Going Green
By Gary Hamilton, Jeff Hodgkinson, & Gareth Byatt

Today's society is prevalent with organizational and social campaigns to "**go green**". This is for good reason. It is, after all, our social responsibility to reduce our carbon footprint, to reduce our dependency on non-renewable energies, and to recycle – not to mention the potential financial benefits associated with going green and green products. There are many things that Program and Project Managers of all industries can take to contribute to this worthy cause as part of following good program and project management processes and practices, but what are the "big ticket items"?

#1 – Direct your outcomes towards efforts such as Energy efficiency, Emissions (Carbon) reduction, Water efficiency and Waste minimization: there are many actions that program and project teams can take to achieve any of these four overall targets. For example, in IT the implementation of software that automatically turns off monitors when not used can lead to carbon reductions. If you work in manufacturing, construction or heavy industry the options for tackling these four factors are many and varied.

#2 – Help make a difference with design: consideration of the environment and sustainable initiatives at the design stage of an end product or solution is crucial – since this is what will determine the end product which the program/project will deliver. As a Program or Project Manager you have an opportunity to influence those responsible for design with "green thinking" (which they will no doubt already have in mind). For example, designing a product (be it a car headlight, a new computer or a manufacturing process) for energy efficiency.

#3 – Make a difference by having a sustainable supply chain: virtually all programs and projects (in all industries) rely on supply chain partners for delivery. The way you procure your partners can make a huge difference on the way a program or project is delivered. For example, make sure your supply chain partners are appropriately certified in sustainable practices and that they will adhere to leading practices. This principle relates to anything – from procuring sustainable timber for construction to ensuring "green thinking" is part and parcel of IT equipment procurement (for example, packaging can constitute a large volume of waste if not thought about in a sustainable way). Advice from governments and non-government organizations is plentiful in supply on actions that can be taken – look them up in the country you operate in.

In addition to these three actions, here are some other examples of smaller "green initiatives" that you may consider:

#4 – Include "Environmental and Sustainability Initiatives" in your Project Management Plan: Including such initiatives in your Project Management Plan will reinforce the project commitment to going green and outline specific tasks the project will be expected to undertake, during the duration of the project. Examples of such tasks may include:

1. Procurement – ensure your procurement policies and selection criteria are based on Sustainability and Environmental measures.
2. Maximizing the use of virtual team meetings – for example, conducting of virtual training and traveling only when absolutely necessary, such as during a major milestone in a given project. Technologies have progressed to the point in recent years that allow for video conferences, streaming videos and other forms of communication that reduce the requirements for face to face encounters without a reduction in the quality of the meeting

3. Ensuring recycling logistics are in place at both virtual and face to face meetings. For virtual meetings, steps could be taken such as a requiring a recycle box for non-secure documents. The Project Manager can also coordinate the collection of the documents from all virtual locations. During face to face meetings, in addition to ensuring recycle bins are in place, the Project Manager may also require public transportation to the meeting and hire "Green Friendly" vendors.

4. Requiring the project team to update their signature lines. A good idea is to say words to this effect: *Be Green. Please don't print this e-mail unless you absolutely have to.* Use this as part of your e-mail signature.

5. Include in your project templates, such as agendas, presentations and status reports some "Go Green" statements. Verbally remind project team members to print only what is absolutely necessary.

6. Require electronic only copies of project training and other artifacts when possible. Certain project artifacts, training materials and many other deliverables can actually be effectively carried out without printing.

7. Fax to PDF services: Using these services is a great idea especially when contracts are part of your project. Low cost faxes to PDF providers are readily available to send to a global audience. When a stakeholder faxes certain project documents, instead of printing them out, they can be converted to a PDF format and then automatically e-mailed to all the e-mail addresses in a given account. Most of these services deliver the PDF versions in real time, which can reduce the paper output by as much as 50% without adding in delivery delays. The PDF received can then be saved in the project repository.

#5 – Use your Project Management skills to improve your community: Try to find opportunities to put your project management skills to suitable use on various community projects, and show an interest in environmentally friendly ways of improving the community. This could be the organizing of a community activity for your project team for the cleaning up of a park or waterway project. Other possibilities include the serving on planning committees for other types of green initiatives.

In conclusion, this article only touches upon the possibilities of "going green". Our main message is that although every appropriate action adds up in terms of sustainability and environmentally friendly outcomes, getting a good understanding of what you organization's most significant environmental impacts are first before you agree what to focus on will set you on the most effective path forward. Regardless of the industry, the organization, or the type of project, opportunities to go green are abundant. Program and Project Managers should take advantage of the possibilities and embrace and encourage their implementation. Lastly, "going green" is good project management. Green initiatives not only benefit the environment, they have positive effects on employee health and well-being, and can help to maintain profitability of a project or organization.

About Our Authors

Gareth Byatt, Gary Hamilton, and Jeff Hodgkinson are experienced PMO, program, and project managers who through networking developed a mutual friendship. Realizing a common goal to help others, in February 2010, agreed to collaborate on a five (5) year program goal to write 100 PM subject articles (pro bono) for publication in any/all PM subject websites, newsletters, and professional magazines / journals.

Their mission is to help proliferate program and project management practices, add value and promote the PM profession, to be a positive influence to the PM Community, and in earnest hope readers gain benefit from the advice of their 60+ years of combined experience and expertise. To date, they have completed 14 articles and have a planned output of 1-2 articles per month. Although each of them are well credentialed, together they have the distinction of being 3 of only 25 worldwide that hold the Project Management Institute's PMP®, PgMP®, and PMI-RMP®. Credentials and continue to obtain others.

Along with writing articles, each also champions a role in the overall writing program collaboration process:
- Gareth manages all requests for additional guest author collaborations
- Gary manages the article development tracking and readership metrics
- Jeff manages the article distribution and new readership demographics

Gareth Byatt is Head of the IT Global Program Management Office for Lend Lease Corporation. Gareth has worked in several countries, and is currently located in Sydney, Australia. Gareth has 14+ years of project and program management experience in IT and construction. Gareth can be contacted through LinkedIn.

Gareth holds numerous degrees, certifications and credentials in program and project management as follows: an MBA and first-class undergraduate management degree, PMP®, PgMP®, and PRINCE2. Gareth is also the APAC Region Director for the PMI's PMOSIG and chairs several peer networking groups.

Gary Hamilton is the Manager of the PMO and Governance within Bank of America's Learning and Leadership Development Products organization. Gary has 14+ years of project and program management experience in the IT, Finance and HR. He has won several internal awards for results achieved from projects and programs he managed as well as being named one of the Business Journal's Top 40 Professionals in 2007. Contact Gary through LinkedIn.

Gary holds numerous degrees and certifications in IT, management, and project management and they include: an advanced MBA degree in finance, and has the PgMP®, PMP®, PMI-RMP®, PMI-SP®, ITIL-F, and SSGB professional certifications. Gary also is a 2009 Presidents' Volunteer Award recipient for his charitable work with local fire services and professional groups.

Jeff Hodgkinson is the IT Cloud Program Manager for Intel Corporation. He is a 30+ year veteran of Intel Corporation with a progressive career as a Program/Project Manager. He lives in Chandler, Arizona and volunteers in various support positions for the Phoenix PMI Chapter.

Jeff received the 2010 PMI (Project Mgmt Institute) Distinguished Contribution Award for his support of the Project Management profession from the Project Management Institute. Jeff was also the 2nd place finalist for the 2009 Kerzner International Project Manager of the Year Award™. Due to helping people achieve their goals, 'Hodge' as referred to by his many friends is one of the most well networked and recommended people on LinkedIn.

Jeff holds numerous certifications and credentials in program and project management as follows: CCS, CDT, CPC™, CIPM™, CPPM–L10, CDRP, CSQE, IPMA Level-B®, ITIL-F, MPM™, PME™, PMOC, PMP®, PgMP®, PMI-RMP®, PMW, and SSGB.

He is an expert at program and project management principles and best practices and enjoys sharing his experiences with audiences around the globe as a keynote speaker.

Listed trademarks are the property of their registered owners