

27th March 2009

Climate Change!

Back to Basics on Cause and Effect!

There are some interesting debates on climate change at the moment and I have to own up to some confusion as to who or what is right in this arena.

Weighing into the debate this week, Rowan Williams, our multi-lingual Archbishop of Canterbury. I reference the languages because the Archbishop apparently speaks seven. I find this amazing, because personally I am still mastering the first (English) and struggling to come to terms with the imperfect tense in French. But I would hope the ability to speak seven languages means a person has learned something of the cultures from whence those languages came and thus, have a reasonable understanding of how the world works, not just their own back yard!

Apparently the Archbishop is concerned that we are not taking our environmental responsibilities seriously enough and that we need a “radical change of heart” to prevent runaway climate change and damage to our world.

Whether you believe in the principles of Christianity or any other religion, or even in the Archbishop himself, it does appear reasonable to suggest we have been gifted a unique opportunity to make a home on this earth and it is something we, thankfully, are starting to take more seriously. To see the church getting so directly involved does seem to indicate how high profile this issue has become.

Regrettably, it's probably not enough to attach 'don't print this email unless you need to' to the end of your email signature; although it's a start. How about a few more ideas to help the planet and keep business expenses down:

- Reduce travel time and cost by scheduling only necessary face to face meetings. Use technology where possible to assist (teleconferencing and videoconferencing – the tools are getting better all the time);
- Consider home working for staff on a part or full time basis. Surprisingly the statistics indicate staff work harder and are more motivated (although writing this from home with the kids squealing in the background even I am dubious);
- Ensure all office equipment is powered down at the end of each day (where you can safely do so), perhaps staff could be incentivised with a proportion of energy savings credited to a staff social fund;
- Try to use less paper (note: even 'paperless' offices don't entirely get rid of all the paper but a reduction to say 30% of normal consumption is great). You have to remember that reliance on paper means paper cost, ink cost, storage cost (racks, cabinets, lever arch files, long term retention cost), printer acquisition & maintenance, etc etc. Reducing the output will make an enormous difference.

We could go on.....

From our work we are beginning to see the enormous recognition and benefit firms get from implementing 'environmental' initiatives. Cost savings are everywhere, because the correlation between reducing resource utilisation and reducing business expenditure is so high.

We encourage our clients to look at the environmental issues, not just for the cost savings possible, but also because you can market this side of your corporate personality and help yourself win business on the back of it.

So, although hearing the Church weigh in on this debate surprised us at first, we encourage any pro-environment coverage and debate. Save the planet – we say!!

27.3.09

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