



Why do this program?

the David Suzuki Foundation designed this guide to make it easier for you to make small changes in your workplace to protect nature for the future. And we promise you and your colleagues will have fun doing it!

Making a difference

The link between environment and health is clear. It's in all our best interests to protect the resources we depend on for survival. There are thousands of things individuals can do to conserve nature, ranging from using phosphate-free laundry detergent to carrying reusable bags to the grocery store, but we wanted to know which actions are the most effective. So we put on our lab coats to research how Canadians can make the biggest difference.

We started David Suzuki's Nature Challenge in 2002 to help Canadians answer the question, "What can I do to protect the environment?" It turns out that the choices we make in our personal lives – both at home and at work – related to transportation, food, energy use and getting involved are the most critical.

Becoming an employer of choice

Individual actions make a difference to the protection of natural resources and Canadians care deeply about the environment. They already actively implement these values at home by walking to regular destinations, buying local food and turning down their thermostats (listen carefully, you can hear a mother somewhere yelling, "put on a sweater!")

You already know that people don't check their values at the door when they leave for work each day. Your employees are hungry for opportunities to ex-

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press their environmental values. When staff members see their workplace is committed to reducing its corporate footprint, they become more invested in their work. The most valuable asset any company possesses is its intellectual capital – in other words, its people. The more engaged the staff, the more valuable the organization.

Most of us spend at least eight hours a day at work. The changes we make to conserve the earth's resources in our professional lives influences others in our workplaces and can have an even more far-reaching effect than the actions we take at home. Just imagine how clean and quiet our world would be if everyone carpooled, used transit or cycled to work. Or if every courier and taxi company used hybrid vehicles in their fleets. Or if the lights of office buildings were shut off at night so we could see the stars.

On the surface, making these small changes might not seem like much, but they do significantly improve our quality of life by reducing air pollution and the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. And maybe that's the best way to explain sustainability. It isn't about what you see – it's what you don't see. Making mindful decisions about how we use resources means we are less likely to run out of the things we need to survive, which reduces pollution, improving our quality of life right now. What could be smarter than that?

Many of the activities outlined in this handbook are excellent team-building exercises, offering opportunities for co-workers to get to know one another while doing something good for the planet. If you're an employer, you may also find that some of these suggestions will make your workplaces safer and healthier. Best of all, you'll save money. Some people call it a win-win scenario. We call it sustainability.

Benefits

Office culture is changing, as it always has. Just twenty years ago, smoking in the workplace was considered normal and the Internet didn't exist. Today's corporate universe extols conservation. Organizations that have initiated even small-scale environmental programs already enjoy tremendous competitive advantage.

David Suzuki's Nature Challenge at Work is a great way for organizations and businesses to incorporate sustainability into regular workplace practices. You're probably reading this handbook because you already care about the health of the planet. Now you have the opportunity to be a leader and steward of the environment. Not only will you help conserve nature for the future, you'll also boost morale among your colleagues.

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