



### Seeking for Sustainability

With unemployment figures near a 30 year low, employees are in a strong position to be highly selective about whom they work for. In this tight labour market, organisations that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and CSR are fast becoming the employers of choice. The 2007 'Feed Your Mind', report published by Seek, found that 69% of (job seeking) respondents to an employee satisfaction and motivation survey labelled corporate responsibility as an important factor when deciding which company they wanted to work for. In addition 15% said they would only work for a company that had a CSR program.

*"They are demanding this and the market is such that they can demand it",* says Romily Madew, Chief Executive of the Green Building Council of Australia, referring to the growing demand from both employees and tenants for companies' to become more sustainable through use and construction of green buildings. In the US, 'Care2,' the largest online progressive community network, published results from a recent survey, with 48% of employees saying they were willing to work for less pay if given the opportunity to work for a socially responsible company. They also found that 73% of workers said it was 'very important' to work for a socially responsible company and 35% reported having left a company because they believed it wasn't socially responsible.

In an article on sustainability and employee recruitment in the Wall street Journal, Sarah Quarterman, Head of Merrill Lynch & Co's campus recruiting says that 10 years ago no one asked about their green credentials, but today, Merrill's environmental efforts are detailed on the back of every campus recruitment brochure produced. *"Students are looking to work for companies that care about the environment... they are almost expecting 'greenness' like they expect work-life balance, ethnic diversity and globalisation",* says Lindsay Pollack, the author of 'Getting from College to Career'.

With current low unemployment figures, companies that are considered socially and environmentally responsible are realising the benefits of their actions when it comes to attracting and retaining the best employees.

Below are findings from the 2007 MonsterTRAK survey of over 4,700 job seekers:

- 80% of students are interested in a job that positively impacts the environment
- 92% of students are more inclined to work for a company that is environmentally friendly; and
- 32% of students are currently looking for an environmentally friendly job

#### References:

- Mattioli, D. "How Going Green Draws Talent, Cuts Costs," The Wall Street Journal
- "Socially Responsible Companies Rank High With Job seekers," <http://www.sunshinebydesign.com>
- "Green buildings boost business: expert," The Age, May 27, 2008
- [http://www.monstertrak.com/green\\_careers](http://www.monstertrak.com/green_careers)

### Upcoming Events

#### Melbourne Sustainability Drinks

- 6<sup>th</sup> August 2008
- 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008
- 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008

[www.sustainabilitydrinks.com](http://www.sustainabilitydrinks.com)

#### Garnaut Review Draft Report Public Forum

- Melbourne Town Hall  
10:00am to 11:30am, 9 July
- Paddington Town Hall, Sydney  
10:00am to 11:0am, 10 July 2008
- Brisbane Town Hall  
10:00am to 11:0am, 11 July 2008

*The opportunity to hear Professor Garnaut present his findings is a unique opportunity that should not be missed. Professor Garnaut's findings will be integral in the future public policy on environment, sustainability and the Emissions Trading Scheme which will have a significant impact on all our lives. Please visit the following website to register your interest. Full details here*

#### The Garnaut Review Reviewed

Carlton, Melbourne, 10 July 2008  
[Full details here](#)

#### Trivia Night

Environment Institute of Australia & New Zealand, Victoria, 24th July 2008.  
[Full details here](#)





## Earth Hour 2008 Project Manager speaks with Sustainability Jobs

As Project Manager for the highly successful 'Earth Hour Melbourne 2008,' **Fiona Poletti** was faced with the challenging task of influencing Melburnians to turn to off their lights for one hour at 8pm, on the 29th of March this year. Earth Hours aim was to deliver a powerful message about the need for action to mitigate the effects of climate change. The impressive contribution by Melburnians to this cause highlighted the hard work and dedication of Fiona and her team.

Focusing on developing relationships, and making contact with senior decision makers and partners amongst the Melbourne business community, Fiona's goal was to sell her vision of what could be achieved. In doing so she successfully raised funds of \$167,000 cash and received \$630,000 of 'In-kind' and pro-bono support.

Other Earth Hour Melbourne 2008 achievements included:

- Participation of 1500 businesses and their pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5% over a 12 month period
- 1 million people turning off their lights
- 56% of people over 18 years of age participating
- 15,000 individuals signing up (highest level in any State) based on a target of 9,000
- Energy reduction of 10.1%, based on a target of 5%

Mathew Newman from Sustainability Jobs caught up with Fiona earlier this week:

**Mathew Newman:** Fiona, thank you for taking the time to speak with us. Can you please give us a brief synopsis of your professional background?

**Fiona Poletti:** I completed a degree in Economics majoring in politics and a Post Graduate Diploma in Arts (Communications) at Monash. My interest in the political and democratic process was peaked by my experience

and influences at university and I set about focusing on a career that involved public policy and decision making. This led me to work as a senior policy adviser to the former Federal Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, advising on matters related to digital, broadcasting, print media and the arts. This provided the opportunity to work on policy for the broader public good and to gain invaluable insight into government and stakeholder relations. From there I honed my skills in strategic thinking with the Australia Council for the Arts (primary federal arts funding body) as its Senior Strategic Advisor – Government Relations. This gave me hands-on experience on the other side of the political fence - developing policy proposals, leveraging existing federal and state programs and analysing and developing ideas.

In 2007 I was approached to be Project Manager for Earth Hour Melbourne. This was a campaign that I felt could use all my past experience and skills to deliver a strategic and successful campaign. Environmental sustainability was an area of growing interest and passion to me because of its potential impact and implications on and for current and future generations. The Earth Hour campaign also provided a vehicle for me to forge strong relationships with an array of dedicated and inspirational people.

I have recently been appointed as the Program Manager for carbonDown (a combined initiative of VECCI and Sustainability Victoria). This Program will focus on the 'how to' of carbon emission reduction and the delivery of business-to-business solutions. This is a unique opportunity to oversee, measure and collate data demonstrating and facilitating real outcomes in our fight to combat global warming.

**Mathew Newman:** What are you passionate about and how has this helped you to better chart the course of your career?

**Fiona Poletti:** I have always had a strong focus and passion for areas that impact positively on the wider community. These areas have included media policy, the arts, education and the environment, all of which have been of significant personal interest to me.

**Mathew Newman:** What advice would you give to passionate people seeking their first job in the sustainability sector?

**Fiona Poletti:** To work through how your skills and experience can be transferred to support and add value to this growing sector. This could mean choosing an organisation or company that is committed to environmental sustainability and has career opportunities to transition into this area.

**Mathew Newman:** Why do you think Earth Hour was so successful in Melbourne?





**Fiona Poletti:** Earth Hour was a success in Melbourne because it provided Melburnians and business with a simple and effective way to take action against global warming by participating in a fun and non-threatening worldwide event. It was an inclusive and non-aggressive community based movement that engaged schools, businesses and families to be part of a broad campaign that sent a positive message to decision makers that small actions by many can make a real difference in tackling climate change. It meant that people were empowered.

**Mathew Newman:** What skills and attributes do you feel have been the most useful in transitioning your career into sustainability?

**Fiona Poletti:** I believe my skills in understanding and facilitating decision making processes and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders have been instrumental in transitioning my career into the sustainability sector. This is an area where it is critical to listen and learn from the grass roots through to corporate Australia as we will all be affected by the impact of climate change and will need to play specific roles in slowing and reversing global warming.

**Mathew Newman:** In your opinion what is unique about the sustainability sector?

**Fiona Poletti:** The sustainability sector is unique in that everyone involved in it has an interest in getting it right to ensure the long term sustainability of our planet. Given the overwhelming scientific evidence of rapid global warming the sector is also unique in that it requires flexibility and collaboration in responding with a broad range of solutions.

**Mathew Newman:** What advice would you offer to a person looking to transition their career into the sustainability sector?

**Fiona Poletti:** If you are committed to working in the sustainability sector, look for creative ways to transition or gain a foothold into the sector. This may include volunteering for environmental NGOs or campaigns, working for organisations, local government, etc which are building and growing their sustainability divisions as well as networking at relevant events and forums.

**Mathew Newman:** Sincere thanks for your time. We wish you every success in your new role with carbonDown.

### Top Tips for building relationships

Many of us involved in sustainability loathe to hear (and unfortunately it's heard a lot) people using the term 'networking.' If you are the type to cringe, or even curse a little on the inside, every time you hear this word, perhaps it might pay to look at the concept of networking in a different light. We like to think of it as '**relationship building**,' an essential skill when meeting new people, such as potential clients, employees and most importantly potential employers. Last month's edition of the Sustainability Jobs Update listed some of the industry events that people looking to access the 'hidden job market' can attend. In this month's edition we have included our 'Top Tips for Building Positive Relationships in the Sustainability Sector', in other words 'What to do and what to say at those industry events':

#### SJ's Top Tips for Building Relationships and finding that Green Collar Job:

1. **Introduce yourself:** it's a no brainer but can be daunting; especially in a room full of people you don't know. Be proactive in doing this; it's easily done when you find yourself standing next to someone at the bar, but be confident in entering a conversation between two or more people and introducing yourself as well. Remember everyone is there for the same reason and shares an interest in sustainability.
2. **Be yourself:** a great ice-breaker is to ask the other people what brings them to this particular event. This will open up a chance to find out about them, but also for you to talk about yourself and your interests, studies, job and passions etc.
3. **Ask questions:** ask others what their interest is in sustainability? Have they been to these events before? What's their background? Etc. These ice-breaking questions will inevitably lead on to more fruitful conversation and allow you and the other people to relax and build rapport.
4. **Bring a business card:** Even if you don't have a job related business card, get some personal ones made up. People expect this and it is the best way for them to remember you. Also there are many options to get ones made-up from recycled paper and non-toxic (vegetable) inks etc. All they need to have on them is your name, email address and mobile number.
5. **Make a date:** follow up by sending people you have met an email or call them the next day to thank them for the conversation. Diarise a time in the next week or two to catch up with them for a coffee or a drink or invite them to another function that you may be both interested in. It is essential to remain in contact with people in the industry, if you are after that green collar job.





6. Look out for others: networking is a terrifying concept to most people. If you see someone by themselves, invite them into your circle. They will be really thankful and this provides an opportunity to introduce them to the people you have just met and improve your ability to socialise and build relationships at functions.
7. Practice makes perfect (and gets results): the more industry events you attend the better you will get at building relationships, and the more natural it will feel. You'll also meet more people and have an opportunity to develop a greater rapport with those potential future employers.
8. Smile: this one's easy 😊

We look forward to meeting you and hearing all about you at the next event!



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