

# **Sustainability Perspectives**

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[www.swaco.org/srco](http://www.swaco.org/srco)



# Three Vantage Points

1. Roundtable co-founder.
2. Teacher – MBA elective course on “*Business & the Environment – Strategies for Sustainability*” at the OSU Fisher College of Business.
3. Sustainability advocate.

# Sustainability Roundtable of Central Ohio (SRCO)

- Co-founded in February 2005 w/Dennis Hirsch – Associate Dean and Professor of Environmental Law at Capital University.
- Primary purposes = networking & self-education.
- 125 people on SRCO ListServ.
- Meet every 6-8 weeks.
- Plan to explore formal leadership & governance matters in early 2006.
- Searching for an outreach mission.

# MBA Elective Course

**Focus** – How businesses (of all sizes) can gain competitive advantage by minimizing their environmental footprint.

## **Topics include:**

- Sustainability success stories
- Green building
- Industrial ecology
- Performance reporting
- Environmental investing
- Environmental management systems
- Lean manufacturing
- Design for environment

# MBA Elective Course (con't)

- Student Feedback

- “The concepts taught provided an added dimension to be considered in making business decisions that are not covered in other courses.
- Had I not taken this class, I would be at a severe disadvantage in the work place.”
- “This should be a core class along side business law, finance and economics.”

- Key teaching tool: extensive use of outside speakers.

# Sustainability advocate

- Member of a church planning a 100,000 sq. ft. construction project.
- Member of Mayor Coleman's Public Environmental Advisory Group.

## General observations:

- Public very illiterate when it comes to sustainability.
- Generation of young adults (<30) seems to “get it”.

# Sustainability Issues in Ohio

- Agricultural land available for development.
  - Promotes sprawl.
  - Transportation accounts for 70% of energy demand.
- “Blessed” with abundant, relatively cheap coal.
  - Fossil-fuel based energy infrastructure will predominate.
  - Available supplies will last for many fewer years than projected.

## ...Issues in Ohio (con't)

- Out of State Wastes.
  - Can't stop it – ICC Regulations.
  - Overburdens our landfill capacity.
- Green purchasing practices not well-developed.
  - Rumpke sends most glass to Pennsylvania where markets are better developed

# Final Points

- Sustainability is in its infancy as a fundamental paradigm for designing and maintaining global social and economic systems.
- Can't think in parochial terms.
- Must invest heavily in educating young generations.
- Sustainability “beats” the alternative: *unsustainability*.