

Going Green at the Office

What ever happened to the good old days when the only people thinking green were **tie-dyed** hippies and tree-hugging nature lovers?

Well, what happened, if you ask me, is one too many years of strange weather. Some years it's too hot, other years too cold... I think most of us recognize that something is not quite right. And we've run out of both excuses and **scapegoats**.

Savvy companies realize that environmental awareness goes hand-in-hand with bottom line growth. But where to begin?

To start thinking green, companies should sit down and **plot out** in detail how their operations impact the environment. In other words, step up and measure their **environmental footprint**. By systematically examining its footprint, a company will hopefully begin to find ways to **mitigate** the negative consequences of its operations.

Finding a green solution is the name of the game, ultimately.

For office workers, thinking green might mean shutting off the computer at night – not because it saves the company 5 cents, but because it saves the environmental equivalent of cutting down a **mature-sized** tree. Print documents only when you need to and use the back side of used office paper whenever you can.

To the extent possible, companies should work with environmental experts to see how they can lower their energy consumption and to see how and where they can recycle. After all, enhancing energy and materials efficiency sounds like a winning green **equation**.

Recognizing the problem areas comes first, and then the hard part: finding real solutions that go beyond mere talk.

Glossary

environmental footprint

the environmental impact any company or entity makes as it performs any activity

equation

a situation that has two or more variable elements to be considered

mature-sized

having reached full natural growth or development

mitigate

make something less severe

plot out

make a plan of something

savvy

shrewd and well informed (informal)

scapegoat

somebody who is blamed for something that

someone else has done

tie-dyed

dyed using a dyeing

technique popular in the

1960s