

Sustain

For economic, environmental and social sustainability

May 2013 | Volume 1 | Issue 1





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On the Cover:

Photograph by Steve Speer. The sun rises on our inaugural issue's cover and highlights the theme, "Sustain: What does it mean?"

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Publisher's Note

by David B. Savage, President & CEO of think•SUSTAIN•ability



We have been separated and misled by the positional debate. Many people react to the “S” word. Some claim it as their very own high ground and look down on others from that perspective. Some react to the “S” word as though it will damage their ability to make money. The “S” word is Sustainability.

There is no separation between us. When we drop our positions, we find that we all value a healthy place to live, work and relate to others. We want the same for our children and great grandchildren. When our companies are an integral part of our community, we find our goals are more easily achieved. When we do some research, we find that public companies that embrace sustainability generally outperform those that do not.

There is no separation of economic, environmental and social sustainability. The debate is false. This game is not one of zero sum. Organizations that continually earn their social licence to operate do it as much from their economic and environmental successes as from their community relations. Those that encourage economic advances know that their community then has more opportunities to protect the environment and support their community.

Readers of SUSTAIN know why sustainability is important. And they understand that all three pillars are necessary. Not one or two; all. Our readers also pursue learning, connection, dialogue and communication on economic, environmental and social sustainability. We offer SUSTAIN to serve their interest.

With our sister venture, think•SUSTAIN•ability (TSA), we work with your organization to “Evaluate, Educate, and Engage” for economic, environmental and social sustainability. Our Gold Package includes assessments, analyses, communications, goal and accountability setting throughout your team,

education, coaching and reporting including an annual integrated report. think • SUSTAIN • ability Consultants Ltd. (www.thinksustainability.ca) brings together expertise to address all the facets of sustainability.

Here is our inaugural issue of SUSTAIN. This is a place for intelligent, inclusive, challenging, respectful and creative conversations that matter on sustainability, corporate social responsibility and leadership.

I am taking the Harvard Course “Strategies for Sustainability Management” taught by Professor Bob Pojasek. Consider his advice to me:

“Sustainability has the look and feel of the things you already do, simply finding ways to improve it. I believe in this and no one has found the right way... every person and organization is doing “sustainability” and none of us are doing it well.”

We celebrate this first issue with articles by members of our advisory board and an open invitation to join in the conversation.

Our dream for this magazine is to convene intelligent conversations around sustainability with many people bringing their own diverse perspectives to this dialogue. This dialogue is one of the most important for each one of us and the future. We will not settle for positional debate that excludes or separates. We will make this powerful, inclusive and educational.

SUSTAIN brings like minded, forward thinking leaders together in service to our planet, our companies, our communities and ourselves.

Join us in this conversation. Contact us with your thoughts, your ideas, your articles and your point/counter-point. 💡

TSA Advisory Board



Members of the TSA and SUSTAIN advisory board and executive gather to celebrate the launch and first board meeting held April 15th, in Calgary, AB

L-R: Gary Redmond, Cathryn Ayles, Dave Savage, Dr. Irene Herremans, Paula Arab, Steve Speer, Jack Blair, Venkat Somasundaram

TSA and **SUSTAIN** advisory board and associates:

Paula Arab

local writer and columnist with a 20-year-career in mainstream journalism

Cathryn Ayles (*SUSTAIN* magazine)

TSA publications and editor of SUSTAIN magazine

Jack Blair

project management and value management specialist

Irene Herremans

Professor, CMA-Alberta Faculty Fellow at the Haskayne School of Business and adjunct professor in Environmental Design at the University of Calgary

Seema Jindal

sustainability specialist

Bob Johnson

executive assessment and coaching

Jackie Rafter

executive assessment, strategic planning and marketing

Gary Redmond

populations and the environmental risk assessments, and sustainable development specialist

David Savage (*Executive*)

President and CEO, leader, consultant, professional speaker, coach, negotiator and writer

Venkat Somasundaram (*SUSTAIN* magazine)

sustainability and management

Steve Speer (*Executive*)

VP Design, Creative Director, award winning graphic designer and photographer

Cory Strandberg

project management and strategic planning



SUSTAIN

One of the great reads in our SUSTAIN magazine will be **Point/Counter-Point**.

We will provide you an opportunity to:

- a) Name the topic,
- b) Write an article on the topic from your perspective,
- c) Help us find a person with the opposite view, and
- d) Present them both.

Too often, we shy away from debate. SUSTAIN will encourage healthy debate and then find the shared values and understandings to turn this into dialogue. No one gets to be wrong. And through **Point/Counter-Point**, we will all deepen our understanding.

Let's get the conversation started.

Contribute now.

Contact cayles@thinksustainability.ca

For economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Corporate Social Responsibility: *Walking the Green Talk AND Reporting it Globally* by Paula Arab

Sustainability. It's a word worth thinking about, according to the two co-founders of a new consulting company called **think • SUSTAIN • ability (TSA)**. But what does it actually mean? If one thinks about how sustainability might apply to one's own life, it would mean living such that you don't burn out physically, mentally or financially. This involves managing one's physical environment – things like where and how you live, how often you exercise, what kind of air you breathe, and what you eat, for instance. Emotional and economic sustainability would similarly involve managing your stress and your finances, including spending within one's means.

Derived from Latin, sustainability literally means to hold up. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines it as capable of being sustained or endured.

When it comes to sustainable development, the word speaks to the development of our environmental resources in a way that meets the needs of today, without compromising the ability of the generations of tomorrow to meet their own needs.

Like sustainability in our personal lives, corporate sustainability is about more than the physical environment, says Steve Speer, the co-founder and VP of design for TSA.

"There's also a social aspect and there's an economic aspect of sustainability," says Speer, an award-winning graphic designer and photographer in the oil and gas sector. Speer is committed to using his talent to tell the stories of communities, and how individuals interact with their environment and with each other. Most recently, he has published a photography book that documents life in rural farming villages in China.

Speer cares about the environment but says he's "also a consumer. I drove here. I want the creature comforts of a warm house," he says. He feels the story of the oilsands, for instance, is misrepresented by "selective omission."

Part of TSA's mission is to present balanced information on corporate sustainability.

For Speer personally, sustainability is as simple as fostering long-term relationships with his clients so that the investment on both sides, will reap rewards well into the future.

"Social sustainability can be understood if you think of a happy employee; an employee who is fully engaged and working for a company that they feel is doing good work, not just focused on the bottom-line. That's an example of social sustainability. The employee is likely to want to stay, will be loyal, and won't want to leave," says Speer. "Increasingly, young people are looking to work for companies that practice corporate responsibility. They want to work for companies that are good corporate citizens."

When it comes to sustainable development, the word speaks to the development of our environmental resources in a way that meets the needs of today, without compromising the ability of the generations of tomorrow to meet their own needs.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), one of the most widely used frameworks for reporting on sustainability, says: "A sustainable global economy should combine long-term profitability with social justice and environmental care."

In other words, sustainability isn't mutually exclusive of profitability.

If sustainability is about doing business in a way that is mindful of the impacts on the community and environment, what is TSA about?

Co-founder David Savage, who is president and CEO of TSA, has a vision of helping companies in all industries introduce sustainability to their corporate culture.

"Many companies are pursuing environmental projects and working with communities," says Savage, an international negotiator, professional coach and professional speaker. "Top

performing companies are looking to create a culture of real sustainability.”

Savage has developed his own three pillars, which are central to TSA's service and mission. They are: Evaluation, Education and Engagement.

“Evaluation is going into a company and helping them, through interviews and research, discover a base to develop their sustainability practice on,” says Savage, who has founded and co-founded a number of exploration companies and not-for-profits.

“We live in a world that has finite resources,” says Speer. “Not just companies, but everyone should care about sustainability.” Savage adds: “Sustainability is not flat lining to preserve the status quo. It is reducing our negative impacts and enhancing the positive ones so our client companies outperform their peers this year and many years to come.”

The evaluation process, after a number of assessments, will lead to a baseline, against which future progress can be measured.

“They will know where they're starting from, will be able to measure and go back to determine their progress,” says Savage.

A road map that identifies goals, objectives and strategies will flow from the evaluation stage of the process and into the second pillar, Education. Savage, Speer and their associates help clients build their awareness of their role, and their company's role, in the greater economic, environmental and social sustainability picture. Savage and Speer will offer customized webinars and workshops, internal media communications training and content, and importantly, sustainability reports that measure their performance to the standards set by the GRI. Companies around the world are voluntarily participating in the GRI network, measuring and reporting their sustainability performance according to the rigorous reporting framework.

“It's a matter of finding balance,” says Speer. “It's not green wash. It's a matter of incorporating sustainability into the corporate culture and then reporting on it; stating what you're doing that's good. And if something happens that's bad, it's stating what you're doing to mitigate that.”


The third E is for Engage — engaging employees, the community and each other. Savage says TSA offers one-on-one coaching to

the organization that brings a focus on sustainability along with a game plan for each employee's role and commitment. This will also include identifying the gaps that may exist between what staff and executive are expected to perform, and how the rewards or punishment are shared.

Both Speer and Savage have a long history of giving to their community and firmly believe that focusing on sustainability is an all around win. Companies that practice corporate responsibility routinely outperform those that don't. Analysts who follow ethical funds are looking for the sort of information that is found in sustainability reports that meet the GRI reporting standards.

“We live in a world that has finite resources,” says Speer. “Not just companies, but everyone should care about sustainability.”

Savage adds: “Sustainability is not flat lining to preserve the status quo. It is reducing our negative impacts and enhancing the positive ones so our client companies outperform their peers this year and many years to come.”

For more on TSA and to arrange a discussion, check out www.thinksustainability.ca 

About the Author:

Paula Arab is a local writer and columnist with a 20-year-career in mainstream journalism. She is now the principal of Paula Arab & Associates, and can be reached at paulaarab@icloud.com

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The Future of Corporate Sustainability: McKinsey, PwC

by Venkat S. Somasundaram



According to the findings in the 2011 McKinsey survey “The Business of Sustainability” (PDF), businesses are moving from merely managing reputations to recording and reporting impact and finally to action and engagement.

In this article, I will first divide corporate sustainability initiatives into three versions, based on maturity. Then I will present the key challenges for the future of corporate sustainability.

Sustainability version 1.0

Building a responsible corporate image was one of the first business cases for sustainability initiatives. Managing reputation of a company amongst customers and other stakeholders was the mandate of Sustainability 1.0. Often labelled as green washing, many corporations portrayed themselves as environmentally responsible without much evidence and by masking environmental wrongdoings. The focus was to create a perception and legitimacy that the business is performing activities in line with societal and environmental values. The “Sustainability Leadership Report—Measuring Perception vs. Reality” (PDF) released by Brandlogic and CRD Analytics shows how some corporations focus more on building green reputations than on their green performance.

Sustainability version 2.0

Sustainability 2.0 focuses on non-financial performance (sustainability) reporting. Organizations like GRI and CDP have established global standards for quantifying and reporting requirements. I would call the increasing corporate focus on reporting sustainability performance data as Sustainability 2.0. The 2010 accountability statement (PDF) of Vancity, Canada’s largest credit union, is a great example of leadership in integrated

reporting (financial and non-financial data) across the globe.

Sustainability version 3.0

So, what is Sustainability 3.0? It is a state in which employees in an organization realize the importance of sustainable business practices and make decisions while coordinating with relevant stakeholders. The key challenge for Sustainability 3.0 is engagement. Realization of top level strategies comes when every employee is engaged in the journey. The engagement of stakeholders will allow strategy implementation to be more effective. Engagement is the key to Sustainability 3.0. That’s the corporate sustainability initiatives in three versions, based on maturity. In addition to the above mentioned reports by McKinsey, Brandlogic, and CRD Analytics, another major report released recently is the “14th Annual Global CEO Survey” by PricewaterhouseCoopers. As I read these reports, I see three key challenges emerge for sustainability 3.0 that will be faced by corporations in the coming years.

Key Challenge 1: Creating change leaders for total engagement

The McKinsey study states that 94% of the respondents say their companies have integrated sustainability into strategic planning. The next stage—Sustainability 3.0—is to catalyze key employees to translate C-suite strategic commitment into organization-wide action. How do we create change leaders, or tribal leaders, who will enable such a transformation within their organizations? Building an enduring corporate culture of sustainability in the business organization where all employees are highly engaged in the formulation and implementation of sustainability initiatives is a key challenge for sustainability in businesses.

Challenge: How can we create change leaders or influencers at all levels of organization to promote sustainability?

Key Challenge 2: Communicating the value proposition

The PricewaterhouseCoopers study suggests that companies could save costs by minimizing business risks, improving

operational efficiencies, and improving employee retention, morale and productivity. CEOs across the globe also believe that there are business opportunities arising by creating sustainable innovative products and services. Despite strong business cases, the C-suite still hesitates in accepting sustainability as a business value proposition. Probably the same kind of resistance existed when new concepts such as “Quality” were introduced, which eventually led to widespread adoption of “Total Quality Management (TQM).”

Challenge: How can the value proposition of sustainability be communicated so that it becomes a cultural norm or policy within businesses?

Key Challenge 3: Co-creating policies for growth

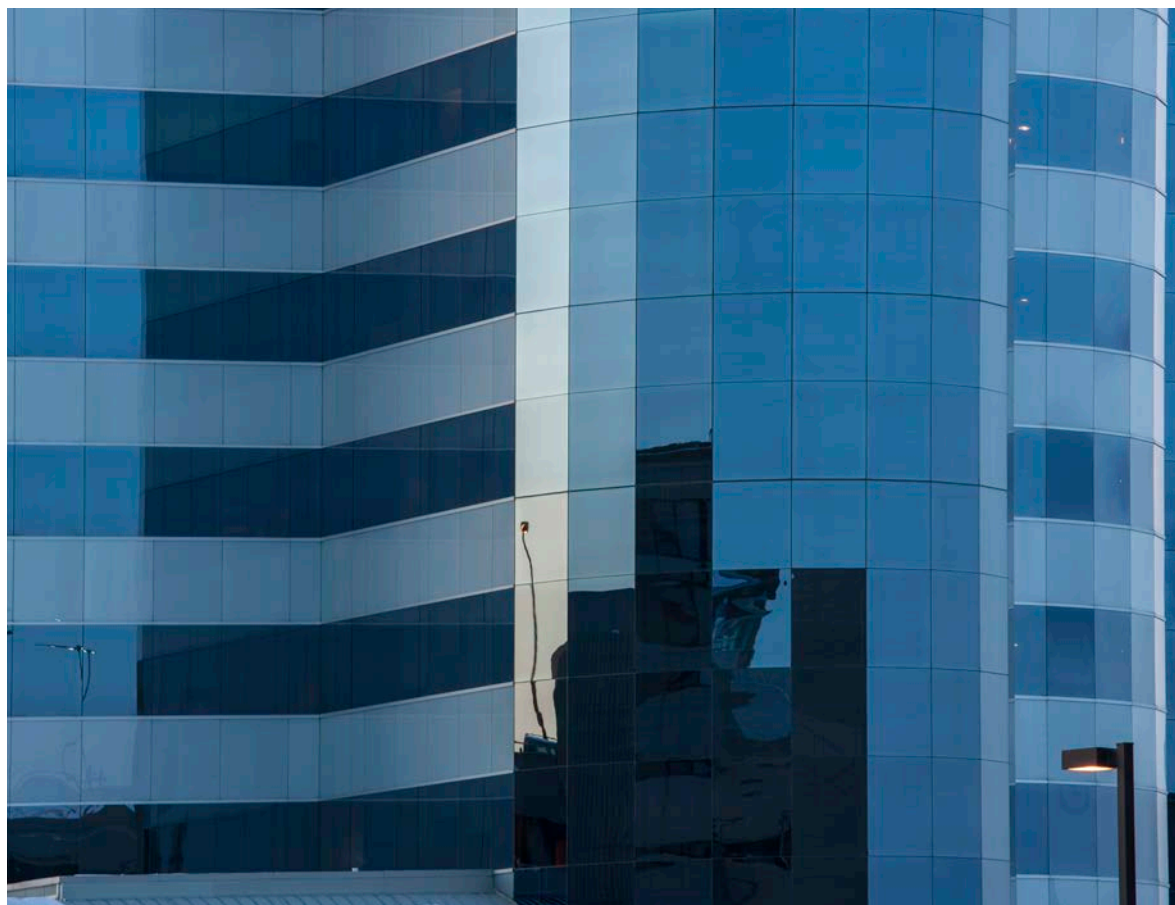
Any provincial or federal election adds uncertainty towards sustainability initiatives in businesses. Public consultations to formulate policies to mitigate recession and climate change risks can be more effective by having a shared agenda across the public, private and NGO sectors. Even though governments across the globe are coming up with regulatory policies, the private sector will have to work closely with the public sector, NGOs, and other stakeholders to arrive at common shared agendas. Half of the

CEOs surveyed by PwC are optimistic that a shared agenda would be more effective than it has been in the past.

Challenge: How can businesses, governments, and other stakeholders co-create policies that promote socially responsible growth? What's your view on the future of sustainability: Sustainability 3.0? What other challenges do you foresee in businesses for the implementation of sustainability initiatives in the future? Share your comments with us, email cayles@thinksustainability.ca. 💡

About the Author:

Venkat S. Somasundaram is a mechanical engineer and a recent MBA grad in Strategy & Sustainability from the Schulich School of Business, York University, Canada. He has core business experience including strategic planning, supply chain, market planning and business development in diverse industries including banking, manufacturing, automobile, public transportation, mining and not-for-profits. He believes in integrating sustainable practices into core business models by inclusive stakeholder engagement.



The Best Sustainability Reports Are Built on Trust

by Dr. Irene Herremans

If a report is published and no one believes it, does it have any value? For stakeholders to believe and use the information in a sustainability report, they must trust the company issuing it.

The latest Edelman Trust Barometer found that people are more likely to believe negative rather than positive information about a company, unless the company is trusted. Trust comes when companies provide credible information — information that is accurate, useful, and represents what a firm is actually doing.

To issue trustworthy reports, companies need to have strong reporting systems and communication approaches. High quality organizational systems related to reporting ensure accuracy of information. High quality communications ensure that the reporting is useful to stakeholders in their decision-making.

Although 95 percent of Global 250 companies provide sustainability reports, according to the latest KPMG International Survey, this number tells us little about the quality of the reporting and whether it is trusted.

Sustainability reports, also called corporate responsibility reports, citizenship reports, and environmental reports, include any web-based, hard copy, or downloadable report that contains information regarding an organization's environmental and/or social performance. They can also contain economic information.

How to make your sustainability reporting credible and trusted

To issue trustworthy reports, companies need to have strong reporting systems and communication approaches. High quality organizational systems related to reporting ensure accuracy of information. High quality communications ensure that the reporting is useful to stakeholders in their decision-making.

Key organizational systems related to reporting include:

1. Clear corporate mission and objectives. The report should evolve from these commitments, to show the company's progress in fulfilling them. (Additional policy statements may be necessary to give sustainability sufficient emphasis.)
2. Organizational structures for managing data. Managers should assign responsibility for data collection, provide guidance on data analysis, and discuss opportunities for improvement.
3. Management systems that establish sustainability as a priority. A corporate commitment to sustainability leads to ethical employee action even when performance isn't being monitored. For example, Suncor makes the Chief Financial Officer responsible for environmental and social indicators as well as financial indicators, giving equal weight to all.
4. Review by an assurance provider and a panel of stakeholders. Assurance providers (auditors) verify data accuracy but will not assess performance. The stakeholder panel will comment on both reporting and performance. Stakeholders can provide feedback on report readability and content — for example, whether important themes are adequately discussed and whether performance is consistent with the organization's commitments.

Quality communications involve:

1. Using the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines for reporting. The GRI has been designed through a multi-stakeholder process specifically to address the informational needs of users.
2. Indicating progress by showing performance against benchmarks. Companies usually compare their performance to how they have done in past years. Stakeholders are most interested in how a company is doing compared to the industry overall. In Canada,

energy companies often compare themselves with the industry average provided by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

3. Demonstrating commitment by setting targets. Targets should be related to the company's priority areas.
4. Communicating through multiple channels. Diverse communication outlets are necessary because sustainability reporting has many stakeholders. Appropriate channels include the annual company report, the stand-alone sustainability report, the website, and NGO partnerships such as the Carbon Disclosure Project. Information should be consistent across these various channels.

According to KPMG, European companies are global leaders in both areas

required for trustworthy reporting: reporting systems and communications approaches. North American companies are particularly weak in their sustainability reporting systems.

Building these systems takes time and effort; European companies may be leading because they have been reporting longer than North American companies.

Trust starts at home: Companies need to believe in reporting

Companies need to see value in reporting in order to make the effort required. Ideally, sustainability reporting is motivated by internal values or an appreciation of the business benefits of reporting. Too often, companies start reporting due to external pressure: e.g., from governments and institutional shareholders. Environmental or social disasters that question the social license to operate can also spur reporting.

In these situations, companies are in a defensive position, seeking to demonstrate quickly that they are responsible citizens. The company doesn't have the internal capacity to provide quality, trusted information. More proactive companies, beginning reporting in the absence of external pressure, have

time to develop the internal systems and controls necessary to report trusted information consistent with their performance.

Once companies begin to report, however, they often start to understand the many benefits of reporting. There is a business case for reporting trustworthy information, though benefits are not automatic and many are intangible and difficult to quantify. Yet it's possible to understand how environmental and social performance complement financial performance. For example, Baxter, a medical device and pharmaceutical company, issues an Environmental Financial Statement (EFS), which monetizes the costs and benefits of its stewardship activities. On average, Baxter reports a return of \$3 per year for each \$1 of investment. Reporting allows the company to identify exactly where to focus

resources for the greatest return.

The next step in reporting is integrated reporting, in which environmental and social information is combined with financial statements in one report. Integrated reporting shows that the company understands how environmental and social performance are complementary to better financial performance. This

kind of commitment produces the most credible, trusted reporting, and the most useful information for stakeholder decision-making.

Additional resources

The University of Calgary offers online modules on key areas of sustainability reporting, with a particular focus on credibility, performance, and assurances. This project was funded in part by the Network for Business Sustainability.

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About the Author:

Dr. Irene Herremans is a professor in the Accounting, Tourism, and Environmental Management areas at the Haskayne School of Business. Her research interests focus on many contemporary issues including management and environmental control systems, environmental performance, international business, intellectual capital, and performance evaluation. 💡

Tough Mudder and Sustainability

by David B. Savage

We used to think we are separate. We used to think our business was to cross the finish line first. We used to think we could know it all. Our challenges today seem much greater than yesterday. The challenges of tomorrow are expected to be greater yet. How will we meet these challenges?

I will tell you a story that links to my answer to our question on future challenges.

My son, Dan, lives and works in Los Angeles. Last spring, Dan called me; "Dad, remember when I was five you started having me join you in 5 and 10 km fun runs?" "Yes." "Well, before you turn sixty, I want you to join me in the first Tough Mudder™ in Canada. It will be at Whistler and will cover 20 km with 22

obstacles." As he has been in six Tough Mudders and qualifies in the top 5% in the world, I was both impressed and scared by his challenge. I replied, "Thank you for the opportunity. It will scare me into better fitness. Dan, you know I am a negotiator, so I must counter propose. I will participate in this extreme mountain challenge provided you will stick with me throughout the race and that you and I will hold hands as we cross the finish line together." "Agreed!" "Oh and Dan, remember those 5 km runs when you were young?" "Yes." "You should also remember that I carried you most of the way!" "Ha ha!" I looked online and read: "Tough Mudder events are hardcore 10-12 mile obstacle courses designed by British Special Forces to test your all around strength, stamina, mental grit, and camaraderie." Obstacles are lovingly named Arctic Enema, Underwater Tunnels, Ball Shrinker, Firewalker, Trench Warfare and the Mud Mile. Better get to boot camp. This is a big challenge.

Late June, in the cold mountain air at dawn, we are in the bullpen at the starting gate for Tough Mudder. I am nervous. Holy s-it, the average person here is half my age, this course is up and down the mountain, through snow, ice, miles of heavy mushy mud, 3+ m (10+ ft.) high flat faced walls to get over, ice cold water to swim through...! The Navy Seal type starter is yelling and the metal music is pounding to get us ramped up for a gruelling day. The starter yells through the bullhorn, "Look around you at the fifty people in this group. Your mission today is not to beat them. Your mission today is to make certain that everyone in this group completes the course." Heh, I am liking this more now.

And, sure enough, the challenge was very tough, the obstacles crazy, the mud oozed into my genetic structure and most everyone helped anyone else that needed help. With a very few exceptions and a few bypassed obstacles, we all completed the course. My son, the veteran of six, helped many in this first event in Canada. Just before the finish line is Electroshock Therapy



(where you run through up to 10,000 volts of electricity). As I steeled myself to get through, Dan grabbed my hand. After 20 km and 22 obstacles, we ran through the bare electrical wires and crossed the finish line together.

That day with Dan is now added to our great life memories. This picture is, also, a reminder that I/we can overcome great challenges. How do we overcome great challenges? By focusing on the future and by collaboration. Remember, the elite special military forces (like Canada's JTF2 and the American Navy SEALs) put collaboration and looking out for one another far above the individual's pursuits. They do this to make certain their missions are successful and everyone comes back healthy. In the old days, we are led to believe, lone rangers and cowboys were the heroes. In the world of today and tomorrow, the narrow sighted cowboys will likely be killed.

Canadian business is changing and finding ways to work together with many people, organizations and communities that appear on the surface to be our adversaries. Take a few moments to watch oil industry, environmental, aboriginal, community, and regulatory leaders in the video "Working Together" <http://savagemanage.com/videos.html>

This article is titled, "Tough Mudder and Sustainability." I use the Tough Mudder event as a metaphor for the challenges we are now facing as an industry, communities, Canada, and our planet. Yes, planet Earth is, has been and hopefully always will be, a "Tough Mother." Nature is far more powerful and resilient than mankind. The challenge we face today is that our human impacts in the past century, and increasingly today, are far more substantial than ever before in history. We must not miss the opportunity to come together, realize our connections, co-create solutions and create our future.

"We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." Benjamin Franklin.

What is changing?

1) Acting strategically rather than taking positions.

We waste time arguing about perspectives and demanding our own interests come first.

2) Decreasing sense of isolation.

We are all connected; let's act in ways that honour our environmental, physical and spiritual interconnections. Let's move from "us vs. them" to "we."

www.thinksustainability.ca

3) Sustainability is far more than environmental protection.

In many ways the strong focus on environmental issues has detracted from real sustainability.

Sustainability includes three pillars:

- a) Economic,
- b) Social, and
- c) Environmental.

These three pillars are completely connected. Without economic sustainability, environmental and social sustainability are diminished. We cannot separate what makes sense to generate wealth from what supports communities and preserves the environment. And the converse is true.

4) Sustainability is not only an expense.

Corporations are now seeing sustainability as a strategic advantage.

The 2012 Massachusetts Institute of Technology annual Sustainability and Innovation Global Executive Study reports that; "With the exception of industrial services and media, survey respondents have indicated that sustainability related plans have contributed to their company's profits. ...not making the business case for sustainability, but attempting such actions, results in a decrease in profits."

5) Social Responsibility is not a side issue.

For many years, Michael Porter of the Harvard Business School, was well known for his assertion that what is good for business is good for the community. Recently, his tune changed 180 degrees. Now Porter asserts; "What is good for communities is good for business." In the January 2011 Harvard Business Review, he states; "A big part of the problem lies with companies themselves, which remain trapped in an outdated approach to value creation that has emerged over the past few decades. They continue to view value creation narrowly, optimizing short-term financial performance in a bubble while missing the most important customer needs and ignoring the broader influences that determine their longer-term success. Government and civil society have often exacerbated the problem by attempting to address social weaknesses at the expense of business. The presumed trade-offs between economic efficiency and social progress have been institutionalized in decades of policy choices. Companies must take the lead in bringing business and society back together. The recognition is there among sophisticated

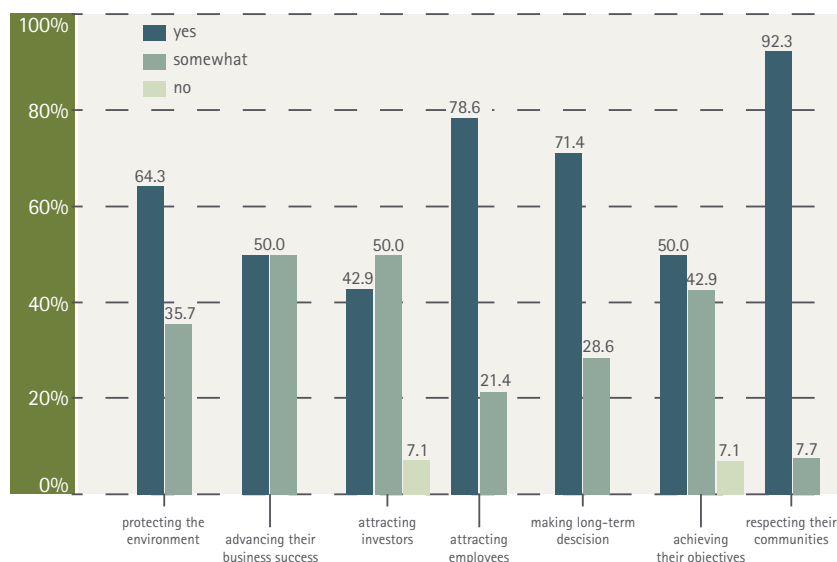
business and thought leaders, and promising elements of a new model are emerging. Yet we still lack an overall framework for guiding these efforts, and most companies remain stuck in a “social responsibility” mind-set in which societal issues are at the periphery, not the core. The solution lies in the principle of shared value, which involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges. Businesses must reconnect company success with social progress. Shared value is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success. It is not on the margin of what companies do but at the center. We believe that it can give rise to the next major transformation of business thinking.”

6) We see the link between our company and sustainability.

In his 2008 book, “The Necessary Revolution” Peter Senge, after many years working with multinational corporations like Coca Cola, Walmart, GE Ford, DuPont, Costco, Shell and IBM reports that:

- “There is significant money to be saved.
- There is significant money to be made.
- You can provide your customers with a competitive edge.
- Sustainability is a point of differentiation.
- You can shape the future of your industry. You can become a preferred supplier.
- You can change your image and brand.”

In Savage Management’s 2012 Survey on Leadership and Sustainability, participants told us a focus on sustainability helps their organization by:



7) We no longer wait for managers.

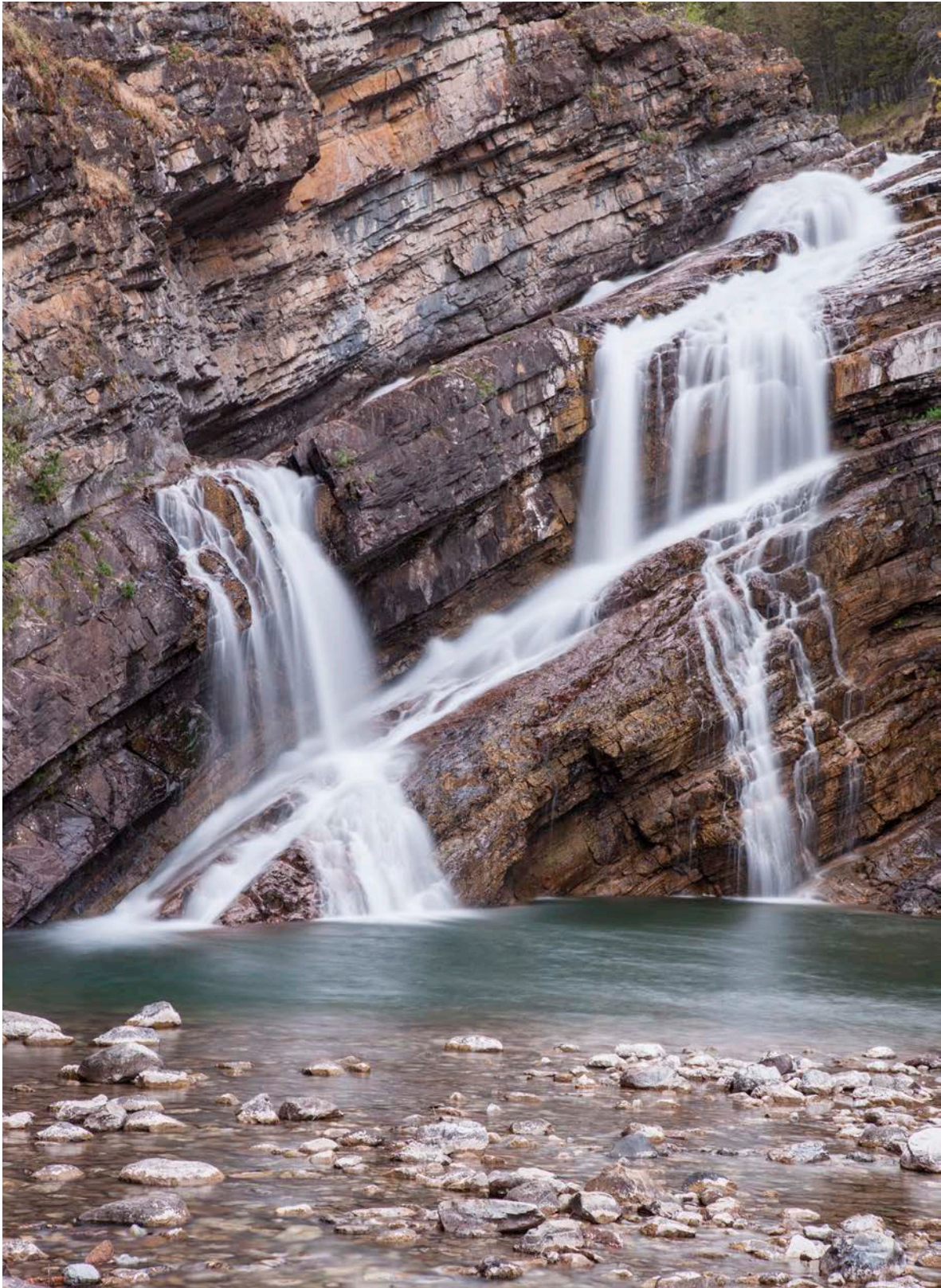
Increasingly the conception, collaboration and leadership on sustainability opportunities comes from all levels within organizations. People like you. People like you and your organization can collaborate and act in new ways that will vastly improve our impacts, how we are perceived around the world and move the pricing of our production from heavily discounted to a preferred supplier and much more.

Now look back at our metaphor of the Tough Mudder extreme mountain challenge. Remember what the strong man at the starting gate in Whistler said; “Look around you at the fifty people in this group. Your mission today is not to beat them. Your mission today is to make certain that everyone in this group completes the course.” This course is live and our future.

The walls are getting higher for business. We will make our organizations a more positive influence on future generations. We will do this through awareness, collaboration, co-creation, leadership, accountability and our focus on all three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental and social). We will profit from this shift. Our commitment is to educate, communicate and engage people at all levels of our organizations, industry and nation.

Will you participate in the extreme mountain challenge and opportunity? Will you be a bystander and nay-sayer? What are the consequences of both choices? Think about your family, community and our planet 50 years from now. And now make decisions on your projects, investments, brand, relationships and impacts in service of today and 50 years from today.

Together let’s move from self-interest and “Green Washing” to Gifting to our Future. How will you choose to have a more positive sustainable impact on your family, organization and community today and every day from now on? 💡



*Cameron Falls, Waterton National Park, AB
photo by Steve Speer*



SUSTAINABILITY... What does it mean to you?

Thinking about sustainability is good for business. It is a fact that companies who focus on sustainability, improve their bottom line, attract and retain better employees and are better connected to the communities in which they live and operate. Over 80% of CEOs say sustainability is important yet CFOs and management at investment decision points will often sacrifice sustainability to meet short term financial targets.

Let's meet to talk about how we can help you incorporate social responsibility into your corporate culture. Be engaged, be authentic; make sustainability part of your corporate credibility.

www.thinksustainability.ca

