
Broman and Robert (2015) discuss the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD) including its history, method of development, benefits to the model, the model itself, and real-world applications.

The mission of the FSSD is based upon a central idea: “We went to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (p. 29). In order to do this, people cannot be subject to obstacles in productive ecological and social systems. Furthermore, the FSSD outlines parameters of sustainable ecological and societal practices. Briefly, economic sustainability means not increasing (a) concentrations of substances extracted from the earth; (b) concentrations of substances produced by society, and (c) degradation of Earth by physical means. Societal sustainability means people shall not be subject to obstacles to health, influence, competence, impartiality, and meaning making.

The FSSD comprises five levels of analysis and development: entities need to examine systems between people, and humanity and ecology, sustainability
guidelines, and gaps; develop a vision, end-goals, and success criteria; use backcasting to form strategic action plans; prioritize these actions; and utilize tools to carry out sustainability work. The process is meant to be iterative, collaborative, and interdisciplinary (p. 23)

The FSSD does not depict its own “image” of the future for several reasons: people have different values and preferences; a ceiling should not be established that may limit creativity; and it is difficult to know whether or not one scenario is truly sustainable (p. 20).

This article is fraught with examples, resources, and insights on how to use the FSSD in practical settings. Leaders who need more examples and strategies on the implementation of the FSSD will benefit from reading this article.


Missimer and Connell (2012) first delineate sustainability leaderships skills as cited throughout the research into three categories including ways of thinking, working with others, and personal skills (p. 173). Then pedagogical approaches to sustainable development are described in detail including social/peer learning,
experimental learning, transformative learning, empowerment, and dialogue (p. 174).

Missimer and Connell (2012) then conduct a case study of Sweden’s Blekinge Institute of Technology’s (BTH) master’s program in Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability. This program draws on all of the pedagogical approaches to create a spiraling program. The students begin learning the core concepts of sustainability leadership, take a deep dive into the issues that are important to them, engage in practical application and feedback, and finally undertake a thesis project. The instructors purposefully move through phases of teaching, coaching, and advising as students move through the program, enabling the students to increase their autonomy and ownership of their learning.

A survey was given to 306 alumni of the program to assess the importance and effectiveness of the pedagogical approaches and level of development of leadership skills (all mentioned earlier). The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive. The authors note that this way of teaching is still considered non-traditional in the United States.

This article provides educational leaders a glimpse into a highly successful and progressive higher education setting, and the leadership skills desired in the field. Education systems must promote sustainability leadership and adopt
pedagogical practices that are conducive to continue rigorous progress toward global sustainability.


Linnenluecke and Griffiths (2010) use the widely accepted competing values framework (CVF) of organizational culture to discuss the relationship between corporate sustainability and organizational culture (p. 359). The CVF framework consists of four quadrants with specific ends and means determined by the amount of flexibility or control that is given internally or externally. The four quadrants and their ends are: human relations (cohesion and morale), open systems (growth and resource acquisition), internal process (sustainability and control), and rational goal (efficiency and productivity). Parallels are drawn between each of the four CVF quadrants’ culture characteristics and their inherent management ideologies. This comparison describes how different organizational types influence how employees understand and enact corporate sustainability according to how they are typically managed.

Briefly, the internal process model is coupled with the scientific management ideology producing a focus on economic gains through closed system models and hierarchies. The cognitive and motivational limits imposed on
employees restrict the understanding and enactment of sustainability (p. 360). The rational goal quadrant is coupled with the systems rationalism ideology and open-rational systems which emphasize controlling the organizational structure to match the external environment in an efficient manner, leading to sustainability practices. The difference is teamwork is encouraged and cost savings are invested back into the development of the employees to further find more efficient ways of operating (p. 361).

The human relations model and ideology focuses on social interaction and emphasizes staff development, therefore it holds the potential to support the learning capacity to promote corporate sustainability, so long as sustainability is the focus. In the open systems quadrant emphasis is placed upon growth and the quality ideology engaging morals, flexibility, and invoking employee commitment (p. 362). This system will likely place emphasis on both social and ecological sustainability as it pursues corporate sustainability.

Linnenluecke and Griffiths (2010) conclude that depending on the focus of the organization (staff development, resource efficiency, environmental protection, or and stakeholder engagement) depends on how corporate sustainability is implemented and outcomes that are achieved (p. 362). However, it appears that to move toward corporate sustainability, leaders need to achieve a balance of social
and environmental values rather than operate under a purely economic paradigm and move toward open systems (p. 363).

This article encourages leaders to examine how their management ideologies, values, and organizational purposes influence their organizational cultures, and to further assess the resultant effect on corporate sustainability.