

# It's just not that easy being Green

The path to enticing George to join the company was well-worn and familiar to all of the decision makers. The process involved negotiations conducted at the local steakhouse with plenty of imported wine and fine cigars. George would be expected to work long hours, but in exchange he would be given a great title, a big office with a window and a company car. He would receive personalized stationery and would be introduced to all of the right people. The deal was sealed over scotch and a handshake. This was 1977 and George had just secured his first job in management for a leading company.

Today, George is the President, and he realizes that things have changed tremendously in the past 30 years when it comes to attracting talent. No longer interested in being wined and dined or in fancy titles, many of today's top candidates want to work for companies that share their values. And what are their values? One of them is environmental stewardship – reducing and repairing the damage that humans cause to our earthly environment. There has been a green tipping point and suddenly green companies, or those that are environmentally responsible, have become today's employers of choice.

Not only will being green help companies attract employees, it will help them keep the ones they already have. In a fall survey of 3,660 Canadians conducted by job site giant Monster, a shocking (I thought) 78 per cent of respondents indicated that they would switch companies if they found a more "environmentally friendly" one. Recognizing a need, Monster has committed a major portion of its site to Green Careers.

The Human Resource Professionals Association of Ontario called it the Green Magnet in a program offered last week to employers. In it, Anthony M. Watanabe, Ph.D, president of The Innovolve Group taught employers strategies to leverage environmental responsibility and sustainability to attract, retain and align people to create a path to becoming more green.

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## HUMAN CAPITAL



But this stuff isn't just words you can put in your Core Values plaque hanging in the reception area. "We are committed to environment responsibility, blah, blah..." Oh no, the generation that grew up with the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) will see right through that. In addition to making a commitment to creating a greener workplace there needs to be some real changes to your processes, programs and systems. For inspiration, look at leading Canadian organizations such as Husky Injection Molding, Alcan, Fairmont Hotels, Suncor, Hudson's Bay and The Body Shop, all of whom have embarked on major green initiatives. All of these companies have rethought the ways in which they do business and shifted their focus to green – each in a unique way.

For your company, challenge and re-think your policies and procedures in the following areas:

- How you create and dispose of waste.
- How people and products are transported.

- How, why and when you use energy.
- What chemicals you use and what alternatives exist.
- Whether your partners and suppliers are green.
- How your employees and facilities interact with the environment.

Consider developing green teams to help come up with ideas and don't forget to reward employees that get it right. Determine also whether you have, or can create, any "green collar jobs" in your organization. These would be jobs that contribute directly to the protection of the environment such as those related to public transit, recycling, landscaping, alternate power, insulation, using renewable resources, etc.

Once you have made a commitment to the environment, don't forget to tell the world. Make it part of your corporate communication strategy and put it in your job ads. Soon, being green will be the rule, not the exception, and employers that aren't serious about the environment will have trouble attracting good people.

Savvy candidates who are seeking a green employer will ask questions during the interview process about what programs and initiatives your organization has put in place to honour the environment. So, make sure that interviewers and managers are equipped to promote the success stories of your company's green programs.

Attracting talent to your organization is not as easy as wining and dining candidates anymore. And retaining the employees you currently have goes way beyond good pay and benefits. Going green is not only the right thing to do – it will help you attract great people.

Everybody wins.

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## Toronto conference on carbon emissions

The Canadian Institute opens the doors to its much anticipated 'Seizing the Investment & Compliance Opportunities of Carbon Emissions' conference taking place January 15 - 16, 2008, at the Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel in Toronto.

Designed to inform and educate delegates on the investment opportunities of reducing carbon emissions, this conference will feature an exclusive Ambassadors Panel featuring representatives from some of the leading European countries in emission reduction innovations and trading schemes. In this panel, the Ambassadors will discuss the latest international efforts to stimulate investment in emission reduction, and the challenges and solutions being adopted.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Dorian Prince (Conference Chair), Ambassador and Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Commission to Canada
- Werner Baumann, Ambassador of Switzerland to Canada
- Anthony Cary, British High Commissioner to Canada
- Matthias Höpfer, Ambassador of Germany to Canada; and
- Ingrid Iremark, Ambassador of Sweden to Canada.

With senior executives from Ontario Power Generation, TransAlta, TransCanada, Nexen, Mondial Energy, EPCOR Utilities, TD Bank Financial Group, CIBC World Markets, Montreal Exchange, and international industry participation from Winslow Management Company (U.S.) and Trucost (U.K.) this conference will be one of the most engaging and relevant conferences for the investment community on climate change.

For more info visit [www.CanadianInstitute.com](http://www.CanadianInstitute.com).

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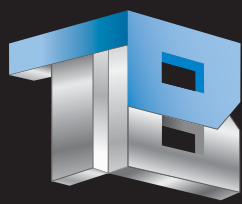
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