

Organizational Responsibility for Sustainability



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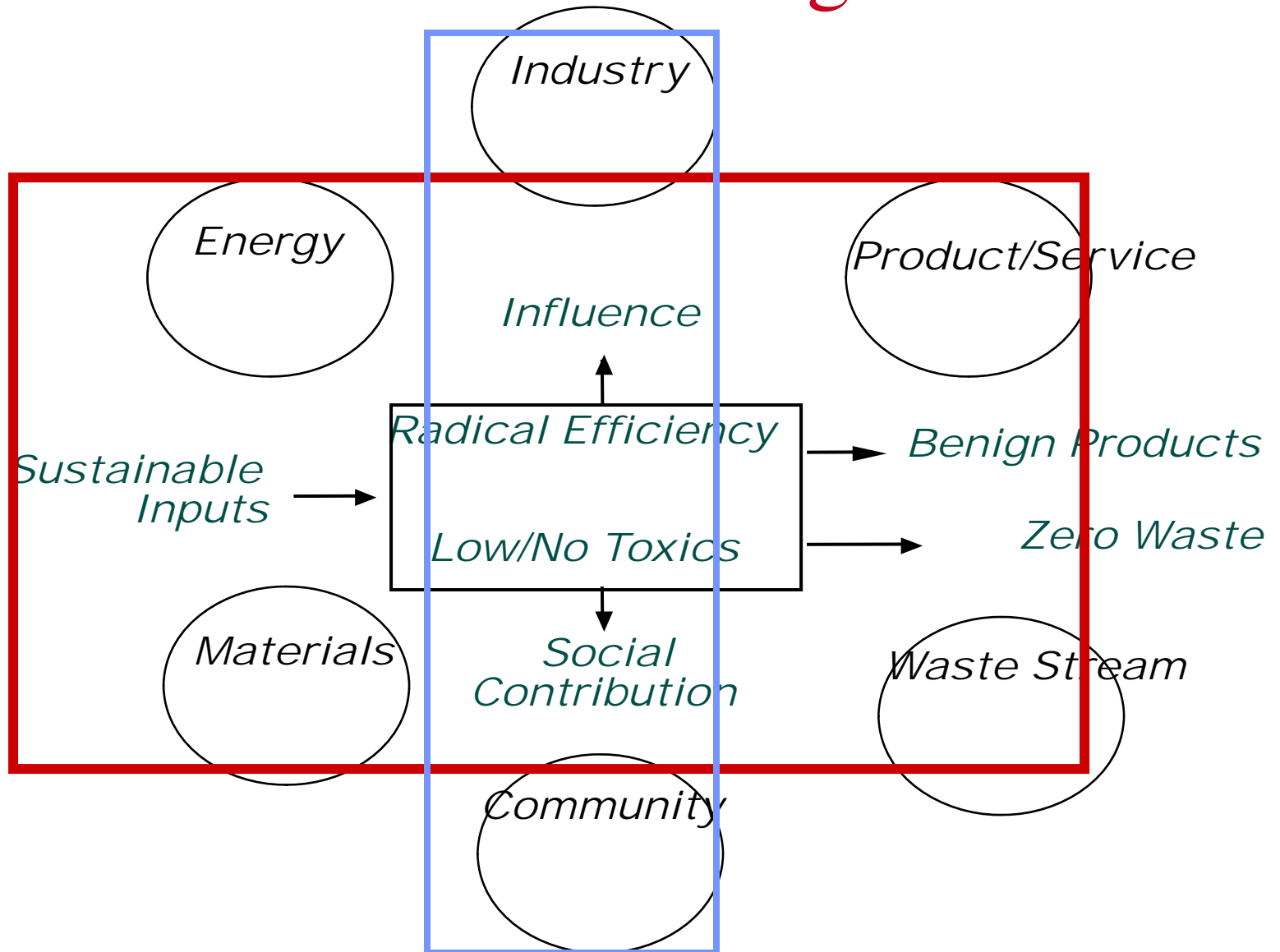
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Top 10 Reasons to implement sustainability

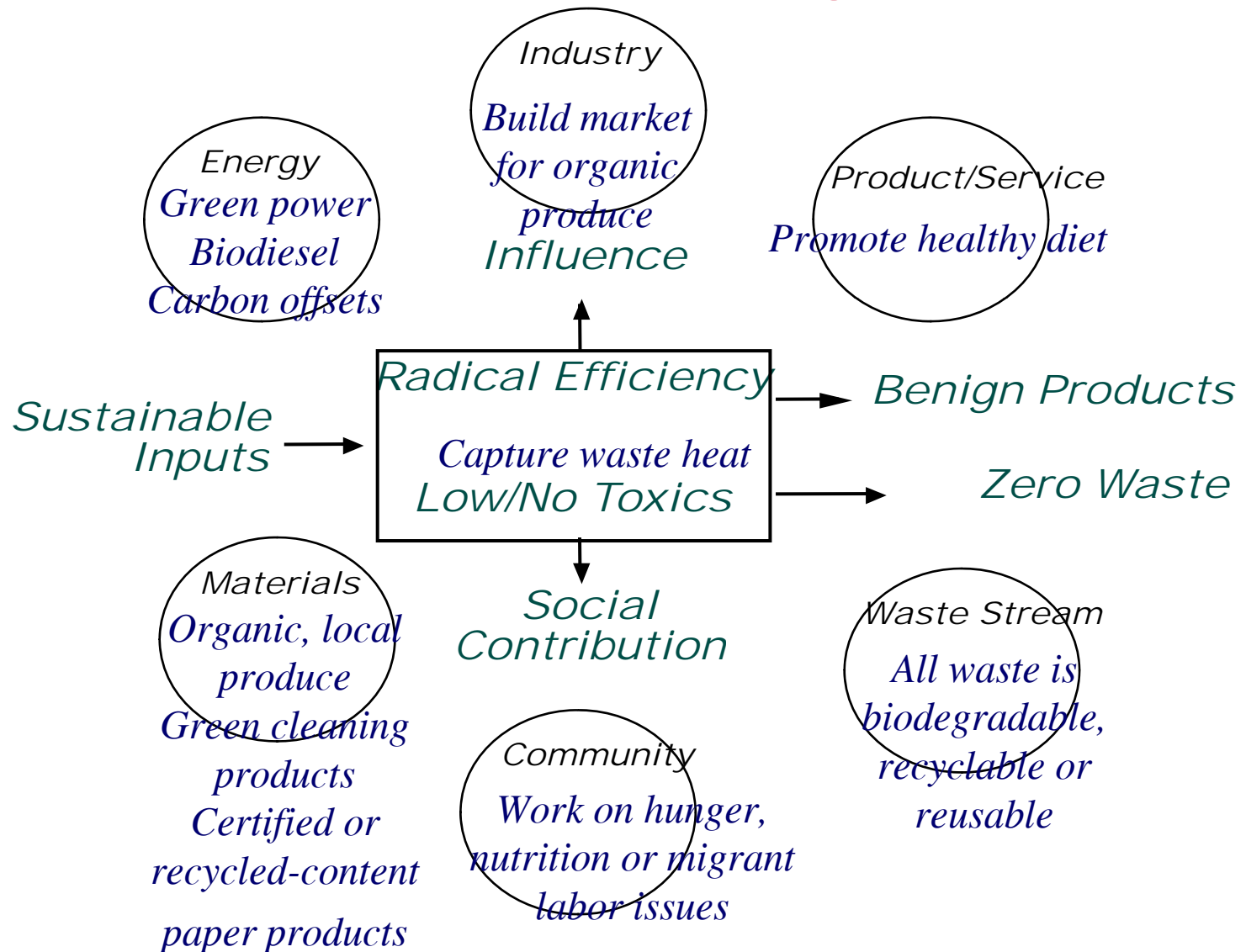
1. Attract and retain talent
2. Sidestep new regulations
3. Keep customers
4. Improve your image
5. Improve sales
6. Save money
7. Develop innovative new products
8. Reduce risks
9. Improve the livability of your community
10. Save the planet



What is a sustainable organization?



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Energy Example—City of Portland

- Put microhydro in water pipes
- Capturing methane from waste treatment; used in fuel cell
- Purchasing 100% wind power at less cost than current rates



Product Design Example— C&A Floorcoverings

■ C&A Floorcoverings

- ◆ Awkward questions about landfills
- ◆ Made new carpet from old
- ◆ Costs less, performs better

“[The operators] didn’t know it couldn’t be done.”

— Dobbin Callahan,
general manager-government markets



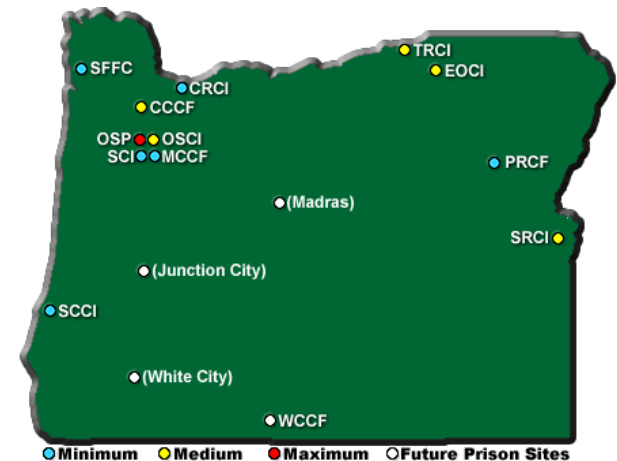
Service Example—Swiss Re

- Swiss Re withdrawing coverage for senior executives from liability claims for failing to adopt adequate climate change policies.



Community Contribution— Oregon Dept of Corrections

- Takes excess produce from farmers
- Inmates sort/repackage into family-sized bags
- Truck to Oregon Food Bank
- Diverted millions of tons from landfill to hungry families
- Part of restorative justice
- Community building
- Farmers get tax deduction and avoid disposal fees



Waste Example—Epson

- ◆ Achieved zero waste to landfill
- ◆ 90% reused/recycled; 10% burned for energy
- ◆ Reduced overall waste by 37%; VOC's by 96%
- ◆ Ink used as paint pigment
- ◆ Saved/made \$308,000 in 2000

“If you’re not for zero waste,
how much waste are you for?”
— GrassRoots Recycling Network



But this is not enough!

“Humans may be the only species to go extinct because it wasn’t profitable to do otherwise.” (Kurt Vonnegut?)

- Tragedy of the commons
- Pace of climate change (too little too late?)
- Failed and failing nation states
- Inability to see the whole system

Emerging ideas include...

- Paying for ecosystem services (Costa Rica)
- Green taxes (Europe)
- Product stewardship legislation (British Columbia)
- Cooperatives as an organizational structure (Costa Rica)
- Feebates and 'Golden Carrot' incentives (US)
- International agreements (e.g., cap and trade) (UN)
- Microloans

Lessons for change agents

- You can start anywhere, from any position
- Assess the readiness of your organization
- Link to past effort and current priorities
- Flush out kindred spirits and don't sweat the naysayers
- Measure your results

Low-Cost Resources

- **AXIS newsflashes (book reviews)**
AXIS-newsflash-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- **AXIS Advisory (quarterly article)**
AXIS-Advisory-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- **NW-Sustainability (events, job postings, etc.)**
NW-Sustainability-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- **Sustainability Series™ how-to booklets**
www.pacifier.com/~axis/sust_series.html
- **The Business Guide to Sustainability**
(includes SCORE assessment, July 2006)
http://shop.earthscan.co.uk
http://www.zerowaste.org/score
- **Workshop on sustainability assessments,**
May 9 in Portland, events@ortns.org

Recommended Reading

- The Party's Over (Heinberg)
- Collapse (Diamond)
- Presence (Senge, et al)
- Powerdown (Heinberg)
- Plan B (2.0) (Brown)