

Sustainability: Critical for success

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Sustainability is one of the key priorities of businesses, industry bodies, and individuals alike. Year on year, those living and working in Jersey aim to reduce their carbon footprints for the benefit of the planet, and it appears to be working. The Government's environmental report for 2021 showcased that emissions had reduced by 2.9 kilotons compared to 2020 and print totals were reduced by 10%.

While all these steps are going in the right direction, there's so much more to be done – and businesses recognise this.

The draw of sustainability in business

A study by Capgemini found that 66% of global consumers are willing to pay more for products and services from sustainable companies. The same study found that 79% believe that companies should be held accountable for reducing their environmental impact.

The drive for business sustainability doesn't just come from consumers, employees are also prioritising sustainability in the workplace. According to a global study by IBM, 68% of respondents were more willing to accept positions from companies who they consider to be sustainable.

Of course, businesses must be authentic about their sustainability credentials and work. If they aren't, they'll quickly be caught out and could suffer irrefutable reputation damage. Worryingly, research by the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN) found that more than one out of four (42%) of 'green claims' were exaggerated, false or deceptive.

Supporting the bottom line

For those businesses that *genuinely* place sustainability at the forefront of their business, they're likely to see a great improvement in business success.

Incorporating sustainability into operations can lead to significant cost savings. According to the Energy Savings Trust, small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) – of which Jersey has a large proportion in its business community – could save a quarter on their energy bills by implementing behavioural change around energy efficiency.

Going further than green

Of course, green credentials only make up the tip of the iceberg of what constitutes a 'sustainable business'.

Sustainability also relates to social sustainability. How do businesses play a part in ensuring that the people they employ are positively impacted from the work they do. Do businesses supply their teams with the basic and legal requirements, such as financial stability, shelter, warmth, and rest. But do they also go one step beyond, promoting and implementing a sense of connection with others, high self-esteem, and reaching their full potential?

Are these businesses also considering their external stakeholders? How do they care for the welfare of those within their supply chains and what corporate social responsibility efforts are undertaken annually to support programmes in and around their local communities?

While environmental sustainability sits high upon the priority list for most consumers, so does social sustainability. Research by Deloitte found that [37% of consumers](#) believe a product is sustainable if it is made in a socially

responsible way (fair labour practices, for example). Respect for human rights also falls in consumers' top five most important environmentally sustainable or ethical practices.

Companies could work towards setting sustainability goals and tracking their progress, creating a culture of sustainability that is continuously striving for improvement. Additionally, involving stakeholders such as employees, customers, suppliers, and local communities in the sustainability journey can build a sense of shared responsibility, ultimately leading to stronger relationships and increased productivity.

Sustainability is no longer just an ethical consideration but a critical factor for business success. Consumers and employees around the world are increasingly demanding sustainable products and services, and companies are recognising the need for sustainability to maintain a positive reputation, improve productivity, and achieve cost savings.

If you'd like to continue this conversation with Jersey Business or would like further business support, please contact us at info@jerseybusiness.je.

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