

The Business Case for Zero Waste Operations

Determining the next steps towards amplifying your sustainability initiatives for your organization



STEP 1: ASSESS CURRENT STATE

What do you need to know **right now** in order to take steps towards accelerating your sustainability goals?

STEP 2: DEFINE FUTURE STATE

What are your **organization's goals** in each area? Are they **realistic given the time horizon**?

STEP 3: DETERMINE IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

What **questions need to be answered** and what **decisions need to be made first** in order to make progress towards the defined goals?

Zero Waste

Zero Waste Approaches

1. Composting, Reusing & Recycling
2. Energy Efficiency
3. Waste Tracking & Process Optimization
4. Demand Forecasting

Step 1: Assess the current state

1. **Waste Audit:** What type and quantity of waste do our operations currently generate?
2. **Current Strategies:** How effective are our current waste reduction strategies?
3. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Are our employees, suppliers, and stakeholders actively engaged in our zero waste initiatives?
4. **Financial Impact:** What are the costs and potential savings from our current waste management practices?
5. **Technology and Innovation:** Could new technologies or practices enhance our waste management efforts?
6. **Long-term Sustainability Goals:** Is our zero-waste initiative aligned with our broader sustainability goals and corporate strategy?

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Step 2: Define the Future State

1. What types of waste generated by our operations can be composted, reused, or recycled?
 - Consider mapping various waste types and disposal methods across plants or site and color-code these waste streams to determine which ones require attention and then develop actionable plans to recycle, reuse, or compost the waste, diverting it from landfills.
2. How can we integrate composting, reusing, and recycling into our processes?
 - Assess the feasibility, including the need for new equipment or partnerships.
3. How can composting, reusing, and recycling contribute to our overall business strategy and sustainability goals?
 - Evaluate the potential benefits, including cost savings, improved sustainability image, and compliance with environmental regulations.

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Step 2: Define the Future State

1. What is our potential for adopting renewable energy sources like solar power?
Consideration:
 - Evaluate your current energy sources and consumption levels. Consider the geographical location of your facilities, the availability of sunlight, and the feasibility of installing solar panels. Assess the potential cost savings, environmental benefits, and alignment with your company's sustainability goals.
2. How can we optimize our processes to enhance energy efficiency?
 - Look into your operational processes to see where energy usage can be minimized. This might involve optimizing heating and cooling systems, implementing energy-efficient technologies, or redesigning processes to minimize energy waste. Consider the cost implications, potential energy savings, and how this aligns with your company's sustainability commitments.

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Step 2: Define the Future State

1. How are we currently tracking waste in our operations?
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of current waste tracking methods and system leakage/inefficiencies.
2. Where are the opportunities to optimize processes to reduce waste?
 - Identify process inefficiencies contributing to waste and increased costs.
3. How can improved waste tracking and process optimization enhance our operational efficiency and sustainability reputation?
 - Reflect on the potential for cost savings from reduced waste, improved operational efficiency, and enhanced reputation for sustainability.

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Step 2: Define the Future State

1. How can more accurate demand forecasting support our business goals and drive our zero waste initiative?
 - Think about the potential to reduce overproduction and waste, improve customer satisfaction with better product availability, and enhance operational efficiency.
 - How can we enhance the accuracy of our future demand forecasting?
 - Analyze how reducing forecasting errors might minimize waste and overproduction in the future.
 - What potential waste reductions could we achieve with improved demand forecasting?
 - Evaluate the potential of advanced forecasting techniques or tools for our future operations.

Zero Waste at a Major Consumer Packaged Goods Company

Building the Business Case for Zero Waste Operations: A Major Consumer Packaged Goods Company's Approach

The company's business case for zero waste operations is anchored in cost savings, waste reduction, and enhanced operational efficiency. By reevaluating their processes and pinpointing opportunities for optimization and sustainable sourcing, they've established a more sustainable and cost-efficient operational model.

Assess the Current State	
1.	Waste Audit: The company initiated their journey to zero waste operations by developing waste stream maps to identify the various waste types generated across their facilities and their disposal methods.
2.	Current Strategies: The company's current strategies include auditing their energy usage, transitioning to rooftop solar power, optimizing water usage by capturing and utilizing rainwater, and creating waste stream maps to identify areas for waste reduction.
3.	Stakeholder Engagement: The company's zero waste initiatives have boosted employee engagement by encouraging them to think creatively and sustainably.
4.	Financial Impact: The zero waste initiatives have led to significant cost savings and improved operational efficiency, proving to be a financially sound strategy.
5.	Technology and Innovation: The company has utilized innovative solutions such as rooftop solar power and rainwater harvesting to enhance their operational efficiency and sustainability.
6.	Long-term Sustainability Goals: While not explicitly mentioned in the reference information, the company's focus on zero waste operations, energy self-sufficiency, and water usage optimization indicate a commitment to long-term sustainability.

Define the Future State	
<p>Composting, Reusing, & Recycling</p> <p>By color-coding their waste streams, The company identified waste that could be recycled, reused, or composted, diverting it from landfills.</p>	<p>Energy Efficiency</p> <p>The company maximized their energy efficiency by conducting energy audits, transitioning to renewable energy sources like rooftop solar power, optimizing water usage by capturing and utilizing rainwater, and implementing a comprehensive waste management strategy towards zero waste operations.</p>
<p>Waster Tracking & Process Optimization</p> <p>The company developed waste stream maps to track the various types of waste generated across their facilities and their disposal methods. This information was used to optimize their processes and reduce waste.</p>	<p>Forecast Demand</p> <p>While not explicitly mentioned in the reference information, the company's efforts to assess what's coming in, how much is being used, and where optimization is possible suggest a focus on demand forecasting as part of their future zero waste strategy.</p>

By implementing these steps, organizations can reduce waste, lower costs, and improve operational efficiency, making a zero waste approach a strategic business decision.

Worksheet: Building Your Business Case for Zero Waste Operations

Considerations for Your Business Case:

- Understanding the current situation
- Business case development

Today's Focus

- Cost and Investment Analysis
- ROI and Payback Period Estimation
- Risk Analysis
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Implementation Plan
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Communication Plan

Future State Planning

- Reflection & Next Steps

Outcome