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Giving Green the Business: American Enterprises Break New Ground

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Giving
GREEN

The Business

American Enterprises
Break New Ground



**Courtesy of
The Belden Center
for
Private Enterprise Education**

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PREAMBLE

At the urging of our SIFE Business Advisory Board (BAB) Chairman and former SIFE Co-Captain, Brian Ford, this year, our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team focused our energies to help create economic opportunity for others on our campus, our community, and beyond, by assisting people in all walks of life to make more honest-to-goodness, cost-effective, and environmentally-sustainable decisions. We furthered the "Going Green" dialog and offered positive solutions by partnering with Harding University's newly-formed 2008-2009 Environment Conservation Task Force.

As Wal-Mart has taken the high ground on Eco-Advantage issues, demonstrated by the public commitment of their CEO at last summer's stockholders meeting, our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team members have developed our own Manifesto. We proclaim that we can all be effective stewards of the earth, by stressing values-based concern for eco-efficiency, and also enhancing the enterprise's bottom line: (1) by innovating; (2) by becoming more competitive; (3) by redesigning processes; (4) by developing cost-effective environmental strategies; (5) by delivering quality products at reasonable prices; and, of course, (6) by keeping cost below revenue.

With the growing initiatives for business people to explore viable ways to decrease their carbon footprints and conserve energy, there has never been a better time to consider switching from incandescent lighting to compact fluorescent lighting (CFL). Specifically, our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team, with the help of Sam's Club, donated CFL bulbs to a large, local apartment complex. Consumer's Union reports that CFL's are providing 9,000-plus hours of service life, versus 800 hours for older technology incandescent versions. The apartment complex owner pledged that future bulb replacements would also be energy

efficient. Our community can now see how protecting environmental sustainability can be a good business practice, when it saves money and improves efficiency, too.

Promoting an Eco-Advantage culture, initiative, and tactical strategy, our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team provided copies of our “Giving Green the Business—American Enterprise Breaks New Ground”—a 50-point checklist (being written) on cost-effective, earth-friendly, initiatives for enterprises and the individuals which work and shop with them. These Checklists were given to college students, alumni, campus visitors, consumers, libraries, small businesses, area schools, non-profit organizations, churches and academies, restaurants and factories, chambers of commerce, and civic clubs. We also shared with audiences tips on “How to Tell Green from Greenwashing (i.e., deceptive eco-friendly promotional claims),” along with independent websites for confirmation.

College students have come a long way from those Earth Day campus demonstrations of three decades ago. “Not in Use? Save the Juice!” is a program born at Harding 30 years ago during an energy crisis of yesteryear. Today, going beyond the textbooks and getting out of the classrooms, our SIFE @ Harding “Green Theme” approach urges individuals and organizations to conserve costly resources, prevent waste and pollution, and thereby create environmental sustainability. There is no shortage of useful ideas during these lean times (e.g., The National Restaurant Association, Connect Atlanta, the Alameda County Green Business Program, and George Washington University were especially helpful).

Americans of all stripes, and from blue and red states alike, finally get it: We didn’t inherit the environment from our parents. We are, in fact, borrowing the environment from our children and grandchildren. Our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team is putting the word

out that we of all generations have finally gotten together and figured it out: the environment has complementary components—the economy and the ecology. They stand or fall together.

In the past, outdated and inefficient technology was the villain when it came to waste and pollution (negative externalities, economists call them). Now, our SIFE @ Harding Economics Team goes on record: new and improved technology is heroically not only more efficient, but also less polluting (a positive externality of economic activity). This is, in fact, how any people, in any country, on any continent, at any point in our history, have been able to raise their standard of living.

So, the SIFE @ Harding Economics Team stands foursquare on the grounds that environmentally friendly economic decisions by enlightened Americans is positively affecting nothing less than, yes, the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. It turns out that good business is good business: Win-win!

1. Make sure doors close correctly, to reduce heating/cooling operation.
2. Open window blinds in winter to help warm and light interior.
3. Replace incandescent bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs.
4. Clean appliances regularly for more efficient operation.
5. Install energy curtains in freezer rooms.
6. Serve customers water upon request.
7. Run dishwashers, washing machines only when full.
8. Install low-flow toilets and repair leaky faucets, toilets.
9. Install motion detectors or timers for lighting.
10. Install a reflective roof, skylights and energy-efficient windows.
11. Recycle paper, plastic, glass, and aluminum.
12. Incorporate Green Business suggestion boxes and reward programs.
13. Inform all stakeholders about your business efforts to go green.
14. Offer facility tours to show what you are doing on site.
15. Highlight in newsletters what your business is doing to go green.

16. Encourage other businesses and consumers to engage in similar efforts.
17. Opt out of “junk” mail/direct mail at www.stopjunkmail.org
18. Use electronic forms whenever possible.
19. Use “sticky” fax directory notes.
20. Use e-mail instead of paper for notes.
21. Reuse envelopes for ongoing office communication.
22. Buy in bulk, and switch to products with minimal or no packaging.
23. Use energy efficient equipment (look for the Energy Star ® logo).
24. Turn off lights when not in use.
25. Convert to double pane energy-efficient windows, and seal windows and doors.
26. Install low-flow aerators on faucets.
27. Reduce or minimize sprinkler usage.
28. Install water efficient ground cover in landscaped areas.
29. Use cleaning products safe for employees, customers, and the environment.
30. Use the least toxic pest management products.
31. Utilize rechargeable batteries for appliances.

32. Do business with other “green” vendors.
33. Encourage ridesharing and mass transit.
34. Offer telecommuting and flexible work schedules.
35. Provide a commuter van or shuttle service, install bicycle parking and lockers.
36. Encourage employees to patronize services within walking distance.
37. Revise delivery routes for greater efficiency.
38. Recycle plastics, glass, magazines, and newspapers.
39. Reduce lighting and heat/air conditioning during non-business hours.
40. Use reusable, sanitizable items wherever possible instead of disposable.
41. Reuse plastic shopping bags instead of trash bags to dispose of trash.
42. Offer online gift certificates to save paper and fuel needed for delivery.
43. Shade glass windows in summer to reduce energy load on air conditioning.
44. Source retail items as close to home as possible.
45. Laminate posters with maps and campus information, and post in residence halls instead of distributing on paper.

46. Encourage students to pack items in reusable containers.
47. Designate recycling areas for those excess moving boxes.
48. Use low-flow shower heads and energy-efficient lighting in residence halls.
49. Promote notebooks made from recycled paper.
50. Encourage use of backpacks made of natural or recycled materials.