



Shell Softwiring Sustainable Development in the Hearts & Minds of Employees

Shell Group is a global group of energy and petrochemicals companies which operates in more than 140 countries and employs over 112,000 staff.

For Shell, sustainable development (SD) means protecting the environment while managing resources, generating robust profitability, delivering value to customers, respecting and safeguarding people, benefiting communities and engaging with stakeholders.

Case Background: Shell believes that to be successful, sustainable development needs to be understood and practiced across the whole Group, not just by a few managers or SD specialists. The Group aims at bringing a change in the organization's culture so that it is second nature for people to look through the SD lens when making a business decision, large or small.

Case Description: As Shell wanted to introduce SD into training and leadership development, e-learning was recognized as a cost-effective way of providing an introduction to the subject to the wider workforce as it can provide employees with a personal way of exploring ideas and values.

In 2002 Shell discovered that the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) were developing an e-learning tutorial called Chronos that would meet this need.

The idea behind Chronos is to highlight some of the real-life, complex issues that confront companies. It uses quizzes, case studies and role plays as some of the ways of making the subject informative, relevant and lively. License price is set very low, with sharp discounts to encourage companies to make it widely available to staff.

Shell played an important advisory role in the design and development of Chronos as one of a number of companies that worked with the University of Cambridge and WBCSD to ensure that the content was accurate and the situations reflected real business dilemmas.

Chronos was specifically designed so that it would be easy to produce variants that make the material more relevant to a particular company or industry sector. Shell was the first company to commission its own customized version, which includes Shell's perspective on sustainable development, links to existing Shell SD Learning initiatives and personalized messages from Shell employees who are helping to translate SD into action.

The company has 10,000 licenses for use by individual employees and business partners as well as in corporate training and leadership development programs. Chronos is made available on a voluntary basis, with the incentive of a certificate for everyone who completes the program. Shell also includes Chronos in the 'on boarding kit' for all new employees.

Achievements: Many people felt that, as employees of a committed company such as Shell, they were already familiar with the principles of SD. Nevertheless they have often been surprised how much information in Chronos was new to them.

Feedback from users has been very positive. Employees besides enjoying it have reported at finding it successful in provoking deeper understanding and training them in not forgetting the environment even in the very cost-constrained world of a refinery."

Chronos is also helping prepare employees take part in assignments with *Earth Watch* as part of Shell's Project Better World initiative.

Reference: www.wbcsd.org