renew their strengths and relook

into areas which they can improve and effort in this area should be put in consistently. A slack or a little complacency could end up disastrous as it opens up the doors for clients to look somewhere else for alternatives. Always keep the energy levels up and provide a "wow" service to your clients.

H. Working in the communities where the companies operate.

We've always heard that when we work alone, our successes are limited because we are working within the oysters of our own success. However, when we open up to combine forces with our friendly competitors, it strengthens and enhances the communities where companies operate and share their ideas together.

Having said this, while some companies are making genuine efforts, others just want to appear green in its stakeholder's eyes, exploiting the gap that exists in the green space. But in the long term, these Sustainable Business Development principles will have to be adopted by the businesses who want to stay in the business or else they will see themselves being shunted out of the marketplace.

e-marketer

