The Sustainable Generation:
The Sky Future Leaders Study

Sky Future Leaders

Believe in better

Contents

sky **Future Leaders**

Believe in better

Chief Executive's foreword

Sustainability has become a common part of everyday business language. In recent years, more and more companies have recognised that sustainability offers the potential to make their operations more robust and efficient. They also understand that their future success is based on building valuable, long-term relationships with their customers. So they know it's important to be a responsible business and make a broader contribution to society.

Sky is no exception. We don't believe we have to choose between acting responsibly and being a successful commercial business. That's why we are committed to doing the right thing in our day-to-day business and to working with our people and our customers to play our part in the communities in which we operate. Through our Bigger Picture programme, we are working in three areas where we believe we can make a positive difference: helping to tackle climate change; improving lives through sport; and opening up the arts to more people.

But while we hear a lot from Chief Executives about the importance of sustainability, much less is known about what the business leaders of tomorrow think. That's why we undertook this research. We wanted to better understand their attitudes to some of the key issues, including how they think business today is performing on sustainability, whether they feel they're being equipped with the skills and knowledge they will need and what they themselves will do differently in the future.

At Sky, we are a company that believes in better. Even with our track-record of change, we know that standing still means going backwards. And we bring that desire for perpetual improvement to everything we do, including our approach to sustainability. So we also asked the people who will be leading our business in the future to take part.

The participants coined the phrase 'the sustainable generation' to describe themselves. It's certainly hugely encouraging that they're already engaged with sustainability and have a huge appetite for it to be a part of their careers. And by integrating sustainability into how businesses operate today, we can ensure our future leaders are ready to rise to the challenge, all our companies succeed and we can go on contributing to society, for many years to come.

Jeremy Darroch

Chief Executive, Sky

Introduction

This report presents the results of research undertaken by Sky to determine the attitudes and aspirations of the UK's next generation of business leaders towards sustainability.

The study is based on research undertaken by market research agency Populus, who interviewed 751 graduate trainees, current and recently graduated MBA students, and high potential middle managers earmarked for leadership positions.

Participants were recruited via social media networks and existing market research panels. The Association of MBAs, the international authority on postgraduate business education, secured responses from MBA students studying both full and part-time degrees.

Populus conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 20 participants, all of whom had completed the initial online survey.

In order to gain greater insight from all three groups of participants, a workshop was held in London for 11 future leaders. Business and sustainability experts including Sir Paul Judge (Chairman, Association of MBAs) and James Goodman (Deputy Director, Forum for the Future) joined the discussion.

Throughout all stages of the research, sustainability was referred to as "a process which involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society and the environment by addressing their needs and challenges."

The research was conducted between September and November 2011.

> A process which involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society and the environment by addressing their needs and challenges.
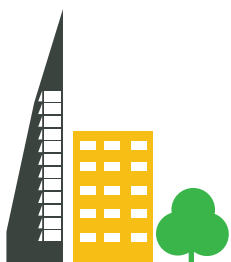
Key findings

Tomorrow's business leaders identify themselves as the first 'sustainable generation'. This is based on:

– the exposure they've had to sustainability, having grown up with issues like environmental protection and social responsibility in their lives and in the media;
– a personal belief that the environment and contributing to society are important;
– 69% of participants saying their personal beliefs affect which companies they trust and use themselves;
– 79% citing the vision and values of a company as an important factor when looking at potential employers;
– and 34% saying that creating social and environmental value through business is an important career goal.

As well as in their personal lives, they also believe that sustainability is important to business:

– 70% of participants agree that sustainability can create new opportunities for business;
– just 21% believe that sustainability has to come at the expense of profit;
– as well as new business opportunities, sustainability also offers the potential to achieve cost savings;
– 67% of respondents agree that sustainability can help differentiate start-ups;
– 66% believe difficult economic conditions should not be an excuse for businesses to ignore sustainability;
– and while international competitiveness, a failure to innovate and the need to reduce the UK's deficit are identified as the most pressing challenges facing businesses now and in the future, climate change is the fastest-growing threat.

The sustainable generation has mixed views on current UK business sustainability performance:

– 78% of participants recognise that companies in the UK are making a real effort to address sustainability;
– only 3% believe that companies are succeeding in fully integrating sustainability;
– 32% believe that businesses communicate their sustainability policies and initiatives well enough internally to employees and 31% well enough externally to customers;
– just 15% credit businesses with doing enough on the environment and 13% to support local communities;

– 62% cite an unwillingness or inability to pay for sustainable products and services as a barrier to progress;
– 62% also say other business priorities being seen as more important is a barrier;
– and 32% of middle managers, 30% of graduate trainees and 18% of MBA students believe businesses that claim to have a social purpose beyond creating profit.

Members of the sustainable generation are keen to help move the sustainability agenda forward:

– 96% of respondents plan on being involved with sustainability in their careers;
– 72% credit their employer or business school with encouraging them to take a long-term view;
– as well as commercial benefits, sustainability can help address external pressures and help them as individuals to stand out in their careers;
– but just 35% feel they have received sufficient sustainability training from their business school or employer;
– and 26% cite university reforms and access to higher education as a key threat to UK business in 5-10 years time.

And they have a five-point plan on how they will address sustainability once they reach senior executive positions themselves:

1. Improve employee engagement – create a culture that harnesses employees' creativity and empowers them to drive sustainability initiatives forward;
2. Collaborate even with competitors – businesses should take collective responsibility by sharing best practice and helping each other to act more sustainably;
3. Take responsibility for the supply chain – understand the supply chain to mitigate risk and help other companies improve;
4. Integrate sustainability into values and decisions – make sustainability part of everything a business does by embedding it in its values;
5. Use new technology – be an early adopter but don't just rely on technology alone.

Stats at a glance

69% More than two thirds believe that a company's values and ethics are essential in building personal trust in a business

79% cite the vision and values of a company as an important factor when looking at potential employers

TRANSPARENT SUPPLY CHAIN

COMMUNITY LINKS

HONESTY

VISION

INTEGRITY

Section 1

What is the sustainable generation?

34% A third cite creating social and environmental value through business as an important career goal

The Sustaina

9

see themselves in sustainability

70% agree that pressure to act sustainability presents new opportunities for businesses

12% increase in percentage points of future leaders identifying climate change as a key threat to business in 5 – 10 years' time

21% believe that sustainability and profit come at the expense of the other

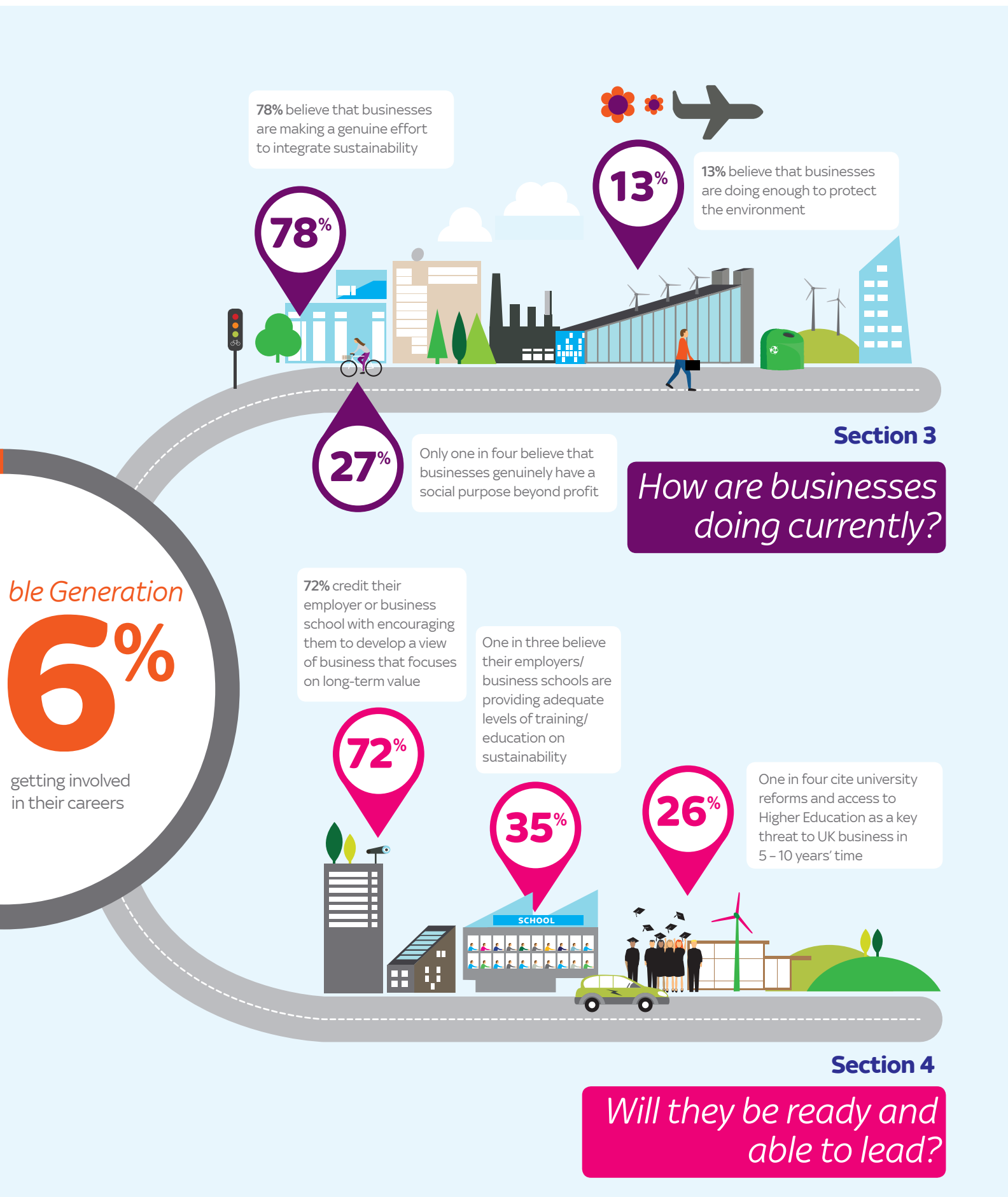**66%** believe sustainability must remain a priority in a downturn

70%

12%

$ € £

21%

66%

Section 2

Do they believe sustainability makes good business sense?

78% believe that businesses are making a genuine effort to integrate sustainability

78%

13%

13% believe that businesses are doing enough to protect the environment

Section 3

How are businesses doing currently?

27% Only one in four believe that businesses genuinely have a social purpose beyond profit

ble Generation

6%

getting involved in their careers

72% credit their employer or business school with encouraging them to develop a view of business that focuses on long-term value

72%

One in three believe their employers/ business schools are providing adequate levels of training/ education on sustainability

35%

SCHOOL

26%

One in four cite university reforms and access to Higher Education as a key threat to UK business in 5 – 10 years' time

Section 4

Will they be ready and able to lead?

Section 1

What is the sustainable generation?

Future leaders who took part in this study readily identify themselves as the first 'sustainable generation'. This stems from the exposure this group has had to issues like environmental protection and social responsibility. Having grown up with them in their lives and in the media, they feel knowledgeable about, and comfortable with, sustainability.

One graduate trainee explained: "If you think about things like recycling, Blue Peter were doing campaigns about it in the 80s and it was starting to get going then, but now it's mainstream."

A range of definitions are used by participants to define sustainability, and they greatly influence how they think about the issues. Fundamental to the majority of definitions given are the responsible use of environmental resources and a need to plan for the future. The societal and business aspects of sustainability are less commonly included. Above all else, sustainability appears to be synonymous with environmental matters like reducing carbon footprints, cutting pollution and recycling.

This reflects their personal commitment to environmental issues and social responsibility and, in turn, influences how they judge current business sustainability performance and the challenges they plan to address once they reach leadership positions.

Impact on trust and purchasing decisions

The personal beliefs of future leaders affect more than just how they think about business sustainability; they also influence the decisions they make about which companies to do business with.

The ethics and values of a company were cited by more than two thirds (69%) of respondents as essential in building their trust in a business – behind only quality of product and customer service (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
Which of the following is essential in building your personal trust in a business?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

1	84%
2	71%
3	69%
4	43%
5	32%

1 Quality of product/service
2 Customer service
3 The company's values and ethics
4 The company's reputation for being a good employer
5 Financial track-record

Importantly, good sustainability credentials also appear to impact directly on purchasing decisions. As one graduate trainee explained: "If a company takes its responsibilities more seriously, I personally would be more likely to use their products or services."

Tomorrow's business leaders also appear to be demanding consumers. One middle manager remarked: "For me, it really is a case of 'actions speak louder than words'. I want to see what a business is doing, see real evidence and if I do it does change how I view them."

69%

More than two thirds believe that a company's values and ethics are essential in building personal trust in a business

79%

79% cite the vision and values of a company as an important factor when looking at potential employers

Barriers to personal action

Despite their strong personal convictions, many of the next generation of business leaders admit to feeling unable to fully act on their personal views about sustainability.

Three specific barriers are identified. First, sustainable products and services often cost more, at least in the short-term. Second, there can be an absence of reliable information about what the most sustainable products are. Third, participants face the same difficulties as the rest of the country in juggling their work, family and personal lives.

Professional ambitions and personal beliefs

Having expressed a strong personal commitment to sustainability, 79% of participants identified the vision and values of a company as an important factor when considering potential employers.

But they also take a pragmatic approach towards the most important factors. Job satisfaction, promotion prospects and the financial package are all ranked ahead of vision and values, and well ahead of an impressive sustainability record (see Table 2).

When discussing overall career goals, creating social and environmental value (34%) is ranked ahead of the chance to work internationally (30%), but well behind job satisfaction (84%) and work life balance (78%) (see Table 3).

There is significant variation between the three different groups of participants. For MBA students, creating social and environmental value ranks third in their career goals, which makes it more important to them than quick financial gain. For graduates and middle managers, the same option was ranked lowest on the list provided, although more than a quarter of each group do still say this is important to them.

TABLE 3
Which of the following are your most important career goals?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

	Graduates	MBAs	Middle Managers	Average
Achieving a high level of job satisfaction	82%	83%	86%	**84%**
Achieving a good work-life balance	75%	75%	84%	**78%**
Achieving career progression quickly	50%	39%	29%	**39%**
Quickly increasing your salary/bonuses	37%	27%	40%	**35%**
Creating social and environmental value through business	27%	46%	29%	**34%**
Working internationally	31%	29%	29%	**30%**

TABLE 2
When considering potential employers, how important is each of the following?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

	Graduates	MBAs	Middle Managers	Average
Job satisfaction	93%	96%	95%	**95%**
Prospects for promotion / development within the company	89%	91%	81%	**87%**
Pay and benefits package	86%	86%	92%	**88%**
The vision/values of the company	75%	84%	77%	**79%**
Opportunities to shape the values of the company	51%	77%	70%	**66%**
An impressive sustainability record	37%	50%	36%	**41%**
International travel	35%	30%	35%	**33%**

Section 2

Do they believe sustainability makes good business sense?

As well as a personal belief in its importance, the sustainable generation also see a strong business case for sustainability.

70% of participants agree that pressure to act sustainably presents new opportunities for businesses. "This isn't complex business theory. Lots of consumers are concerned about sustainability and are prepared to pay for it, so it makes sense for businesses to meet that need," said one MBA student.

Alongside this, future leaders also raise the potential for sustainability to pave the way for cost savings and efficiencies, such as taking steps to minimise environmental impact by reducing energy consumption.

Consequently, respondents stress that those businesses that aren't acting sustainably will be left behind. As one middle manager put it, "If you're not measuring sustainability, then you're at a competitive disadvantage."

As well as the commercial benefits that a company might enjoy, future leaders also recognise other reasons for businesses to engage in sustainability, such as pressure from external stakeholders.

70%

Agree that pressure to act sustainably presents new opportunities for businesses

66%

Believe sustainability must remain a priority in a downturn

No one is exempt

The business case for sustainability is not diminished by the size of company or the economic conditions it is operating in.

Two thirds (67%) of respondents agree that sustainability can help differentiate start-ups and attract initial customers early on.

A very similar amount (66%) of respondents believe that the recent economic downturn does not mean businesses should completely lose sight of sustainability, 73% agree that acting sustainably can help drive customer loyalty and trust during the economic downturn.

> ❝
> Although there has been an economic downturn for the last two to three years, most companies are still focusing on sustainability … because it is a priority for the customers.
> ❞
>
> MBA student

Challenges facing UK business now and in the future

The business case is also reflected when tomorrow's business leaders were asked to identify the most pressing threats facing UK companies now and in the future.

When asked to consider a range of possible issues now and in 5-10 years, the three most pressing challenges identified are the same – international competitiveness, a failure to innovative and the need to reduce the country's deficit (see Table 4).

But the number identifying climate change increases almost threefold from 7% to 19%, which makes it the fasting growing challenge facing business.

The second fastest growing challenge is the impact of university reforms, which increased from 18% to 26%. One graduate trainee asserted: "The number and breadth of people going to university will decrease and this will affect the range of people going into business."

Both climate change and education reform remain some way behind the most pressing challenges. But many participants do not view the threats faced by business in isolation and readily draw links between them. One middle manager explained: "If you haven't got an educated workforce, you can't innovate. If labour costs are too high, your business becomes uncompetitive relative to international rivals."

TABLE 4
Which of the following poses the greatest threat to UK business today and in the next 5-10 years?

Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

	Now	In 5-10 years	Increase in % points
International competitiveness	63%	70%	+7%
Failure to innovate	63%	63%	–
The need to reduce the country's deficit	55%	41%	-14%
Regulation	42%	37%	-5%
Domestic labour costs	38%	35%	-3%
University reforms and impact on access to higher education	18%	26%	+8%
Climate change	7%	19%	+12%

21%

Believe that sustainability and profit come at the expense of the other

12%

Increase in percentage points of future leaders identifying climate change as a key threat to business in 5 – 10 years' time

Section 3

How are businesses doing currently?

More than three quarters (78%) of the sustainable generation believe the UK business community is, on the whole, making a genuine effort to integrate sustainability (see Table 5).

But they are less positive about the results so far. Only 3% of future leaders believe businesses are fully succeeding. Common criticisms include taking too long to act, limiting sustainability only to premium products or services and choosing to tackle certain aspects of sustainability while ignoring others.

" There is this term 'greenwash' and I do worry most businesses talk a better game on sustainability than they actually deliver. "

MBA student

TABLE 5
To what extent do you agree with the following statements about current business sustainability performance?
Respondents answering agree or strongly agree

1	3%
2	59%
3	16%
4	20%
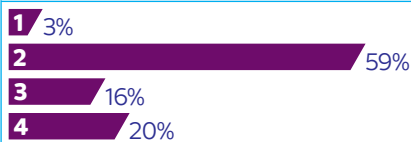
1 Businesses are working very hard and succeeding in their efforts to integrate sustainability into the business
2 Businesses are making an effort to integrate sustainability into the business with some success
3 Businesses are trying but failing to integrate sustainability into the business
4 Businesses are not making enough effort to integrate sustainability into the business

Go Green

78%

Believe that businesses are making a genuine effort to integrate sustainability

A breakdown in communication?

Furthermore, the sustainable generation points to a clear gap between words and actions.

Just under a third of participants believe that businesses communicate well enough about their sustainability programmes internally to employees (32%) and externally to customers and the public (31%). Less than half this amount (15%) believe businesses are doing enough to support local communities, while just 13% say they are doing enough to protect the environment (see Table 6).

This point was reinforced by a suggestion that businesses might be selective or, even, deliberately misleading in the way they talk about their sustainability performance. "You hear a lot about the headline initiatives, but less about how they are being measured, how long they take or what the starting point is," said one middle manager.

TABLE 6
To what extent do you agree with the following statements about business communications and performance around sustainability?
Respondents answering agree or strongly agree

1	32%
2	31%
3	15%
4	13%
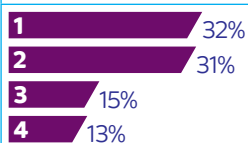
1 Businesses tell employees enough about their sustainability programmes
2 Businesses tell consumers enough about their sustainability programmes
3 Businesses are doing enough to support local communities
4 Businesses are doing enough to protect the environment

The barriers to sustainability

When asked to consider why businesses might not be performing as well as they expect, they admit that the main reasons are most likely to be cost related.

Just under two thirds (62%) of participants rate an unwillingness or inability on the part of consumers and clients to pay for sustainable products and services (see Table 7). One middle manager added: "I think a significant proportion of the country simply do not have the option of choice when it comes to paying a premium for sustainable products."

60% of future leaders believe that it can still be difficult for businesses to prove the bottom line value of investing in social, ethical and environmental initiatives.

Alongside this, almost two thirds (62%) of participants believe other business priorities are still seen as more important than sustainability, while 43% cite failure to integrate sustainability into all parts of the business as a barrier to progress.

One MBA student questioned whether dedicated sustainability or corporate reputation teams are the best way of integrating sustainability across a business.

TABLE 7
Which of the following are the most significant barriers to sustainability?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

Other business priorities seen as more important	62%
Consumer unwillingness to pay more for environmentally and socially responsible products/services	62%
Difficulty of proving the bottom line value of investing in social, ethical and environmental responsibilities	60%
Difficulty of fully integrating sustainability into all parts of the business	43%
Consumer indifference to social, ethical and environmental issues	25%
Insufficient education/training provided to staff to address sustainability issues	23%
Lack of employee engagement	19%

27%

Only 1 in 4 believe that businesses genuinely have a social purpose beyond profit

Do motives matter?

Participants believe that business will only succeed in fully integrating sustainability if it is part of its values. One middle manager claimed: "If you're just [addressing sustainability] for a quick win, the long-term gain is going to be significantly less than if you incorporate it into the ethos of your business."

Under a fifth of MBA students (18%) believe that businesses that claim to have a social purpose beyond making profit do so because they genuinely believe it to be true, compared to around a third of graduate trainees (30%) and middle managers (32%) (see Table 8).

Conversely, when asked whether motives or actions matter more, the majority argue that the acid test is what a company actually does.

Those who claim that motives matter more appear to do so out of a concern that, so long as businesses respond only to customer demand, they could quickly stop environmental or social initiatives if their customers switch their attention elsewhere.

TABLE 8

Many businesses claim to have a social purpose beyond creating profit. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Respondents answering agree or strongly agree

	Graduates	MBAs	Middle Managers	**Average**
To improve their reputation	87%	88%	82%	**86%**
To win customers	75%	78%	75%	**76%**
Media pressure	59%	52%	49%	**53%**
To placate regulators	38%	40%	42%	**40%**
To placate NGOs	30%	29%	26%	**28%**
Because they genuinely believe it to be true	30%	18%	32%	**27%**

Section 4

Will they be ready and able to lead?

Virtually all (96%) members of the sustainable generation plan on being involved with sustainability during their careers. Of these, 40% say they will take a proactive role in driving sustainability, while 54% say they intend to support the action of others.

While some are motivated by their personal convictions, others recognise the combination of the business case for sustainability, the growing significance of climate change as a challenge facing business and pressure from a range of different sources in the future. Government and regulators (66%), customers (56%) and competitors (44%) are expected to be the leading sources of pressure (see Table 9).

As a result, members of the sustainable generation understand that developing experience and expertise in sustainability will help their own career progression by making them stand out.

TABLE 9
Which of the following is most likely to pressure businesses into being more sustainable in the future?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

1	66%
2	56%
3	44%
4	37%
5	25%
6	22%
7	21%
8	14%
9	10%

1 Government/regulators
2 Customers
3 Competitors
4 Media
5 Shareholders
6 Technology advances
7 Climate change
8 Employees
9 NGOs

"
If your company is saying that they want to be sustainable, then marking yourself out as someone who's a bit different and interested in it is important in terms of your progression.
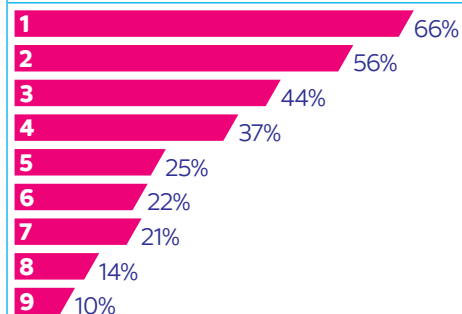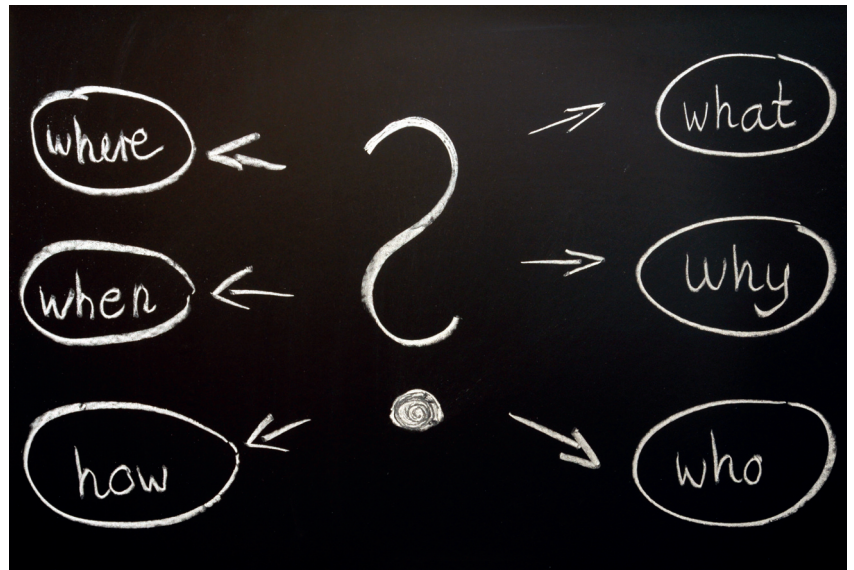"

MBA student

72%

Credit their employer or business school with encouraging them to develop a view of business that focuses on long-term value

> ❝
>
> I know what my company does on sustainability. We get asked to volunteer or receive e-mails about the recycling policy, but I don't really know why we do it or what's behind the decisions my company takes.
>
> ❞
>
> Graduate trainee

Formal training in sustainability can be improved…

All three of the groups surveyed believe they already possess a good awareness of the issues around sustainability. They attribute this to a range of different sources, including the basic information they receive from the media, as well as their business schools and employers.

But the level of awareness about what their company does falls when it goes beyond basic information. 46% of participants understand the rationale behind their company's sustainability work, while just 30% know how the policies and initiatives are measured.

Participants have similar views about the formal training that they receive. Just one in three (35%) feel they have been given sufficient sustainability training by their employer or business school (see Table 10).

For many current MBA students, dedicated tuition on sustainability does not feature heavily in their business courses. As one MBA student explained: "I opted to study an elective that covered sustainability, but not everyone on the course did. There is some teaching in the core parts of the course, but not a huge amount."

Looking ahead, over a quarter (26%) of participants believe higher education reforms and access will be a pressing threat to UK business.
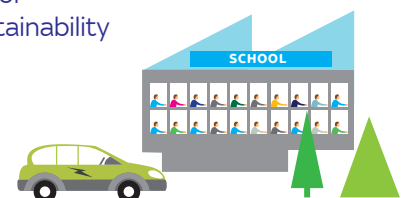
TABLE 10

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your employer/business school?

Respondents answering agree or strongly agree

	Graduates	MBAs	Middle Managers	**Average**
My employer/MBA course encourages me to develop a view of business that focuses on long-term value	68%	88%	61%	**72%**
My employer/MBA course includes sufficient training/teaching on sustainability issues	30%	47%	29%	**35%**
Teachings on sustainability are integrated into the core curriculum of my MBA course	–	54%	–	**–**

35%

One in three believe their employers/business schools are providing adequate levels of training/education on sustainability

> ❝
> **The initial work on establishing sustainability as something worth tackling has already been done. My role will be to expand what my company does.**
> ❞

Middle Manager

… but future leaders are confident in their ability to lead

Despite the room to improve communication and training on sustainability, the sustainable generation remains confident in its ability to lead in the future. There are three main reasons for this.

First, participants believe that basic awareness of sustainability isn't something that needs to be formally taught. One middle manager explained: "It isn't an area I've ever received any formal training on, it's just something I've picked up." Many other respondents agreed. "With young leaders coming through, growing up with sustainability is much more part of their lives," said a graduate trainee.

Second, they see a strong business case for sustainability and are confident in their ability to take a long-term view. Almost three quarters of participants (72%) – rising to 88% of MBA students – credit their employers and business schools with encouraging them to develop a view of business that focuses on long-term value (see Table 10). One graduate trainee said: "The scheme I'm on definitely lets me get involved in different parts of the company and to see how it all fits together and where it is going."

Third, while they expect to be able to go further themselves in the future, a number of future leaders remarked that much of the groundwork is being done today and led by today's CEOs.

> ❝
> **Sustainability is definitely an area I see myself getting involved with. I see it as a growth area and think there will be growing demand for people with relevant experience and expertise in it.**
> ❞

Graduate trainee

26%

1 in 4 cite university reforms and access to higher education as a key threat to UK business in 5 – 10 years' time
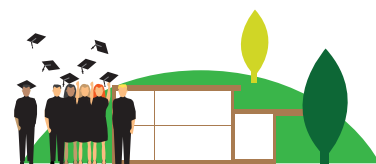
Section 5

How will they be more sustainable?

The sustainable generation is ready and willing to drive sustainability forward but what will its members do differently when they take the reins?

TABLE 11
Which of the following would you do differently to current business leaders when addressing sustainability?
Respondents identifying each factor in their top three choices

	Graduates	MBAs	Middle Managers	Average
Increase employee engagement	46%	48%	57%	**50%**
Increase collaboration with industry peers to address sustainability challenges	42%	53%	38%	**44%**
Integrate sustainability into all decision making	38%	47%	44%	**43%**
Be quicker to adopt new technologies	47%	31%	38%	**39%**
Provide more education/ training on sustainability issues	38%	38%	39%	**38%**
Be more transparent about your company's sustainability record	27%	35%	28%	**30%**
Introduce mandatory targets/objectives to ensure action	33%	20%	33%	**29%**
Take advantage of social media	26%	20%	18%	**21%**

Using the four most popular responses (see Table 11) and a further response that emerged very strongly during the follow-up discussions, there are five key actions that participants say they intend to take themselves to address sustainability when they reach leadership positions.

66

You've also got to have internal processes whereby you can draw on the skills, knowledge and passion of your employees because quite often they can instigate the biggest change.

99

Middle Manager

Five-point plan

1. Improve employee engagement

Half (50%) of all future leaders – including 57% of middle managers, who have the most direct experience in the workplace – plan to improve employee engagement and, in doing so, create a culture that thinks sustainably.

Participants cite two main benefits of this approach. First, better informed and engaged employees are more likely to help implement sustainability policies. Second, they believe that employees will have new ideas for change that business will be able to tap into.

2. Collaborate, even with competitors

Beyond sourcing ideas from within a business, almost half (44%) of tomorrow's business leaders see greater collaboration across industry as an important way to address sustainability. Having studied a range of businesses and business models, MBA students are particularly keen to collaborate (53%) in order to join the dots and share best practice.

Respondents also argue that businesses have a collective responsibility to share how they're tackling sustainability, even if it means telling their competitors what is giving them a competitive advantage.

3. Take responsibility for your supply chain

One aspect of collaboration that emerged particularly strongly during follow-up discussion was how businesses can work with supply chains to improve their own sustainability and help their suppliers do the same.

The importance of understanding the businesses that make up your supply chain is a vital part of choosing the right suppliers to work with. As one middle manager explained: "I do think sustainability has changed relationships with suppliers. You don't want to find that you're working with a company that exposes you to risk and so you do need to develop more knowledge of their business."

66

If I were a leader in a business now, I would be more inclined to look at everything we do and try to see where sustainability fits, rather than treating it as this standalone issue.

Graduate trainee

66

There is no point in performing well if your suppliers are running a sweatshop or making deliveries in a fleet of grubby old vehicles.

Graduate trainee

4. Integrate sustainability into values and decisions

The same proportion (43%) of participants that believe UK business is failing to integrate sustainability into all decision making also plan to place sustainability at the heart of their organisation's values.

Participants believe that an element of genuine belief is needed if sustainability is to become part of a business's values.

5. Use new technology

The sustainable generation is optimistic that new technology will present new opportunities to improve business performance on sustainability.

The most optimistic are those on graduate training schemes, almost half (47%) of whom plan to harness technological innovations in the future.

A number of MBA students and middle managers feel relying on new technology alone should come with a health warning as new technological solutions will not necessarily emerge quickly enough nor provide a quick fix. As one MBA student commented: "Just because there might be technology to address certain problems in the future, there is no room for complacency."

> Sustainability isn't just a business issue, it impacts on everyone. If one company comes up with a way to reduce an impact, it makes sense to share that with other organisations for the benefit of society.

Graduate trainee

> We've seen technology tackle remarkable problems in the past. I think we'll see something similar in the future for business and the environment.

Graduate trainee

96%

See themselves being involved with sustainability during their career

You can find out more about what Sky is doing to be a responsible company and how we are making a contribution by reading the full Bigger Picture Review 2011.

www.sky.com/thebiggerpictureview2011

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