



LEADER OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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People live in groups and need a leader to lead their group and encourage them to achieve their goals. Those group leaders who are at the forefront unite group members around a common goal and increase their courage and strength. Sustainability leaders should possess specific characteristics to achieve sustainable development, and people who encourage and support activities aimed at discovering and developing creative, sustainable solutions, business models and practices that will make the world a better place are called balanced leaders.

Sustainable leadership puts priority on solid partners, a good atmosphere emphasized by the pleasure of colleagues and long-term achievements.

Business activities have a significant impact on the environment around the world, causing companies to consider how to combine strategy and behavior to achieve sustainability goals. Some of the benefits of sustainable leadership in corporate organizations include competitive advantage, improved corporate governance and corporate social responsibility, and improved financial performance. Sustainable leaders add value to all stakeholders and drive continuous improvement and innovation, which is an effective strategy for long-term success and maintaining a competitive advantage.

Additionally, organizations that implement sustainable leadership practices benefit from increased energy and resources, improved organizational image, lower employee turnover, increased community engagement, increased efficiency, and reduced expenses.

Sustainability is a central principle of sustainable leadership, and existing definitions of sustainable leadership emphasize many features and aspects that support the concept of sustainability. In this respect, although it is impossible to create a single definition, there are some basic similarities. Sustainable leadership is defined as one of the key forces influencing change or continuity in the long term.



A sustainable **leader** is someone who inspires and supports actions for a better world.

Sustainable **leaders** are people from all walks of life who are empowered to work with others to create lasting change in society.

In this respect, sustainable **leaders** often focus on complex social, economic and ecological problems. They demonstrate positive behaviors such as hope, courage, honesty and commitment.

According to the Sustainable Leadership Institute, sustainable **leaders** are professionals committed to driving change by increasing their self-awareness in interactions with the world around them. Sustainable leadership is defined as an endeavor that is accountable to individuals, communities and organizations through ethical assurance long-term profitability of a given venture.

Long-term action requires personal contributions, such as changing the way each person engages in the sustainability process. As a result, self-awareness transformation begins with the individual and then spreads to other levels such as team, business and community.

Globalization and increasing competition complicate lives, putting greater pressure on the system and causing leaders to lose sight of themselves in the face of chaos. Effective leadership requires new ideas, creative thinking and a more expressive and effective approach, in addition to existing knowledge, skills and competencies. Sustainable businesses require sustainable **leaders** in these times. Sustainable development requires **leaders** who can create policies, legislation and programs that enable social and organizational action while driving economic progress.

Being a sustainability **leader** involves truly participating in the process of implementing and making decisions with others in the interests of personal interest and common goals. **Leaders** Sustainability experts understand that paradoxes, inconsistencies and different points of view are part of healthy communication as they better understand how our complex environment works. They know that effort comes from differences, and the conflict that may arise has enormous potential for cognitive development. Instead of avoiding or "managing" conflict, they learn to analyze differences with others in a way that maximizes the likelihood of discovering, understanding, and solving problems.

Advancing sustainability depends on how **leaders** embrace, commit to, and champion the concept itself, and how they take care of themselves and those around them so that they can stick to their perceptions. Various researchers have suggested different characteristics and competencies that sustainable **leaders** must possess.

In this context, ten sustainable leadership skills have been defined as learning, empowering, adapting, developing, participating, connecting, reflecting, sustaining, humility, integrity and practice.

These features can be further extended. However, they are important for the leadership community and its ability to meet future threats to sustainable development. We must be prepared for the threats that will arise in the future, while meeting today's economic, environmental and social needs. Sustainability **leaders** have a passion for research and learning, are aware of calculated risks; they learn from their mistakes and tell others about what they discover in the process.

The characteristics of a sustainable **leader** are identified as personal characteristics of **leaders** in the sustainable development leadership model based on empirical evidence confirming

high correlation score between leadership and sustainable development. We distinguish the following characteristics of sustainable **leaders**:

- Caring/Moral Driven: Sustainable **leaders** are compassionate and ethical and are guided by a moral conscience that includes the moral foundations of sustainable growth (i.e. justice, ecology).
- Systems/Holistic Thinker: “Systems thinkers” can recognize the interdependence and interconnectedness of the entire system at all levels, as well as how small changes in the system affect the big picture. The most successful sustainability **leaders** are able to detect and balance a variety of challenges, including economic viability, customer satisfaction, job development and environmental control.
- Inquisitive/open: Sustainability **leaders** are open to new ideas and viewpoints, especially those willing to challenge conventional wisdom and economic growth strategies. **Leaders** in the field of sustainable development are especially eager to learn from intergenerational cooperation.
- Self-awareness/empathy: Sustainability **leaders** have high levels of “emotional intelligence,” which includes the ability to understand their own and others' emotions, truthfulness, personal integrity, and the ability to listen to others. Sustainability **leaders** should recognize that they will need to make a conscious effort to get themselves and their companies where they want to be in the future.
- Visionary/Brave: Sustainability **leaders** bring inspiration, creativity, positivism and courage to their professions. They are goal-oriented and able to connect emotions and vision with desires and reality. Balanced **leaders** must also have the confidence to take opportunities and pursue them without a map to follow beyond the one they create.

Sustainability **leaders** create opportunities for people to come together and formulate responses to discover, learn and prepare a realistic action plan to solve sustainability challenges. Instead of giving directions, sustainability **leaders** work with others to develop and implement actions.

