

LANDMINES TO AVOID WHEN GOING GREEN

tcg: Green Prepare™

□ Be Transparent.

IF YOU DO:

- You will earn trust & respect
- You will gain credibility
- Your green actions will be more apparent
- Customers will approach your products/services with confidence

IF YOU DON'T:

- Your green actions might go unnoticed
- Credibility is lost
- Assumptions of greenwashing could emerge
- Customers will question if you're "keeping them in the loop"

The green steps you're taking should be made readily available via your website, press releases, newsletters, etc. There is no way any business can be fully green right away, but as long as there is transparency and accountability, the public will respect you and your brand a lot more.

□ Define your Green Story! Create a Green Integrated Internal/External Communication Plan:

IF YOU DO:

- You will convey a positive, sustainable image to the public
- More people will be eager to purchase your brands/services
- New customers will approach your products/services
- Your employees will support and streamline your green efforts

IF YOU DON'T:

- You likely will not gain consumer recognition for your green efforts
- You might lose brand loyalty based on your sustainability efforts
- You will lack internal green cohesiveness/understanding

The green actions you're taking should benefit not only the planet, but also your image. Craft your green identity and make it an integral part of your branding and advertising campaigns. Communicating your green identity internally through the use of emails, newsletters, etc., will also help to instill loyalty amongst your employees and streamline your green efforts.

□ Implement in a phased approach.

IF YOU DO:

- Your green actions will be more defined and measurable
- Organization/efficiency of green initiatives will increase

IF YOU DON'T:

- Goals will not be achieved efficiently and in a timely manner
- Green projects will seem massive and unapproachable
- Measurement/data compilation based on your green initiatives will be difficult

Becoming green is a step-by-step process. Set incremental green goals for your business (e.g. two months for replacing standard lighting with energy-efficient LEDs and compact fluorescents).

□ Have measurable data that accounts for your company's sustainable efforts and green product claims:

IF YOU DO:

- Credibility will be lent to your business and product(s) and customer loyalty will increase
- New customers will approach your products/services
- The data can be used to preempt rumors of greenwashing

IF YOU DON'T:

- You invite accusations of greenwashing, with no means to defend your efforts
- You could lose customers to competitors with proven certified efforts and products
- Your green-efforts are confined to 'hear-say'

The most powerful weapon against accusations of greenwashing is the record of measurable results that your company has kept, showing exactly what you have implemented and how it has been environmentally beneficial. This is why assigning a Sustainability Director is highly recommended.

□ ABOVE ALL, DO NOT LIE OR MISLEAD.

- **DO NOT** CLAIM A PRODUCT YOU MANUFACTURE OR SERVICE YOU OFFER IS "SUSTAINABLE," "GREEN," "ORGANIC," ETC., WHEN, IN FACT, IT IS NOT.
- **DO NOT** MARKET GREEN CLAIMS THAT YOUR COMPANY CANNOT MEET (E.G. AN OIL COMPANY'S ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN CLAIMING THAT THEY HAVE SOMEHOW "TRANSCENDED" PETROLEUM).
- **DO NOT** CLAIM YOUR ENTIRE BUSINESS IS "GREEN", WHEN THE NATURE OF YOUR BUSINESS IS INHERENTLY NOT. THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY ACCEPTING THAT IT IS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR MOST BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS TO BE TOTALLY GREEN, EVEN WITH CARBON OFFSETTING,