

# Sustainability Reporting

## 10 reasons why its important to

get it right

For any sustainability practitioner who has been involved in the preparation of their organisation's annual sustainability report, the prospect of having to collect, analyse and present the data on an annual basis may seem a formidable task.

However a well-written and produced report can deliver many benefits that will help you to embed a sustainability culture into your organisation and deliver on your commitments.

So here are our top ten reasons why it's important to get it right.

### 1 It's mandatory, so you've got to do it

Since the 2011/12 financial year all central government organisations and agencies are required to show fiscal and non-fiscal performance covering savings on their consumption of Water, Waste, and Green House Gas Emissions together with the sustainability impacts of their procurement policies.

The PES and FRm mandatory requirements mean that you have to incorporate an annual sustainability report within your Annual Report and Accounts, so for that reason alone its important that you do it and get it right.

### 3 It establishes the strategy and governance that drives operational performance

To be effective, operational performance needs a clear direction and terms of reference. Your sustainability reporting can establish both the roadmap and the framework for your sustainability initiatives, so that your staff and stakeholders understand the regime within which you are operating.

### 2 It improves policy making and performance

By using the data collected for your sustainability report you can confidently embed the sustainable development strategies into your policy making that will have a more far-reaching effect on your performance in delivering on your sustainability commitments, than simply making operational changes.

### 4 It proves your achievement against strategy

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Your sustainability reporting will enable you to demonstrate that you are reducing energy and materials consumption, provide evidence that you are successfully tackling waste and verify that you are delivering better value for money through fiscal savings.

## 5 It enables you to set out future plans and targets

By delivering clear measurable information, sustainability reporting makes it easier to see what plans and targets you need to establish to make a material difference to your organisations sustainability impacts.

## 7 It demonstrates good practice

Your sustainability reporting will show where you have made material reductions in your use of resources and the waste you generate. It can also enable you to demonstrate the good practices you have put into operation, allowing your readers to understand how you are going about delivering on your sustainability commitments.

## 9 It encourages accountability

By providing measurable information in a transparent manner you can more easily encourage a culture of accountability. By giving people clearly defined outcomes targets that they own and are responsible for, you can challenge them to deliver on their commitments and recognise their achievements.

## 6 It's a tool to transform attitudes and buy-in to your sustainability vision

If you're serious about reducing cost through sustainable policies you're going to have to bring your people along with you. By delivering the right messages your sustainability reporting can engender attitudinal and behavioural change in your staff so that they enthusiastically embrace the changes you are trying to bring about.

## 8 It builds trust

Your audiences must believe and have confidence in your sustainability reporting. By reporting transparently and consistently, including both the good and the bad, you will be able to win your audiences trust in your ability to deliver on your sustainability commitments.

## 10 It raises the profile of sustainability issues

The actual process of collecting data and preparation of your report will make your commitment to sustainability more visible within the organisation. But by using the information contained within the report to communicate with your people and stakeholders on notice boards, in media releases, at out-reach events and on line you can significantly raise the profile of sustainability issues making your organisation more aware of the progress you are making to deliver on your commitments.



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