

OUR INSIGHTS

Practical advice on common business challenges
direct from our International team of business experts

INSIGHTS, MATT CRABTREE, STRATEGY



Are you an Earth 1st leader?

Promises for net zero need to be followed up, and a trio of emerging forces mean that pursuing sustainability is a business opportunity, not a risk.

In 2022, what is driving your organisation to become more environmentally sustainable? People might say that more regulation, legislation and tax are what's needed, effectively forcing businesses to clean up their acts, or else face fines and risk market access.

These policy levers have their place, but at Positive Momentum we continually witness an additional, but no less powerful, set of forces acting on industry:

- **Participation** and the agency of employees
- **Proof** and credibility with investors
- **Promotion** and customer interaction

In our recent white paper, 'No-Nonsense Sustainability: How to secure finance, talent and customers in the earth-first economy', we explore how businesses are invigorating their net zero plans and actions by focusing on Participation, Proof and Promotion.

Given that 73% of leaders agree that sustainability is an opportunity for their business, and not a risk, it's time to use the tools at their disposal to make net zero work for them.

Underscoring these ideas is the principle we've coined of an 'Earth 1st' leader – and, indeed, Earth 1st employees, citizens and consumers. The hallmark of the Earth 1st mindset, aside from placing environment at the heart of business decisions and operations, is a deep understanding of how Participation, Promotion and Proof work together.

We venture that the three are intimately connected and form a virtuous cycle.

At a strategic level, people will readily accept the primacy of Participation, Promotion and Proof. But operations is where the hard work lies, and businesses must embed processes to

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both keep on track with net zero, and capitalise on it. How does a business avoid greenwash, robustly measure metrics, and address sustainability in RFPs? How do you engage staff and win customers along the way?

In January this year the results of a survey by YouGov on behalf of Veolia suggest 42% of UK businesses feel overwhelmed by the steps they need to take. I'm proud to say that our white paper gives practical guidance to instil some no-nonsense sustainability in your business. It does what it says on the tin, in that regard.

Creating it was also another step in Positive Momentum's own journey to net zero, too. As a boutique business consultant, we didn't have a huge CO2 footprint to tackle, but we still wanted to be a part of the global shift to redefine business success and build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

One of our major aims was to become a B Corporation: a community of Earth 1st organisations that mobilise profits and growth for a greater impact on their employees, communities and the environment. Accreditation was far from easy, but that is the point.



We believe that any credible move towards net zero (and beyond) is revolutionary to any business, and costs time, investment and imagination. In some cases it will mean finding the courage to admit that an organisation is falling behind and a frank discussion on what the remedy should be.

Thinking in terms of Participation, Proof and Promotion will shape the strategy and the operations. We know it will also lead us to net zero – and beyond.

Read more and even take our Earth 1st diagnostic by [clicking here](#)

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