

IN PRACTICE

Virtual training can be linked to significant environmental benefits.



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A Green Business Case for Training

BY DARLENE CHRISTOPHER

What does workplace training have to do with the environment? As it turns out, quite a lot. Just think of all the materials, participant accommodations, and travel arrangements you have to make for a traditional training session. These activities require the use of many resources that have a quantifiable impact on the environment.

If your organization is dedicated to environmental sustainability, you should consider making a business case for virtual classroom training by connecting it to the organization's carbon footprint reduction. For many organizations, bringing trainers and participants to a central hub can require long flights or car travel—significant sources of carbon emissions.

Using free online tools, you can calculate the carbon emissions savings that would be realized by replacing traditional classroom training with virtual training, along with savings on travel costs. Because numbers on emissions, such as the number of pounds of carbon dioxide, are not meaningful to the average person, you'll want to convert the emissions savings into more under-

standable results.

For example, eliminating 10,000 pounds of carbon dioxide is the equivalent of growing 100 trees for 10 years. Eliminating 40,000 pounds of carbon dioxide is equivalent to recycling the waste in one garbage truck.

To calculate emissions, you can use the calculator tool at www.terrapass.com. To convert the amount of emissions reduced into more meaningful results for your audience, use the calculator tool at www.epa.gov.

To emphasize this benefit to stakeholders, present a slide at the beginning of each virtual class that shows the amount of carbon emissions avoided by delivering training virtually. Participants will gain an appreciation for how environmentally friendly and sustainable virtual training can be.

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This article was adapted from *The Successful Virtual Classroom* by Darlene Christopher.