



The Next Sustainability Wave: Building Boardroom Buy-in (Conscientious Commerce)

Bob Willard

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The idea of sustainability has been embraced enthusiastically by some businesses and rejected by others. The first wave of corporate converts to sustainability was perhaps driven by a public relations crisis, regulatory pressures or the founder's personal passion. The next wave, however, requires different drivers if it is to build a critical mass for corporate responsibility in the business community.

The Next Sustainability Wave assesses why companies have resisted sustainability strategies and focuses on two emerging drivers that promise to spur corporate commitment to sustainability strategies:

A compelling business case

A “perfect storm” of threatening market forces on the horizon that range from climate change to the rising demands of stakeholders

An effective carrot-and-stick duo, these two drivers are both triggering the need for change and providing a vision of business success if the transition to sustainable operations, products and services is smartly managed.

Emphasizing the importance of how sustainability is presented to corporate leaders—using the right language and avoiding threats to the status quo that provoke habitual corporate defense mechanisms—the book applies effective selling techniques to reposition sustainability strategies as a means to achieving existing corporate ends, rather than as a separate priority to worry about. It sells sustainability as a solution, a business strategy and a catalyst for business transformation. An appendix gives a version of the sustainability business case for small- to medium-level enterprises.

Designed for quick reading and reference—right pages furthering the argument, while left pages provide support materials—the book is especially useful for those wanting to convince busy executives and board members.

Bob Willard is a leading expert on the business value of corporate sustainability strategies and in the last two years has given over 100 keynote presentations to corporations, consultants, academics and nongovernmental organizations.

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