THE CHALLENGE OF BALANCING ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Balancing environmental sustainability with the economic realities' businesses face has become a daunting task for both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations world-wide. This paper will explore some of the challenges and opportunities facing these organizations, as well as some of the difficult strategic decisions that are going to need to be made that will have serious repercussions for people, companies, and society as a whole. In examining the literature and the practical realities of sustainability, and the existing pressures most businesses are facing today, the goal of this paper is to seek how we can improve corporate economic performance while at the same time moving toward environmental sustainability.

***Keywords**: Environmental sustainability; economic sustainability; strategic choices; restructuring organizations; organizational change; organizational decision-making; Stinson organizational wellness model.*

1. INTRODUCTION

While it has probably never been easy to run a company, the complexity and volume of issues facing organizations in this post-pandemic age can be somewhat overwhelming for both employees and management alike. No sooner have organizations of all types and sizes managed to survive the scathing impact of the world-wide pandemic, they now face an uncertain future which includes wars, recessions, high interest rates, and the like. In addition, these companies and organizations face an incessant pressure from governments and the public, more widely, and the environmental groups more specifically, to address the environmental sustainability issues which receive such broad coverage in the media world-wide.

The challenge is trying to balance the demands of environmental sustainability, with the economic realities businesses face in building products and offering services. Unfortunately, we live in a day and age when balance, compromise, and the meeting of minds is in short supply in many parts of the world. On the one side are the hard-core environmentalists, and on the other side are the die-hard capitalists, with neither side willing to budge an inch (or centimeter!) in their respective positions. Yet, without this ability to work through the environmental and economic issues there will be a lot of companies that will not survive the transition to sustainability, with a corresponding loss of jobs throughout the economy. It is within this context that this paper is written.

The purpose of this paper is to look at the challenges of balancing economic and environmental issues, while addressing the organizational and structural issues in moving the companies towards a sustainable future in a comprehensive way.

2. THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ISSUES

2.1 External Issues

A CNBC CEO Roundtable (Rosenbaum, 2021) noted several external trends facing organizations, including: