

Green Steps



*Sustainability Training
and Consultancy*

Green Steps Program

Bridging the gap between sustainability theory and
practice in organisations

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Presentation outline

- Overviews
- A brief history
- Bridging the gap
- Program structure
 - Training
 - Work Placements
- Introducing....the Steppers
- The program today
- Looking ahead



Monash Sustainability Institute (MSI) - overview

- Previously the Monash Environment Institute
- Director - Professor Dave Griggs (former Director, UK Met Office Hadley Centre and part of IPCC)
- Chair of Board – John Thwaites (former Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Environment)
- Three main areas:
 - Research (cross discipline)
 - Education and training (Green Steps and other)
 - Action projects (TBL reporting for Monash)



Green Steps - overview

- Sustainability training and work placement program for university students
- Focus on organisational sustainability
- Developed by MSI in partnership with Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA)
- Delivered in partnership with host universities around Australia



Introducing.... the Steppers

- Joan Ko
- Dan Adams
- Emma Anglesey



Once upon a time... (in the year 2000)

- Monash students wanting to engage business in sustainability (former activists)
- Sustainability theory needed to be translated in practice
- Gap in practical skills and resources needed to be effective 'change agent'



The gap?

Requirements to be effective

professional skills

work experience

contacts

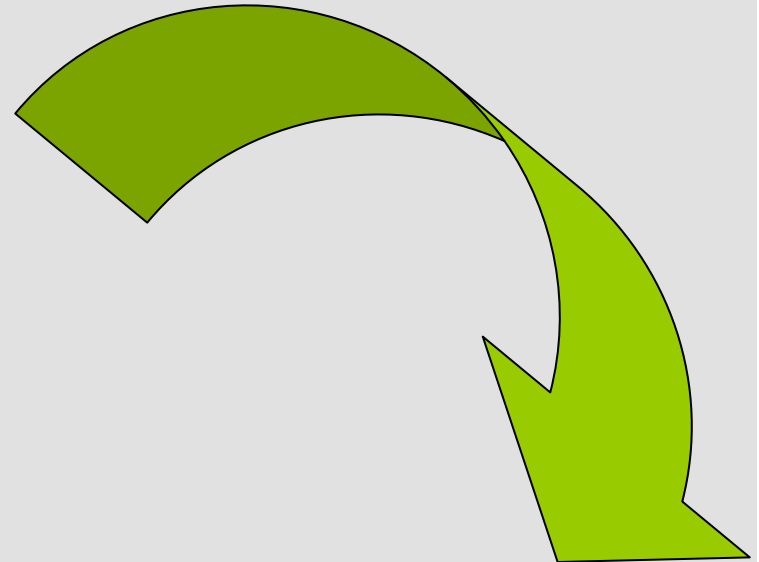
passion

enviro knowledge

confidence

Main focus of
university education

Environmental change in
organisations



What are the consequences?

- Students ill-equipped to be effective at work
- Limited success in sustainability projects
- Sustainability continues to be low priority
- Negative impact on skills & morale
- Young passionate environmentalists may move away from sustainability sector and into other industries



Green Steps – bridging the gap

- Initiated by Monash students in 2000
- Translate environmentalism to effective action by providing:
 - new skills and knowledge,
 - work experience
 - supportive network
- Promote sustainability within organisations by providing skilled and passionate ‘change agents’
- Enhance student employability in sustainability sector, and link them to professional networks
- Create future environmental leaders
- Provide ‘green’ skills to job markets



Program structure

- Students apply to program and are selected
- Intake limited to 12-14 students per course
- Free of charge for students, extra-curricular
- Students come from all academic disciplines (under- and post-graduates)
- Partner university hosts course (usually only for its students)
- MSI delivers training, host university organises placements



Program structure

- Two main phases:
 1. Training
 2. Work placements



Phase 1: Training

- 30 hours intensive (usually over two long weekends)
- Training content:
 - Waste, water and energy auditing (carbon accounting)
 - Interviewing/conducting surveys
 - Communicating data to promote change
 - Organisational environmentalism
 - General presentation skills
 - Negotiation skills
 - Problem mapping
 - Understanding behavioural change



Training approach

- Workshop based, extremely interactive training sessions
- ‘Stand and deliver’ minimised
- Small groups
- Focus on group learning and participation
- Trainers - experienced sustainability practitioners
- Internal project within host university to practice new skills



Phase 2: Work Placements

- Paid work placement
- 12 days – usually during summer holidays
- Students work on real sustainability projects
- Wide range of organisations act as hosts:
 - Private business (Banks, energy providers, retailers, manufacturers)
 - Government - federal, state, local councils
 - Schools
 - Not for profit organisations
- ‘Hands off’ management and mentoring style for placements
- Often supported by summer workshops



Work Placements

- Typical Placement Projects:
 - Conduct environmental assessments – energy and water use, waste production, GHG emissions
 - Establish a ‘Green Office Program’ style staff engagement program
 - Assist with sustainability reporting
 - Implement an Environmental Management System
 - Research green procurement options
 - And a whole lot more....



Outcomes for Steppers

- Participation in recognised training program (WIL)
- Chance to translate theory to practice
- Experience sustainability change management in organisations, 'make a difference'
- Valuable contacts in sustainability sector
- Foot in the door with potential employers
- Part of growing network of young sustainability practitioners



The program today

- 8 courses running in 2008:
 - Australian National University (Canberra)
 - Curtin University of Technology (Perth)
 - Flinders University (Adelaide)
 - Griffith University (Brisbane)
 - Macquarie University (Sydney)
 - Monash University (Melbourne) – 3 courses
- Continued funding through DEWHA
- Organisations charged for placements



Some program outcomes

- Over 400 alumni by the end of 2008
- Over 300 organisations engaged through sustainability work placements
- >65% of graduates still involved in sustainability work
- >40% of placements resulted in further work



Looking ahead

- Green Steps @ Work
- 10th year program anniversary
- A New Zealand program?



Thanks and Questions?

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www.monash.edu.au/research/sustainability-institute/green-steps/

