

10 Things Every Business Leader Should Know About Strategic SUSTAINABILITY

- 1 Sustainable Abundance** is good for business. Every product and every service needs to be re-invented to create a sustainable future. This is the greatest economic opportunity in history. (Consider automobiles, light bulbs, airplanes, energy.... everything.)
- 2 High Sustainability Standards and Maximizing Human Benefits** can generate “leapfrog” designs to invent new products and new business models. (Toyota was creating the Prius while other car companies slept.)
- 3 Sustainability Thinking** saves money. The relentless challenge to improve durability, re-use parts and eliminate packaging brings bottom line innovation. (91% of old Xerox copier parts are reused in “new” Xerox machines.)
- 4 Removing the Bad** attracts new customers. Consumers and business customers are stampeding to choose the benefits of non-toxic, no-waste products (Clorox’s non-toxic Green Works Cleaners is their fastest growing product portfolio.)
- 5 Create a Cause Bigger Than Your Brand.** Over 80% of consumers say they choose brands that support good causes because it makes them feel like they are “voting with their wallet.” (ClifBar’s brand in the manufactured nutrition bar business repeatedly earns the highest loyalty rating. They famously support the organic sourcing and the buy local food movement as well as women and fitness initiatives.)
- 6 Sustainability Obliterates Costs.** When smart people consider how to satisfy a need or want without waste or even cost, new business models spring to life. (When Apple designed the ipod, eliminating the cost/waste of CD manufacturing, shipping and distribution was the natural outcome. The ipod led to the iphone, greener product design and tens of thousands of digital apps which create user loyalty without more cost.)
- 7 Sustainability Drives Game-Changing Business Models.** When leaders consider solving huge problems in sustainable ways, new thinking creates breakthrough businesses. Before the radio, who would have thought of music with a band? Before the light bulb, who would have thought of light without a flame? (Today micro-entrepreneurs are installing solar panels on huts in the world’s poorest areas because solar generated OLED light is cheaper than kerosene. Power without the grid. Is everything possible?)
- 8 Sustainability Creates Smart Marketing.** Engaging your customers in the benefits and breakthroughs of your green and sustainable products requires a new level and a new type of communication. It’s called smarketing. Marketing that makes your customer smart. (GE recently asked design students to come up with creative ways to use GE’s new organic LED lights. Tens of thousands have seen their video on YouTube and the product launch is still months away.)
- 9 Sustainability Attracts Top Talent.** The best science, engineering and business schools report that top graduates only want to work for companies that are serious about making a difference in creating a sustainable future. (Ask any college recruiter.)
- 10 If You Don’t Fully Embrace Sustainability, You Are Toast.** The debate over green is over and green won. Consider the failures of GM and the transformation of Wal-Mart. It’s better to ride the wave than drown in the rip tide of change.

For information on the speech or workshop, “Leading for Sustainability,” email candie@willmarre.com | WillMarre.com
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