

BU3016: Contemporary Issues in Business

2018

Assessment Cover Sheet for the Vision Piece

Assessment Due Date: 14th December 2018

Please complete the following:

I confirm that this assignment which I have submitted is all my own work and the source of any information or material I have used (including the internet) has been fully identified and properly acknowledged as required in the school guidelines I have received.

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For my vision piece, I have chosen the Green World from the Workforce of the Future report (PwC, 2017) as the world that I believe will be the most likely to come to fruition in the future. I will justify this argument by implement examples and theory, after which I will apply the United Nations SDG 8 to the Green World.

I have chosen this particular world because of the necessity for all companies and individuals to recognise the environmental degradations occurring in the world currently (McGrath, 2018; The Associated Press, 2018). These are having detrimental effects on people's health (Levitt & Tinker, 2016) as well as on the ecosystems of the planet (Carrington, 2018; Watts, 2018; Ki-moon & Sachs, 2015, p. 34-39).

The Green World is not a world that we shall enter by choice, but by necessity. The blue, yellow, and red worlds of the report (PwC, 2017) all share a commonality that is not shared with the Green World; they can all be entered by choice. However, if the Green World is not achieved, our world will literally be uninhabitable in generations to come (McKibben, 2018).

Justification for the fruition of the Green World is predicated by present events that put into context its essentiality in our current trajectory as a civilisation. Climate change is the primary driver for the crucial fruition of the Green World, as is evidenced by case studies that have taken place in Antarctica (Lagger et al., 2017, p. 579-591; Desvillettes et al., 2017, p. 63-73), the Arctic (Ramsayer & Rasmussen, 2015; Burch, 2010, p. 287-297), Central Asia (Bia et al., 2017, p. 633-646) and in the Himalayan region (Bajracharya et al., 2007).

The amalgamation of these studies demonstrates the global scale of this issue as well as highlighting the socioeconomic conditions directly caused by climate change events as Malone & Rovere (2004, p. 147-159) discuss. The Green World remains the only world that pivots its focus on reducing the impacts of these events through encouraging changes in behaviour and attitude amongst populations.

As further justification for the fruition of the Green World, there is very strong advocacy for the issues surrounding climate change by influential people, including Sir David Attenborough (Gill, 2018), Leonardo DiCaprio (Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, 2018), Gisele Bündchen (UN Environment, 2018) and James Cameron (Crowell, 2013). Having the combined powers of creative people in support of the Green World demonstrates an opportunity to grasp the attention of audiences through the visualisation of climate issues, as was portrayed in Blue Planet II (BBC, 2017).

With the rise of more environmentally-conscious lifestyles such as veganism (Petter, 2018; Hancox, 2018) and vegetarianism in the UK (Moss, 2018), especially amongst millennials (Rowland, 2018), this demonstrates a generation that is much more aware of the environmental degradations that certain industries are causing. This also highlights a growing population in developed countries that are more concerned with environmental and animal ethical issues which, again, makes the fruition of the Green World more likely.

Not only are influential figures advocating for the Green World, but also entire governments which demonstrates another strong justification for its fruition, including nations such as the Netherlands (Turk, 2017), Denmark (Eory & Huthchings, 2017), Sweden (Karolyte, 2017), Germany (Zeniewski, 2017), and France (Porter, 2015). These countries, through the implementation of

national policies, highlight their understanding of the imminent calamities of climate change and demonstrates how they are already heading towards the Green World.

It remains a common perception that companies are ignorant to the issues of climate change and are choosing the benefits of profitability over the climate change issue and therefore, companies as powerful societal drivers, are not considered to be advocates for the Green World (PwC, 2017). Despite the trueness of this notion in many instances (Cox, 2018; Levitt, 2016; Schleeter, 2018; Riley, 2017), I will demonstrate, with the use of two examples, how some prominent companies in the UK are becoming powerful advocates for the principles of the Green World (Boztas, 2016).

LUSH, which has positioned itself as one of the UK's leading companies in animal and environmental protection advocacy, reflects this stance in the manufacturing of their products (Troy-Pryde, 2018; BBC, 2017), with whom they partner (Surendra, 2018), and the causes they support (Matlin, 2017; Starostinetskaya, 2018).

The second example is the outdoor clothing brand, Patagonia, which prides itself on advocating for the reusability of its clothes (Hopping, 2017) and the packaging it uses to keep the company's environmental impact to a finite level (Baram, 2018). Not only this, but the company has become well known for its political (Blakely, 2018) and financial gestures (Willingham, 2018) which has proven popular amongst its customers who are looking towards companies to take a stance in current affairs. The actions of these companies demonstrates vehement advocacy for the principles of the Green World (PwC, 2017) as they are standing up for something beyond the creation of their own profits which further supports the argument of the Green World's impending fruition.

All the other worlds in the report do not have the same extent of longevity as the Green World (PwC, 2017), which is demonstrated by the unsustainable principles and functions upon which those other worlds are predicated. I argue that the Blue World in particular feeds on the greed of powerful individuals to keep the majority of wealth amongst a small exclusive group, the consequences of which are currently causing protests in France (BBC News, 2018).

However, with the world's population set to increase throughout the 21st century (Scientific American, 2018), we need a world that works for everyone, that functions for the many rather than the few, and spreads wealth across all levels of society, for which the Green World advocates (PwC, 2017). This impending population boom will lead to higher population densities in cities and it is only the equality-driven principles of the Green World that are able to achieve SDG 11 through equal wealth distribution and sustainable economic growth.

Despite the Blue World being able to generate enormous amounts of economic growth (PwC, 2017) thus achieving SDG 8, if that growth is not sustainably created and distributed across the populous, the issues of inequality will be further exacerbated which goes against SDGs 1, 5, and 10. There is no point in achieving SDG 8 if, in the process, we impair our achievement of other goals; the Green World offers a path to goal achievement that remains inclusive of all the other goals.

Overall, the issues we see now will become microcosms of how they will be in the future if the Blue World is followed. This is exemplified by the functionality of the global economy in a linear system (Costa et al., 2017, p. 2-6) which is entirely anti-Green World (Embury-Dennis, 2018) whereas a circular economic system (Stahel, 2016; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2018) is much more sustainable, hence achieving sustainable decent work and sustainable economic growth.

My action plan details how I intend to navigate the Green World and it is divided into four sections all with a sustainable commonality: sustainable skills development, sustainable attitude, sustainable entrepreneurship and sustainable ambitions. Firstly, the sustainable skills development section links skills to the Green World and will focus on two elements that enhance my employability: choosing a path of education that focuses on sustainability and sustainable business management.

Tailoring my skills to the Green World remains key to my navigation and this is predicated on focusing my education on sustainability. Educating myself in such a way that emphasises and applies sustainability to each industry I enter will be essential to my success in the Green World (PwC, 2017). This will involve choosing a degree that focuses on the development of sustainable skills and knowledge, examples of which include sustainable design, manufacturing, management, and assessment (Andersson & Rosenfield, 2017).

The development of my sustainable business management skills is another essential component for my action plan as my career interests revolve around the development of businesses. Applying this to the Green World, I'll focus on developing businesses to become more sustainable and green-focused enterprises by incorporating my knowledge of sustainable principles into all companies I enter or establish (Henderson, 2015, p. 22-25).

Sustainable attitude (Kates et al., 2006, p. 413-444) is the second element of my plan relating to how my attitudes and beliefs will need to focus on environmental sustainability and ecological wellbeing and the translation of those principles to my job performance. Essential to a successful career in the Green World will involve finding a company whose principles about sustainability, environmental protection, and corporate social responsibility reflect my own (Whitmell, 2012).

My sustainable attitude is two-dimensional as it remains present in both my career and in my personal lifestyle choices. The latter of these is predicated on green consumption (Blowfield, 2013, p. 277-285) which will be essential to how my lifestyle will form in the Green World as I must purchase and consume products in a "green way". My lifestyle would consist of adhering to the principles of vegetarianism, actively donating and advocating for animal protection, as well as only purchasing products from companies that practice sustainable enterprise.

Holding a sustainable attitude involves wanting to leave the world a better place than when one was born into it for the benefit of future generations. To realise this principle, I can utilise my talents, abilities, and interests in the Green World which would be best governed according to a meritocratic (Beck, 2008, p. 3-11) and technocratic (NowThis World, 2015) system. To contribute to the achievement of a sustainable society, I will need to focus on two avenues: sustainable entrepreneurship and sustainable ambitions which leads us into the final sections of my action plan.

Sustainable entrepreneurship involves my interest in establishing businesses that hold a role and purpose that transcends that of profitability. To link to the SDG aims of Goal Eight, this would involve entrepreneurs contributing to global resource utility and efficiency in sustainable production (Nauc ler, 2018) and by promoting green consumption amongst their customers, such as through the reusability and recyclability of products and packaging.

Small to medium businesses form 60% of total world employment (World Bank, 2018) so by promoting sustainable entrepreneurship in younger generations, we will usher in the changes

needed in the business world in order to reach both the SDG targets and the Green World. One example in the application of sustainable entrepreneurship would involve equality in pay for work of equal value as well as the involvement of disabled persons, women, and young people in productive employment because the Green World is based upon the notion of unity and equality (PwC, 2017).

I find sustainable entrepreneurship also key to the achievement of the SDG 8 targets of the reduction of the uneducated youth and youth unemployment. By fostering sustainable entrepreneurship, an environment is created that is able to initiate creativity amongst young people. This can then be injected into enterprise, especially by the guidance of institutions such as universities like UCLan (2018) that are dedicated to the achievement of a sustainable society. Encouraging the development of degrees that are predicated on principles of sustainability will lead to even greater opportunities within industries (GreenJobs, 2018; Cook & Jenshel, 2018) as sustainability remains a cross-industry element of all businesses in the Green World, and the promotion of this will result in greater support from powerful political parties (Long-Bailey, 2018) leading to governmental change.

For the final section of my action plan, to better understand my ambitions in the context of sustainability, I took a personality test produced by The Guardian (Lees, 2018). Upon completing it, I found that I had the tendency for the creation of ideas, materials, and solutions and for making new things happen within a business. Ideal jobs for me would include business development manager, design manager, or event manager. To apply this to the context of the Green World, I will either exercise my entrepreneurial skills and form sustainable businesses, work for a company that manufactures sustainable products, or enter an unsustainable business and change it from within.

To conclude, with the support of influential consumer brands and the advocacy of powerful governments, the achievement of the Green World is already in motion (Sovacool, 2017, p. 569-582). However, the instance in which the Green World is achieved on a global level is a much greater feat especially because less developed countries desire the wealth and opportunities that industrialisation has granted to developed countries (Ki-Moon & Sachs, 2015, p. 74-78).

To curb the same type of unsustainable industrialisation that occurred in the Western world from occurring in less developed countries, the leapfrogging approach (World Bank, 2017) will be crucial to the realistic achievement of the Green World. Finally, I must admit that establishing the Green World without incorporating some aspects the other worlds of the report (PwC, 2017) is unrealistic, but achieving a world in which green principles hold the deciding majority would be a markedly greater improvement from the world we witness today.

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