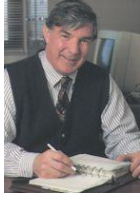


"Sustainability"-The Long View: The Importance for Your Company, Your Children, Their Children and Our Planet

Speakers:



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Room: Grand Coronado

Abstract:

Leading companies continuously improve performance through best practice strategy and operational efficiency. A trend that has grown in interest that has shown to impact strategy and operations is sustainability. Since the 1980's, business leaders used the word sustainability to mean a company's ability to steadily increase its earnings over time. However, currently sustainability is a broader concept that takes into account every dimension of the business. The growing number of publications, consultant offerings, university programs, and industry coalitions is testament to the interest in sustainability. While sustainability initiatives have numerous benefits, many are intended to reduce waste, differentiate products or services by making them more "green", improve employee morale, ensure adequate working environments, or some combination of the above. Despite its potential benefits, little is known about the extent to which firms engage in sustainability initiatives and the actual cost/benefit of these initiatives. In this context sustainability applies to the Triple Bottom Line concept that considers economics, environment, and social/cultural responsibilities of an enterprise.

The objective of this session is to provide an overview of the DBMA Longitudinal Sustainability research initiative. The outcome of the annual Sustainability Longitudinal Study is to provide a benchmark and assess best practices with a focus on the tradeoffs of economical and environmental opportunities. The session initially explains the DBM objectives that led to the launch of the Sustainability Longitudinal effort based on government guides- ISO 14001 using the model- Plan, Do, Check, and Act. Discussion of the design is followed with a summary of the preliminary findings based on the pilot survey conducted in spring 2010. The final session segment covers the launch and analysis plans for the full annual longitudinal study for the DBM SCLA member organizations.

The results of this Longitudinal Sustainability initiative are anticipated to benefit DBMA and its members from both an operational and promotional standpoint. Sustainability can no longer be viewed simply as a method used by niche firms to differentiate their products and services. The future of sustainability holds opportunities for organizations of all sizes to reduce their environmental impact while simultaneously improving the bottom line. The first step in beginning a sustainability program is ascertaining those actions that are of greatest benefit.