

## Minicucci, Bob

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**From:** Minicucci, Bob  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 29, 2007 1:47 PM  
**To:** Will Abbott; Andrea O'Brien; Chris Rawnsley; Ira Leighton; Jean Holbrook; Michelle Hamm; Nancy Girard; Nancy Hirshberg; Patti Carrier; Susan Studlien; Tom Davanzo; Tom Kelly; Yergeau, Sharon; Amy Ignatius; Andre Tremblay; Betsy Blaisdell; Beverly Fischer; Brian Duffy; Burack, Thomas S; Cartier, Rudy; Charles Vidich; D. Dickinson Henry; Dennis Sasseville; Eric Wood; Gary Abbott; Jasen Stock; Jim Bruss; John MacClean; Justin Bielagus; Kendall Buck; Linda Landis; Mary Collins; Melissa Hoffer; Michael Cimis; Michael Giaimo; Paul Quinn; Perelli, Vince; Robert Fox  
**Subject:** NH DES Environmental Leadership Initiative

Hello - This is to transmit the minutes of the August 23 meeting of the DES ELI work group on design of a reward-and-recognition program.

**A reminder: The full Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, September 17, 1:30 - 4:00 PM, at DES offices, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH, Room 112.**

The August 23 meeting ran from about 2:10 - 4:15 PM. Those present were: P. Carrier, NH Ball Bearings; B. Duffy, PSNH; R. Fox, US Postal Service; N. Hirshberg, Stonyfield Yogurt (by 'phone); J. Holbrook, US EPA Reg. 1; R. Minicucci, NHDES, A. O'Brien, NH SBDC; V. Perelli, NHDES; S. Yergeau, NHDES.

The first item of business was hearing from Stonyfield Farm on what makes government partnership programs attractive, or not, to a company that explicitly tries to be an environmental leader. This was a vigorous one-hour discussion.

Ms. Hirshberg started by noting that what she had to say reflected Stonyfield's culture; other businesses will do things differently. That said, she reported that Stonyfield joins some programs and not others. Stonyfield's brand identity focuses on environment, so they try to pick strategically. What will deliver recognition that their customer will recognize? What does not involve much of their staff time, and what brings tangible benefit? She noted Stonyfield's participation in Wastewise, Climate wise and the NH greenhouse gas registry. They choose not to join programs that take up significant staff time, her estimate is that they are probably devoting less than 1/10 of a staff person's time to all such efforts. Ease of use, from the member company's point of view is the most important factor.

The single biggest problem in getting a company involved in such programs is staff-time limitations. She notes that Stonyfield, at about \$300 million, has 3 people involved in 'pro-active environmental' work (which is a lot for a company of that size), while their parent, Danone, has 2. Note that these 3 people have worked to demonstrate their worth, both in terms of the balance sheet and in terms of 'brand name standing', although she seemed to indicate that this proving was less necessary as time has gone on.

Stonyfield participates in the Clean Cities program, but stated that they did not attend meetings - they find the information on that program's email distributions is useful. This 'passive membership' was a concept discussed at several points during this meeting. She finds a private email group of environmental managers works particularly well for her - the right amount of useful traffic from known, credible, people. Another group mentioned was an 'eco-partners' group, described as a 15-year old informal group of companies such as Nike and Patagonia - she likes small informal groups exchanging short messages.

She notes changes in the overall business climate over the last six months, it's now 'hip to be green.' This re-positioning may well be temporary.

She questions the purpose of an environmental partnership program - she does not feel it drives performance. Her suggestion (repeatedly) was for succinct case studies in an easily digestible format. This has not yet been done, such case studies as exist are too long and involved. She does see the need for hand-holding & encouragement to bring 'laggards' along, but agrees that those 'laggards' are also often unwilling to engage 'government' looking for a cooperative relationship. A catchy, absolutely un-threatening name for the program is important.

What sort of recognition is valued by a company? A big event is not important. The recognition has to reach/be important to customers; then it brings credibility by 3rd party endorsement. Recognition is also valued as a boost to employee morale. The question arises as to what is the target of a PR effort - retail customers, wholesalers, media? Product differentiation is a key goal. Stonyfield has put effort into locating large-scale customers who are influenced in this way, especially noting Wal-Mart's recent 'greening' as effecting environmental affairs in enormous ways, especially noting Wal-

Mart's work toward sustainable packaging.

In terms of business-to-business contacts, she noted the importance of CEO-to-CEO contacts several times. When asked if their suppliers had contacted them for advice, she said it was rare, perhaps they don't want to reveal vulnerabilities. Stonyfield intends to focus on better performance by affiliates over the next year.

There is no single resource for companies to tap for better environmental performance. She did however, tout Vermont's work with the Northeast Organic Farming Association's Vermont chapter ([www.nofavt.org](http://www.nofavt.org)) in facilitating farmer-to-farmer contacts - farmers get help and advice from a trusted source (another farmer) and there are few time demands.

Some items from Q&A with Ms. Hirshberg:

Who do we want to motivate (to better performance) and what are the barriers the face? We seek to hold up leaders as an example but that doesn't work. Don't hold them up, enlist them. The 'example' effect is useful but minor. Put effort into eliminating the barriers - case studies, listservers, a clearinghouse, ala Greenbiz.org. By showing value, we can break the barriers - the methods above plus mentoring, trainings, on-site tours mentioned as useful.

It was proposed that those whom DES seeks a better relationship with are already doing the good work, which is what we (DES) wants, not necessarily the partnership. This was met by the proposition that much more can be accomplished by cooperation/partnership, and by the idea that we need the leaders to get to the rest.

Ms. Hirshberg was asked how she thought of EMSs in general. They are not an effective starting point for small businesses, which almost all NH businesses are. It's more effective to catch imaginations and gather energy by using specific projects to get quick wins (an endorsement of a BMP approach?). De-lingo-ize environmental management, make it emotionally accessible. Do not so much provide validation as provide tools.

She suggests DES be strategic by deciding which sectors it wants to reach, perhaps prioritized by environmental impact, find parties within a target sector who want to work with DES, and show successes. Get the visionary members of that sector to come to NH, and speak at the sector's own meeting.

I noted that she was saying things very similar to what Commissioner Burack has been saying.

At this point, we thanked Ms. Hirshberg for her time and discussions continued among those in the room.

We started by critiquing the program design white paper, focusing on the Aspiring Leaders tier. Feedback was given that the paper as written was not user friendly, did not clearly explain 'what's in it for me'. i.e., why would anyone sign up for NH's ELI based on this document?

It was agreed that the paper, or rather a second version of it, would be prepared as a recruitment/marketing tool. Put the benefits (access to a BMP library, membership in a peer group, letter of appreciation, etc.) right up front. We need to lead them in. An initial commitment, or even the membership application form, could be signing an environmental policy form, which would state (ala ISO 14001) management's commitment to follow the laws and regulations, prevent pollution, and to seek continuous improvement.

The recruitment process was discussed. It appears that the main recruitment avenues will be the existing environmental assistance programs, and the enforcement programs. Two organizations represented at this meeting stated that inspection/enforcement events had been catalysts to get them into environmental management. There is also the 'captive' audience DES has through its various training programs such as the HazWaste Coordinator training. And general press-type publicity.

In another point, the program websites for Kentucky, Vermont and Maine were touted for good usability. Here they are: <http://www.dca.ky.gov/KYEXCEL>; <http://www.vbep.org/>; <http://www.maine.gov/dep/oc/stepup/step-up.pdf>.

The entry criteria shown for Aspiring Leaders were seen as too tough. Can we back off? Those present agreed that an appropriate form would be a shell environmental policy statement, signed by an official with sufficient rank to contractually obligate the company which also stated that the applicant company is not currently under enforcement (my translation of the phrase used in the meeting: "actively in trouble.").

Focusing on initial target sectors was agreed to again as the correct strategy. Construction/development, small businesses in manufacturing, and municipal infrastructure were mentioned; the consortium of NH universities are doing fine on their own at present. Regarding municipalities, Peterborough was mentioned as they have just signed up for EPA's community energy challenge.

**Work items moving forward:**

- 1) Write a companion to the program design white paper tailored for marketing purposes
- 2) More edits to the program design white paper.

Both by Sept. 10, to allow review before the Sept. 17 meeting.

Thank you for your interest and participation. Please don't hesitate to call. Attendees to the Aug 23 meeting should contact me if you think I mis-represented you.

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