THE ETHICAL BUSINESS GUIDE

HOW TO RUN YOUR BUSINESS THE RIGHT WAY

HOW TO DEVELOP AN ETHICS POLICY FOR A SMALL FIRM
ETHICAL MARKETING: A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS?
GREEN DESIGN
BANKING THAT DOESN’T COST THE EARTH
THE ART OF BEING AN ETHICAL BOSS
ETHICAL ENERGY
GREEN ACCOUNTANCY
EFFECTIVE CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS
USE YOUR PROCUREMENT POWER TO BENEFIT SOCIETY
ETHICAL DECISION MAKING DURING DIFFICULT TIMES
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Perceived trustworthiness is a large part of ethical businesses’ popularity because in times of economic instability people look to organisations that feel like ‘a safer pair of hands’. They are more likely to be big on high levels of customer service and service levels in general which helps customers feel valued and trusted. They also offer positive social impact and take a ‘more than profit approach’ to their work, which means that they are not purely driven by their bottom line.

This doesn’t mean to say that ethical businesses aren’t profitable, far from it in fact as adopting a more ethically minded approach is increasingly good for business; it’s just a more considered way of working that is now more sustainable for the future than traditional business practices.

A genuinely ethical business can come in many different shapes and sizes – what sets them apart is the way their ethical focus underpins everything they do. It is also reflected in the way they talk about their work. The public has become weary of grand claims, which can, when investigated further, amount to little more than fancy marketing. So it is essential that any claims a company makes can stand the test of time.

This guide aims to provide clear guidance on starting that process, whether through the development of a comprehensive ethical policy or simply by changing key suppliers.

Any business can become more ethical irrelevant of the industry sector, its size or any other characteristics. The end goal is to create a company that not only contributes more to society but also enhances competitiveness, helps to build greater trust in your brand and means your business is better prepared for the future.

I hope you enjoy reading the various articles contained within this guide and that you feel inspired and motivated to make small changes that can add up to great things.

Kim Stoddart
Blue Rocket and Green Rocket

Kim Stoddart is a serial social entrepreneur and founder of Blue Rocket Group Ltd and Green Rocket Media C.I.C, well respected ethical PR companies. For more information visit www.bluerocketgroup.com and www.greenrocketgroup.com
Few directors of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) will deny the importance of good, trusting relationships with customers, employees, suppliers and the community. The success of their company depends on it.

Yet these relationships will pose owners and managers with ethical challenges in their day-to-day business. Examples include:

- How do I respond when securing an important contract seems to require the payment of a kickback?
- How do I delay payment to suppliers and the Inland Revenue when my cash-flow is currently limited?
- How do I meet a deadline with my customer and ship out products even though I know there is a possibility they might be faulty, or do I openly discuss my difficulties with the customer?
- How do I ensure that my employees do their work properly and do the right thing?
- How do I deal with my employees’ desire to balance their work obligations with their personal ones?

This article will set out how a small business should undergo the process of developing a policy that addresses and answers these questions.

**AN ETHICS POLICY IN SMES**

SMEs are characterised by informal understandings and shared expectations among the directors and the workforce of how business is to be done. Any values and ethical principles will usually be implicit rather than formally expressed through ethics policies, codes and programmes that are familiar in large companies.

However, there are advantages to having a somewhat more formal ethics policy in place. Firstly, it reinforces and makes explicit the values and principles that are part of the organisational culture – so allowing them to be communicated to stakeholders. Secondly, a policy will provide guidance and support to employees on how they are expected to conduct their business.
to conduct their business. A policy will provide a context and the vocabulary for employees to raise any concerns they have with their supervisors or the directors. It will form a framework for management and staff to decide what is the “right thing to do” and for understanding why ethical standards are important.

**STEP 1: IDENTIFY AND DEFINE CORE VALUES OF THE BUSINESS**

An effective ethics policy will be based on a set of values or business principles. Values may be thought of as agreed standards of behaviour, expressing beliefs about the ‘good’ and the ‘right’ in the context of the organisation. In SMEs, these values will inevitably be influenced by the personal and professional values and principles of the owner-managers. However, it is considered good practice to consult employees (and even other stakeholders) about this, asking them what they think the values of the organisation are.

When identifying the organisation’s core values, it may help to think of some values as business values and others as ethical values, although the distinction can be blurred and business and ethical values are often interrelated. Some commonly found values are shown in Box 1.

**STEP 2: DRAW UP A ‘CODE OF ETHICS’**

The cornerstone of an ethics policy is a written ethics statement including guidance for staff (usually a code of ethics). It will bring the company’s core values to life as it translates them into specific commitments and expected behaviour in relation to the organisation’s key stakeholder groups (i.e. customers, employees, suppliers and contractors, providers of finance and community).

For example, it will spell out what it means to be ‘honest’ to customers or to show ‘respect’ to employees. A code will also be a good place to address environmental responsibilities. It will be helpful to include issues about which employees are concerned and on which they would like guidance.

Box 2 lists some examples of ethics statements.

The code may be titled, for example, “The way we work” or “Our values and principles”. A code of ethics cannot cover every situation an employee or the business may face, but should make clear the ‘spirit’ in which business should be done.

**STEP 3: EMBEDDING THE ETHICS POLICY**

The ethics policy needs to be communicated to everybody working in the organisation. The code may be displayed on office and shop floor walls – clearly visible to all staff; or a hard copy of the code could be handed out to all employees. It will be good practice if owner-managers themselves introduce the policy to new employees and remind existing staff of the importance of responsible behaviour on a regular basis, e.g. in staff meetings. Reminder communications could include examples of ‘right’ action, consequences of ‘wrong’ actions, and examples of ethical dilemmas and how to handle them.

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**AN EFFECTIVE ETHICS POLICY WILL BE BASED ON A SET OF VALUES OR BUSINESS PRINCIPLES**

**BOX 1: VALUES IN BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS VALUES MAY INCLUDE:</th>
<th>ETHICAL VALUES MAY INCLUDE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Openness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Respect</td>
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<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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Employees should be encouraged to speak to their line-managers or the directors if they are unsure about the ‘right’ response to specific situations or if they have concerns over certain decisions and behaviours. The rights of staff to speak up without fear of retaliation and the support that they will be offered should be made clear. It is also worth considering who employees might contact should they not feel comfortable raising issues with their managers.

Directors may also want to consider appointing an ‘ethics champion’ – a person who keeps an eye on the company’s ethical standards. Depending on the size and set-up of the business, this may be the HR manager, the company secretary, a non-executive director or even a person outside the organisation. Such a person may check on the effectiveness of the ethics policy, discuss ethical issues and concerns with the directors and be a contact if an employee wishes to raise concerns or seek guidance outside of the management line.

Owners or senior managers need to be aware that their behaviour sets an example to their employees. For a policy to be effective, it is important that they are regarded as people of integrity, adhering to high ethical standards. As the same applies for supervisors and line managers, they should be reminded on a regular basis of this responsibility.

It is also good practice to review and revise the ethics policy from time to time, in order to address any new issues and keep it relevant.

Owners and directors committed to promoting an ethical culture in their organisation will be more likely to reap the benefits of a good reputation among their stakeholders and a loyal workforce.

The Institute of Business Ethics was established in 1986 to encourage high standards of business behaviour based on ethical values. The organisation works to raise public awareness of the importance of doing business ethically, and collaborates with other UK and international organisations with interests and expertise in business ethics. For more information visit www.ibe.org.uk

## BOX 2: EXAMPLES OF ETHICS STATEMENTS

**We will provide products and services giving good value and consistent quality, reliability and safety.**

**We will not knowingly sell products which harm our customers.**

**We will treat all employees with equal respect and dignity and will provide them with equality of opportunity to develop themselves and their careers.**

**We undertake to pay our suppliers and contractors in accordance with agreed terms.**

**We seek to compete fairly. We do not solicit or offer bribes or other improper advantages for business or financial gain.**

**We will protect the interests of shareholders and other investors and will not do anything which will advantage one class of investor at the expense of another.**

**We are committed to developing and maintaining good relationships with our local community, and to regularly supporting community activities.**

## CHECKLIST FOR DEVELOPING AN ETHICS POLICY

1. **Identify and define the core values of your business – with the help of your staff.**

2. **Draw up a ‘code of ethics’ that translates these core values into specific commitments in relation to your key stakeholders (i.e. customers, employees, suppliers, community, providers of finance) and marketplace behaviours and goals.**

3. **Make sure all employees know about your ethics policy and the behaviours that are expected of them. Encourage them to speak up if they have any concerns regarding ethical issues and standards.**

4. **Consider appointing an ethics champion – someone who keeps an eye on the company’s ethics.**

5. **Ensure all your senior managers understand the importance of setting an example with their own behaviour.**

6. **Revise the code regularly.**
Unfortunately we can all quote examples of well-known brands that have used marketing to target vulnerable or inappropriate sectors of society, or to draw attention away from the less attractive elements of their business. The same goes for the PR industry, which hasn’t had the most positive reputation over the years. However, to tar all marketing and PR activity with the same brush is to discount one of the most vital and valuable business processes a small and medium sized enterprise (SME) has at its disposal.

So is ethical marketing really possible? The simple answer is yes!

In essence, ethical marketing is an honest and factual representation of a product or service that offers clear cultural or social values to the consumer.

Fairtrade is an example of production value that few would criticise but which would be far less successful as a concept – and thereby benefit fewer disadvantaged people – without effective marketing on what the term means and how it contrasts with traditional purchasing models.

This isn’t to say that your product or service has to be as revolutionary as Fairtrade to be worthy of an ethical marketing strategy. Here are a few tips for enhancing your credibility and giving you even more to shout about.

**UNDERSTAND YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE**

It may sound obvious but you’d be amazed how many companies think they know what their customers want without ever really taking time to check if this is true. The very first step in any ethical marketing programme is to ensure that your product or service is delivering a genuine benefit, after which you need to communicate this in the most appropriate way. Spend time talking to existing and potential clients to find out what they like, and perhaps more importantly what they don’t like about your proposition. Tastes and needs change so this detailed audit should be an annual activity.

Once you’re up to speed in this regard then you should assess whether your existing marketing communications plan can effectively transfer information to this audience. Small companies have a
tendency to get stuck in a rut and do the same thing over and over again, with little insight into whether it’s actually working. For example, advertising can seem more attractive to the uninitiated because it has an immediate and tangible outcome. It may be that another form of communication is more suited to your business such as a targeted event or PR. The more you know about each element, the easier it is to make an effective and profitable decision.

LESS IS MORE
In a bid to stand out from competitors it can be tempting to make bold statements that sound great but may not live up to their promises. It’s important to ensure your credentials stand up to scrutiny, otherwise your brand may be damaged.

This is never truer than in the area of corporate social responsibility (CSR). So many organisations are involved in ‘greenwashing’ – i.e. making flimsy or inaccurate environmental claims – that nowadays consumers are less likely to view such statements in a positive light.

It is essential to consider the long term implications of any marketing activity and avoid the temptation of promoting any initiative, ecological or otherwise, that has little substance. Authenticity and a realistic sense of modesty are incredibly powerful, and people prefer an honest admission of imperfection to over-inflated or downright dishonest pronouncements.

VET YOUR SUPPLIERS
In addition to the things you say, ethical marketing is about assessing the materials and suppliers you use to bring a marketing strategy to life, and ensuring these are as environmentally and socially responsible as possible. This is particularly relevant in the area of design and print, where processes and equipment can vary dramatically (see page 8 for a separate article on this topic from ethical design company The Good Folk). It is becoming increasingly common for larger companies to request a full supplier audit before signing a contract, so it’s worth ensuring that yours is whiter than white (or greener than green) if you hope to win big contracts.

In conclusion, ethical marketing is about understanding your brand, product or service and doing your best to develop and promote this in the most effective and least damaging way to the right people. If that sounds like a challenge then seek advice from an expert who will be able to give you unbiased, strategic advice.
GREEN DESIGN

As an ethical business you need to be open and honest, and reflect this in your branding and message. This can be communicated by a well-designed logo and look, but also through the tone you use. Using straightforward language, being transparent about your activities – both good and bad – and avoiding ‘sales speak’ can help to build trust in your audience.

The printing industry is the fourth largest in the UK, and careful procurement of your print publicity can make a big difference. There are several factors to consider:

1) THE DESIGN
This is the stage where most of the crucial decisions determining the end result are made. Finding a designer that not only understands your business, but can advise you on printing and its effects on the environment – from carbon emissions to harmful chemicals – can get your project on the right track.

2) THE PAPER
Your choice of paper can have the biggest impact on the environment. The greenest option is 100 per cent post consumer waste recycled paper, which uses less energy to manufacture and doesn’t involve chopping down more trees. The quality of recycled...
paper has come a long way in recent years and there is a wide variety to choose from. If you do use paper from virgin forests, there are certifications to prove that it comes from well-managed, sustainable sources. The best is the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certification, which also certifies recycled paper.

If you consider the energy needed to produce an item of print, the majority is used in paper production, so the mill it comes from makes a huge difference. Currently, all paper mills in the UK are powered by fossil fuels. Sourcing your paper from renewable energy powered mills in the US or Sweden can actually reduce its carbon footprint because the additional CO₂ from its transportation is far less than the CO₂ saved in its production.

3) THE PRINTER
There are over 10,000 printers in the UK with varying environmental credentials, from those that do the bare minimum to the ones who excel. But how do you know which ones to pick? The best way is to see what environmental certifications they have (see box on left).

4) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
Quantity: Most medium sized print runs are done on litho presses. Because of the high set-up cost of doing a litho print run, many businesses order too many copies in case they run out. This creates waste and is a real area for consideration.

Paper weight: Thinner paper means less paper is used and and less energy consumed.

Digital: Smaller runs can be done on digital, which is effectively a large, high-quality photocopier. With digital printing there is no ‘make ready’ wastage and practically no set up cost, so no need to order more copies than required.

PRINT CHOICES

GOOD
- Recycled paper (preferably 100 per cent post consumer waste)
- Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper
- Uncoated paper
- Chlorine free (ECF, PCF and TCF).
  All papers made in the EU no longer use chlorine bleaching.

- Vegetable oil-based inks (most litho inks are now vegetable oil-based)
- Water-based varnishes
- Standard paper sizes (such as A4 and A5) save on waste
- Less ink coverage conserves ink and makes paper easier to recycle

BAD
- Mineral-based inks (metallics and fluorescents)
- UV varnishes
- Lamination
- Glue binding

CERTIFICATIONS
EMAS (Eco-management and Audit Scheme) has the highest environmental standards. There are just a handful of printers in the UK that have this certification.

ISO14001: This is an international scheme in environmental management and a good number of printers now have this. (EMAS and ISO14001 are costly, and can be difficult for small printers to attain. There are smaller schemes, such as Green Dragon in Wales and Greenmark in London which work on similar principles of continuous environmental improvement.)

FSC CERTIFICATION FOR PRINTERS
This certification ensures that the paper has been tracked all the way from an FSC forest to the printer and means a printer can put a FSC logo on your FSC paper print jobs.

The Good Folk is a design company working across branding, print and the web. We believe strongly in sustainability and can help you with ideas that have powerful environmental, social and business benefits. For more information visit www.thegoodfolk.co.uk
INTEGRATING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INTO OUR ACTIVITIES

TNT’s mission states among other things that TNT seeks to share responsibility for the world in which it operates. TNT benefits from globalisation and the increase in international flows of goods that is a result. As distances between the continents shrink, all inhabitants of this planet are becoming neighbours. This means the problems of the developing nations are also the problems of the industrialised part of the world, which creates a responsibility TNT feels as a company.

The Board of Management is actively involved in developing social responsibility (SR) policies across the company, including setting SR targets for management and linking them to their incentive schemes.

TNT is convinced that any actions a company undertakes to help address a major problem in the world can be a source of pride for its employees, as well as having a positive influence on a company’s reputation. These are vital factors for a company in a services industry, where success is a direct result of employees’ engagement and customers’ trust.

DIFFERENTIATING OURSELVES
TNT’s SR strategy also aims to differentiate TNT through inspiring initiatives on responsible corporate citizenship, like our partnership with the United Nations’ World Food Programme (WFP).

More than five years have gone by since TNT and WFP started this partnership. From the first global fundraising event, Walk the World, to the latest disaster relief emergency response to Mozambique and from the various knowledge transfer projects to the School Feeding Volunteer Programmes, the TNT/WFP partnership has become an incredible global example of...
best practice corporate social responsibility. The last five years have also become a defining phase in TNT's history. The partnership has given TNT a genuine social soul. It has instilled immense pride in TNT's employees as well as strengthened the company's reputation. No wonder… so far, TNT has supported WFP through 30 emergencies, including 10 emergency airlifts, trained more than 1,000 WFP staff in a range of skills, helped more than 1,000,000 school children and funded 58,000,000 school meals.

The tsunami disaster of 2004 turned out to be a defining moment for the partnership. The way WFP and TNT responded demonstrated the depth and strength of their willingness to work together. With emergency operational procedures already in place, TNT was able to move swiftly and efficiently, transporting emergency response goods, staff and food to assist the six countries affected by the devastating catastrophe. And it meant that WFP could provide relief aid far sooner than would have been possible in the past.

The future will see TNT continue to focus on emergency response needs, knowledge transfer projects, and awareness and fundraising programmes.

Planet Me, the second initiative and launched in January 2007, is a CO₂ reduction programme. Climate change may be the biggest challenge the world is facing today. Most scientists agree climate change is caused by the increased emission of greenhouse gases, mostly CO₂. As transportation is responsible for 18 per cent of total CO₂ emissions in the world, TNT feels that it has a special responsibility in this regard to pro-actively minimise the impact of its operations.

TNT's stakeholders are involved as well. TNT anticipates legislation that will enforce greener transportation. TNT also increasingly sees restrictions being created to stimulate clean inner city distribution, for instance in London, but also in Rotterdam and in other cities. Since TNT's services are part of their supply chain, customers demand that TNT increases the transparency of its CO₂ footprint (per customer, per parcel, per route) and that TNT improves its relative and absolute performance. This will over time become a qualifier for the licence to operate for both TNT and the industry.

Planet Me consists of three projects: Count Carbon, Code Orange and Choose Orange.

Within Count Carbon, TNT will install a consistent model and process to manage, measure, and report on CO₂ throughout TNT. TNT's operational commitment is called Code Orange. TNT is working hard to reduce CO₂ emissions in every segment of its operations. To achieve this TNT is in the process of formulating a set of practices. The third and most innovative part of TNT's initiative is the way in which it wants to involve its employees in TNT's CO₂ reduction efforts. TNT wants to strike a deal with its people: TNT will show them what TNT as a company is doing and then TNT wants to challenge them to take this approach at home as well. This approach TNT calls Choose Orange.
It’s no secret that banks and insurers are in business to make profits. One way they do this is by taking your money and lending it to someone else at a higher rate of interest.

But what they rarely tell you is who they lend it to.

For example, your money could be supporting companies involved in the fur trade, arms dealers who supply oppressive regimes, or companies involved in the production or extraction of fossil fuels – the primary contributor to climate change.

And you wouldn’t know a thing about it.

Every bank account holder has the power to make ethical choices about how their money is used. As a business customer you have the opportunity for this to feed into and enhance your existing corporate responsibility policy.

While you may have a strong desire to ensure your money is working for good rather than causing harm, it’s possible that you’re not sure where to start or what questions to ask your bank. To help make this potential minefield a bit easier to navigate we’ve outlined below some of the areas in which ethical banking can make a real difference.

Every bank account holder has the power to make ethical choices about how their money is being used.
SEEK INVESTMENTS THAT PROMOTE AND SUPPORT RECYCLING, RENEWABLE ENERGY AND THE PRODUCTION OF SUSTAINABLE NATURAL PRODUCTS

HUMAN RIGHTS
Here in the UK, human rights issues can often seem quite remote from our everyday lives. Yet frequently the organisations – be they governments or businesses – that abuse human rights have links to this country. Just as individuals may choose to invest in such organisations, so too do banks. In this way, business customers may inadvertently continue to support oppressive regimes.

One way to avoid this is to check that your money isn’t invested in any government or business which fails to uphold basic human rights within its sphere of influence, or which has links to an oppressive regime that are a continuing cause for concern.

GLOBAL TRADE
We live in a globalised world and many of the goods we consume are produced overseas, where labour is often cheaper to secure. When undertaken fairly, trade has an unparalleled capacity to lift people out of poverty and enhance the quality of lives across the world. However, the day-to-day pressures of business and competition, coupled with political, cultural and economic factors, make decent labour standards difficult to guarantee.

It’s worth checking whether your money is invested in businesses that operate in developing countries. If so, are they involved in Fairtrade activities that help people to work their way out of poverty and become self-sufficient?

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT
Every year, millions of tonnes of fossil fuels, such as oil, gas and coal, are burned, producing large volumes of waste, such as CO₂. The accumulation of CO₂ in nature has been identified as the primary factor behind global climate change.

For that reason, the ethical banking customer may choose not to invest in organisations whose core activity contributes to climate change through the production or extraction of fossil fuels.

Other areas of concern are companies which manufacture chemicals that are persistent in the environment – an issue that has recently been the subject of a major new European law – and the unsustainable harvest of the world’s natural resources: timber and overfishing being specific areas of concern.

Instead seek investments that promote and support recycling, renewable energy and the production of sustainable natural products.

ANIMAL WELFARE
Many people have strict guidelines on the kind of food they will eat. For example, animal products which have been raised in a free range environment are proving increasingly popular. These ideals can be extended to banking practices, through the refusal to invest in businesses involved in intensive farming, such as caged egg production.

Similarly, it’s possible to avoid companies that undertake animal testing of cosmetic or household products or ingredients, or blood sports, which involve the use of animals or birds to catch, fight or kill each other.

With these guidelines in mind it’s possible to make an educated decision about how your business banking should impact on the world, and where it might be possible to make some extremely ethical and sustainable choices.

The Co-operative Bank was the first UK high street bank to launch a customer-led Ethical Policy that sets out where it will and will not invest customers’ money. The Policy also sets out the areas the bank seeks to support – these are often activities that are good for the environment or community, such as recycling and fair trade. For more information visit www.goodwithmoney.co.uk
Who doesn’t want motivated, hardworking employees who are dedicated to your company? This is every employer’s dream as well as a key ingredient in the recipe for success. It is also perfectly achievable if your team is happy and knows that they are valued.

INCLUSION NOT EXCLUSION
Having ethical practices in place that include rather than exclude employees, is the first step in creating a positive working culture. In turn, this reputation helps to attract high quality candidates and increases retention.

Keeping people updated on developments and involving them as much as possible allows everyone to understand and feel part of the company’s future. Encouraging feedback at all levels, not just senior management, is important, allowing you to gain a rounded perspective.

Enthusiasm is infectious: if your people understand the importance of their ideas and that they will be rewarded for useful suggestions then you will be able to tap into an ongoing flow of innovation and creativity. Momentum can be maintained through monthly competitions or regular training workshops. Open channels of communication are key and informal chats, brainstorming sessions and emails can be useful tools to get the most out of your team. Regular company or department meetings can also provide a forum for discussion, and foster inspiration and inclusion.

OPEN CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION ARE KEY AND INFORMAL CHATS, BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS AND EMAILS CAN BE USEFUL TOOLS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TEAM

TAKING CARE OF YOUR PEOPLE
A structured and regular appraisal system helps employees and managers
to stay focused and outlines a clear plan for future progression. This format also provides an opportunity for people to ask questions or discuss problems, enabling the management team to overcome issues early. Encourage a 360 degree approach where people at all levels feed into appraisals rather than just senior colleagues. Some people are great at carrying out requests but aren’t so competent at delegation, so this will give you a rounded picture of their strengths and weaknesses.

**EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION**
The ethical HR practices already discussed should hopefully encourage employees to flag up any potential issues before they become serious problems. However, there may be cases when things escalate unexpectedly and your response to such situations is critical.

When an employee raises an issue, it is important that their concerns are given due consideration. An ethical company has clear communication channels in place so that every member of staff is encouraged to flag up concerns straight away. When your people stop communicating it’s a warning sign that you’re not engaging them properly and systems need to be improved.

It may be useful to implement a buddy programme, where people have a designated person they can speak outside their immediate team, which should help to overcome any natural reticence they may feel in speaking out.

Ultimately, if you treat people with the respect they deserve, they become more than employees and instead are partners in a community of shared success where there is no room for conflict.

**WE ALSO HAVE VIRTUOUS FRUIT MONDAYS AND IRRESISTIBLE CHOCOLATE FRIDAYS WHERE THE COMPANY PROVIDES A SELECTION OF GOODIES FOR PEOPLE TO ENJOY**

**INCENTIVISE, INCENTIVISE, INCENTIVISE**

TV shows like Dragons’ Den and The Apprentice are undoubtedly having an effect on the national consciousness and encouraging a more entrepreneurial spirit. This means that all businesses are in danger of losing their most talented employees if they don’t find a way to engage them within the workplace.

Providing a relevant incentive and reward programme goes a long way to stimulating retention. This can work on many levels and may include everything from company bonuses and profit share schemes to smaller but equally popular benefits like health and beauty treatments, shopping vouchers or duvet days.

For example all of my full time employees are given a choice of a massage or treatment each month. We also have virtuous fruit Mondays and irresistible chocolate Fridays where the company provides a selection of goodies for people to enjoy. Sometimes it’s the simplest ideas that are the most popular!

There are so many benefits to being an ethical boss, which will leave everyone feeling valued and enthused. We all know the saying that it takes more muscles to frown than to smile. Well, at the end of the day it takes more effort to be an unethical boss than an ethical one because a happy workforce takes less time to manage in the long run.
In the current credit crunch, many businesses will be looking for opportunities to cut their operational costs, and one area that has come under scrutiny is the annual energy bill. While it may be tempting to seek out a new provider on the basis of a competitive quote, this is actually an ideal opportunity to take a different, longer-term approach to energy usage.

Good Energy places great emphasis on the environmental aspect of energy supply. However, we also recognise that a business under financial pressure from a turbulent economy needs to be as cost efficient as possible.

It is possible to be an ethical energy user and still save money, and here are some top tips on how your business can achieve this.

**MONITOR USAGE**
The first step in reducing energy costs is to gain an accurate picture of usage across the company, preferably over a year long period, which will allow you to assess seasonal changes. The best way to do this is by using an energy monitor that measures the amount of electricity used in the workplace and tells you how much money you are spending.

**SET CLEAR GOALS**
Work out the percentage by which usage should be reduced over the coming year. Make this a realistic goal otherwise it’s easy to get disheartened.

**ENGAGE EMPLOYEES**
Involve your team in identifying areas of poor performance throughout the company so that they don’t feel the finger is pointed at them when you deliver the policy.
APPOINT ‘ENERGY AMBASSADORS’
These employees will be responsible for helping to implement the policy and encouraging others to take action. You might also want to incentivise people by introducing a quarterly award for the team member who has taken the greatest steps towards becoming energy efficient.

PRODUCE A WRITTEN DOCUMENT
This should outline the overriding reduction goal and how this is to be achieved. Make the information freely available to all employees and new recruits. Elements you may wish to include are ensuring that all electrical items are turned off at the end of the day or outlining a commitment to donate old IT equipment to charity.

TURN DOWN THE THERMOSTAT
A reduction of 1°C can reduce heating bills by up to 10 per cent.

TURN APPLIANCES OFF AT THE WALL
Leaving items on standby uses 85 per cent of the total power. Always try to turn things off at the switch, and remember not to charge up appliances for longer than necessary.

LESS IS MORE
Kettles use a lot of power, so encourage employees to only boil the minimum amount required. Another way of getting around this is by purchasing an eco-kettle, which can help you to use up to 31 per cent less energy than with your standard kettle.

CHECK YOUR WATER TEMPERATURE
A cylinder thermostat must be at least 55°C but does not need to be any higher than 60°C.

INVEST IN ‘A’ OR ‘A+’ RATED APPLIANCES
An old fridge freezer can cost you two and a half times more to run than a newer version. Also, if possible, when buying a computer chose a laptop over a desktop as they use far less electricity.

SWITCH TO A GREEN ELECTRICITY PROVIDER
Good Energy supplies electricity that comes from the natural power of the wind, sun, biomass and water. To compare the amount of renewable electricity provided by all electricity suppliers in the UK go to www.electricityinfo.org

Following these suggestions will place you firmly in the category of an ethical energy user, reducing your environmental impact and your energy bills in one fell swoop!

CONSIDER SELF-GENERATION
A solar panel, wind turbine or other form of generation on your premises may offer a great investment for your business in both monetary and energy terms. Good Energy Shop offers a whole range of microgeneration products to buy and, once installed, you can even earn money through Good Energy’s generation schemes, where you get paid for every unit of electricity that you produce. Visit www.good-energy.co.uk for more information.
Paying attention to the numbers can have a positive impact on the environment as well as the bottom line. It’s possible for businesses in even the most traditional of sectors to take a different and more ethical approach. Green Accountancy was formed in 2007 with the aim of helping and encouraging small businesses to reduce their environmental impact. By combining our qualifications and experience in accountancy, environmental conservation and community work, we have been able to help people who may have found mainstream advice inaccessible or difficult to take up.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH
Starting a brand new business with no systems or clients enabled us to build ethics into our business from day one and to focus on issues that we feel are truly important, such as climate change. As such, we offer a different approach to most accountancy firms, integrating financial advice with environmental consultancy. This not only helps our clients to minimise their ecological impact but also delivers cost savings by doing so. In fact, we are often able to help small businesses reduce their greenhouse gases by up to 90 per cent, which has a significant positive impact on their bottom line.

LINKS TO THE COMMUNITY
Ethical practice at a local level is also about treating people fairly, with consideration and without prejudice. We have an open policy whereby we are always willing to talk to people about any business or...
environmental issue that we may be able to help with.

Many great activities are being carried out by real people in real communities. Often a little advice, perhaps just a half hour chat, can make a huge difference to the outcome of these activities. We have seen too many disaster stories where honest people have fallen foul of tax rules, employment law or market principles for want of a little advice. We prevent this by helping people understand how to make a living from the activities they enjoy. Simple record keeping, how to price and raise invoices, understanding the tax system as it applies to small businesses and having contacts that can help are all part of earning an enjoyable living.

Our willingness to put people first and help in practical ways means that we are acknowledged as approachable. People call us for a chat, to ask questions and to arrange to meet. We have worked with foresters, musicians, writers, artists, therapists, carpenters, plumbers, organisers, cooks, designers, gardeners and landscapers; all of whom may have found it difficult to secure assistance from a traditional accounts practice.

**MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES**

We aim to operate our organisation with as little environmental impact as possible. All of the actions we take are accessible to most small business operations.

- **We have a home based office which is well insulated and receives good natural light.**
- **We refurbish and purchase recycled equipment where possible – our favourite office desk is in its fourth ownership and was made in 1981.**
- **Most of our day-to-day work involves no transport. Meetings are held at our office locations or clients’ premises in Oxford, Reading or London. All travel to such meetings is by bus, train, tube or occasionally we use our low emission Ford Fusion which we fuel with recycled waste vegetable oil.**
- **We monitor and minimise the amount of electricity used. All of our electricity is 100 per cent renewable provided by Good Energy. Our website is hosted by Ecological Hosting using servers that are powered entirely by solar panels.**
- **We tread as lightly as possible in terms of paper, printing, recycling, water usage, purchasing, banking and investments.**
- **We purchase and plant one tree for every 10kg of carbon dioxide per year that our business currently generates.**

**SMES CONSIDERING THE ENVIRONMENT**

Once the basics have been established we find that most small business owners want to run a sustainable company; becoming more efficient, saving tax and motivating their workforce.

The government is encouraging businesses to take up the environmental challenge in the following ways:

- Cars emitting less than 120g CO₂ per km are treated very favourably by the tax system.
- Schemes encouraging employees to use public transport and bicycles are tax efficient.
- Enhanced capital allowances and interest free loans are available when purchasing equipment that saves energy or water.
- Climate change levy is avoided by purchasing renewable source electricity and landfill tax is avoided by recycling.

Public attitudes are changing. The Carbon Trust reports that 64 per cent of consumers are more likely to use a business that can demonstrate it has a low carbon footprint. Procurement policies of many large buyers including local authorities require suppliers to have a sound environmental policy. Whether customers are consumers, public sector or other businesses it is possible to reach an expanded market through solid environmental policies.

No-one ever created a great business by shaving a few percentage points off overheads. However, rising costs of electricity (up 78 per cent since 2003), gas (74 per cent), fuel (36 per cent) and water (24 per cent) mean that efficiencies in these areas help to balance the books and reduce climate change.

The efficiencies don’t stop at costs savings. For example paperless systems give quick access to information. Taking the train instead of driving frees up valuable reading and working time. Maintaining or refurbishing equipment rather than replacing can avoid expensive down time, installation and training.

By taking simple actions, counting your greenhouse gas emissions and setting green policies it is easy to reduce environmental impacts, grow business, reduce costs, save tax and improve the morale of your workforce. In a competitive market, and that includes tougher trading conditions which may be on the horizon, considering the environment will help any small business prosper.

Green Accountancy was founded by David Wilsdon and is a firm of chartered certified accountants qualified in environmental conservation. The company offers a full range of accountancy and tax services, all provided with consideration of the environment and ethical issues. For more information visit www.greenaccountancy.com.
Working in PR, relationships are at the centre of everything we do at Blue Rocket. Thankfully it’s very different to the superficial wining and dining stereotype. Honest, cooperative and genuine relationships have to be maintained with each and every client so that together you can fulfil an organisation’s development goals.

The best campaigns come from working in partnership and over the years many of our clients have come to see their Blue Rocket PR team as an extension of their own organisation. This concept of treating clients as partners is relevant to many different business sectors. Here’s a quick guide to what’s involved:

**MANAGE EXPECTATIONS**

Relationships get off to the right start when everyone knows where they stand. Before a new client signs up lay clear boundaries about what they can expect. Be clear about what you can do for them and what you can’t. Explain how you will treat them and what their responsibilities are as a client.

This might not sound like a great sales pitch but this honesty often wins prospective clients by showing you are trustworthy. It also sets your relationship up in the right way.

It can be useful to set realistic, measurable goals from the beginning so that the client is totally clear what they’re paying for and you know what you are aiming towards. Asking new clients upfront what they would consider a successful relationship is a good way to find out what they really want. It is sensible then to repeat this goal-setting process at regular intervals to help ensure a long term relationship.

**FIND OUT HOW CUSTOMERS WISH TO BE TREATED**

Treat every client as an individual and be prepared to be flexible. For example, while some clients may prefer regular detailed reports others will just want...
a top line review showing that activity is on track. Similarly, some may feel abandoned if they don’t speak to you over the phone every week, while others are too busy and prefer to be emailed. Make it your mission to find out how customers wish to be treated and adapt to them.

BE HONEST
Some companies will do anything to win business and unfortunately directly lying to clients is frighteningly commonplace. While all decent organisations endeavour to tell the truth it can be tempting to hide things from clients – especially after a mistake. Companies may get away with it on occasion but it only takes one scandal to lose client confidence and damage a hard-won reputation.

No business is perfect and there are times when you’ve got bad news for customers. It is essential in these circumstances to tell them what’s happened straightaway, why it happened and what you are doing to fix it.

I’ve seen the importance of this more upfront approach from personal experience. With media relations campaigns sometimes the first strategy simply doesn’t work and you have to find out what went wrong and start again. On other occasions a journalist might promise to feature your client then let you down. Many PR companies carry on struggling behind the scenes while presenting a rosy picture to the client. Yet if you tell a client straight away, then work hard to solve the problem, they are very understanding. Once they know what’s happened they can become your ally in getting around any obstacles you might face.

FAIR, TRANSPARENT PRICING
There’s nothing like an unexpectedly large invoice for souring a relationship. Make sure all charges are absolutely transparent and check every client understands them. Where possible services should include all costs rather than coming with hidden extras. If clients ask for extra work make sure they fully understand the cost implications before going ahead.

MAINTAIN CONFIDENCES
Service providers are often privy to confidential information that could cause damage in the wrong hands. If a client shares sensitive information then it must be carefully protected. Promote best practice as well as fulfilling statutory requirements.

KEEP LISTENING AND IMPROVING
Learn from your clients’ experiences by asking them for feedback and finding out what you could be doing better. Identify the new challenges they’re experiencing and adapt to suit their changed circumstances.

Your clients can also be a great gauge of the viability of new services. Working with them in the pilot stage shows how much you care about their needs as well as ultimately creating a more valuable asset for your business.

VALUE YOUR CLIENTS
Tough times make it more important than ever to provide the best possible service to your clients. Constantly evaluate how you can improve your client relationships and services. This is good business practice anyway but comes into its own in a global recession.

Clients need to see that your work is beneficial to their business and competitively priced in the marketplace. They will also need to feel valued by your team and trust your integrity.

This ethical approach involves working in partnership with customers and providing them with services that really meet their needs. This simple policy of treating clients as we’d all like to be treated helps businesses forge a stronger and more satisfying future.
EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS TO PROCURR GOODS AND SERVICES. YOU CAN ACTIVELY USE YOUR CONSUMER POWER TO PURCHASE FROM SUPPLIERS THAT HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY.

A small but growing breed of enterprises known as Social Firms provide employment and training for severely disadvantaged people, such as those with disabilities, the homeless, ex-offenders or people with mental health problems.

While utterly committed to community interests and re-investing all profits in the people they support, Social Firms are businesses with high standards of commercial practices and product quality.

Here are some tips on how to support the employment and empowerment of disadvantaged people:

FIND QUALITY SUPPLIERS
The Social Firm sector now consists of more than 150 enterprises in the UK. These include everything from catering firms to travel agencies, gardeners to market researchers, sign-makers to print houses and even aquarium rental for offices and exhibitions.

Visit www.trade.socialfirms.co.uk to find suitable suppliers for your business.

SPEAK TO HAPPY CUSTOMERS
Many high profile companies including

THE SOCIAL FIRM SECTOR NOW CONSISTS OF MORE THAN 150 ENTERPRISES IN THE UK
IBM and Morgan Stanley already procure from Social Firms. These early adopters have found commercial advantages to working with these organisations, as well as seeing it as a practical application of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

For example, creator of Famous Grouse whiskey, The Edrington Group, has outsourced its packaging and assembly to Social Firm, Haven Products – an independent supplier award scheme judged Haven to be one of the company’s top five suppliers for product quality, delivery reliability, flexibility and innovation.

**‘BUDDY’ A SOCIAL FIRM**

As well as buying from Social Firms you can also set up a partnership with a Social Firm that complements your business.

This buddy scheme allows employees to use their skills and expertise to help a Social Firm succeed. It provides consultancy experience and extra job satisfaction for corporate staff within a mutually beneficial partnership.

**START YOUR OWN SOCIAL FIRM**

Social Firms UK has set the ultimate challenge for businesspeople – to devise a market opportunity for a Social Firm and get it off the ground. Social Firms UK will help with legal structure, governance and leveraging in finance.

**JOIN THE CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP SCHEME**

While still in the early stages the Social Firm business model has proved successful. If it is to pull more people into social inclusion and economic empowerment then major support is needed. Partnerships with mainstream businesses are essential.

You can get advice and support on how to work with these unique businesses by joining Social Firms UK’s Corporate Membership Scheme.

**LOOK OUT FOR ‘STAR’ SOCIAL FIRMS**

To help more people understand the sector, a quality standard has been created. In the same vein as the Fairtrade mark for ethically traded goods, this award highlights each shining example of the Social Firm sector as a “Star Social Firm”.

Every enterprise with this status has been through an independent evaluation to prove it is a first-rate business providing high quality products or services as well as excellent employment opportunities for severely disadvantaged people.

Social Firms UK is the charity dedicated to supporting Social Firms. The company has approximately 300 members and represents the interests of the sector through lobbying and dissemination activities. For more information visit [www.socialfirms.co.uk](http://www.socialfirms.co.uk)
Many corporate social responsibility (CSR) practitioners in business are engaged in navel gazing right now. With the current economic uncertainty investments in general, and CSR budgets in particular, are being scrutinised more deeply.

When times get tough CSR is an easy budget to cut. However, when this activity is broken down into an organisation’s responsibility towards its people, the planet and making a profit for its shareholders, it all makes more sense to real businesses.

Smart companies are taking the opportunity to streamline their business models so they can survive and hopefully thrive through a recession, and this inevitably involves making decisions about costs.

Ensuring that decision making is legal is a ‘given’ but whilst there is plenty of advice available regarding the legal compliance aspects of employment law and decision making (for example the excellent RBS Mentor service) there is a distinct lack of guidance on how to make ethical decisions in difficult times. How does a business explore all opportunities to avoid the potential for redundancy in order to genuinely come up with some options that could save jobs, yet still achieve the necessary cost reduction?

It is commonly accepted good advice in this situation to “cut hard, deep and early”. Despite this, it is very easy for the heart to be swayed by the emotional arguments for saving someone’s job, despite the head presenting a strong counter argument to make sacrifices so that the rest of the business can survive to invoice another day. And this is where a culture of openness and trust, often brought about through CSR, can help companies to make the right decisions in difficult times.
In our case we had a series of team meetings where the financial forecasts were discussed and the requirement to reduce costs was quantified and explained, with the result that a combination of changes was implemented including:

- A hiring freeze so no new recruits were employed
- Some directors took a short term pay cut
- Staff volunteered to work fewer days
- Some suppliers reduced prices and eased terms
- Staff re-trained to fulfil other new roles in client services and SEO production
- Closer monitoring of overhead budgets and efficiencies

The net result of this has been a reduction in the number of redundancies required to achieve the cost savings, a stronger understanding of the business by all staff and a better shared sense of being part of a team that is pulling together to be successful.

Trust is critical; it takes a long time to develop and can be lost in a flash. I’ve spent several years building a culture of transparency and openness with staff, customers, partners, suppliers and more recently, with shareholders and I believe that we’ve benefitted from that past investment throughout this process. The goodwill and mutual respect between employees has crystallised in everyone, including those under threat of redundancy, pulling together to continue working, to resolve problems, to win new business and deliver their best for current customers in difficult circumstances.

Professor Khalid Aziz, Chairman of the renowned Aziz Corporation, recently said: “In having to deal with and communicate bad news, a downturn exposes leaders who are muddling through without a plan. That way they can often allay the worst fears of the market, while demonstrating that they are on top of the problem and have a plan to deal with it.”

It is in fact possible to replace ‘markets’ in the quote with ‘employees’.

Companies which refuse to come clean risk a steady and persistent drip of bad news. Businesses in difficulty should disclose their position early and in full.

AI Digital is an award winning, digital and search engine marketing agency incorporating www.academyinternet.com and www.sitevisibility.co.uk which helps brands and businesses acquire, retain and build repeat business using the digital marketing channel. For more information visit www.ai-digital.com
Today’s economic conditions present a perfect storm for anyone trying to market a low-carbon economy. As cost pressures mount, companies may be looking at where they can make cut backs and often it is marketing and environment budgets that are first for the chop.

But equally others will fill the vacuum with messages that emphasise the importance of moving to a low-carbon economy and will reap the rewards of doing so.

Businesses which succeed in the twenty first century will be those that seize the opportunity to adapt to a low-carbon future, and that means changing the business model – not just the shop front.

PAINTING THE TOWN GREEN
Clearly this will require a lot of work and businesses need to be wary of thinking they can make shortcuts.

If the Advertising Standards Authority’s (ASA) latest annual report is anything to go by, a lot of companies are potentially misleading in describing their ‘green’ efforts. Complaints to the ASA about environmental claims in advertising increased dramatically in 2007. They received 561 complaints about environmental claims in 410 ads, compared with just 117 complaints about 83 ads the year before.

Getting the message right is therefore key, but so is understanding the claims you are trying to make. Avoiding greenwash is simple – it comes down to one point and one point only and that is honesty.

If companies are to stand up to the charge of greenwash the rhetoric has to match the reality of what a company is doing. Companies need to be transparent about their environmental claims.

Organisations are rightly promoting their green credentials to set their products

A LOW-CARBON ECONOMY WILL OFFER SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS. THOSE ORGANISATIONS WHICH TAKE THE LEAD AND ADAPT TO A LOW-CARBON FUTURE, WILL REAP THE REWARDS.
and services apart in today’s market, but they have to be backed up with supporting evidence. So that means not just talking the talk but walking the walk.

When I was first asked whether any company can adapt their brand to a low-carbon image, my answer was simple: No. It is about adapting your business model. But no company can be expected to go from zero to hero within a day.

As consumer confusion and potential cynicism grows, companies will have to work harder to get the business model and messaging right. But we can learn from others. At the CBI we are encouraging members to share best practice.

ENGAGING CONSUMERS AND EMPLOYEES

Popular, well-trusted businesses have the potential to build on the relationship that they have with...
consumers and their employees, encouraging them to make adjustments towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

If both your workforce and customer base are aware of your sustainable goals this will also enhance your businesses reputation.

LOW-CARBON PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
The business opportunity to develop new or enhance existing products and services for a low-carbon market is potentially huge. If businesses establish themselves as the front runners in designing energy efficient or low-carbon products they can potentially become global market leaders.

CARBON LABELING
More and more companies are thinking about sticking labels on their products which identify its carbon footprint. If we are to engage consumers in the debate and encourage them to make the right decisions, carbon labeling can be a useful tool.

However, it needs to be managed carefully and put into context. How can we equally measure the carbon footprint of a steak compared with a Black Forest gateau?

These are difficult questions and this why a clear and standard practice for carbon labeling needs to be addressed. A new product carbon footprinting standard was launched recently – PAS2050. DEFRA, the Carbon Trust, The Climate Group, the British Standards Institute and the CBI were all heavily involved in its creation.

CARBON REPORTING
As the old saying goes ‘you can’t manage what you don’t measure’. Whilst a substantial number of UK companies currently report their greenhouse gas emissions, there is a lack of comparability and consistency in what they report, which can lead to confusion and charges of greenwashing.

Without proper context how can we compare progress between companies and industries? It is vital that we get a clear method in place which will help to distinguish the companies who are really making positive changes and those who are not.

PREPARING FOR A LOW-CARBON RECOVERY
We are clearly in difficult economic times, but we must not let the downturn become an excuse for inaction – what we need to start preparing for is a low-carbon recovery.

It is more important than ever that businesses focus on the opportunities ahead and begin to incorporate low carbon thinking and decisions into their corporate DNA.

Many businesses are getting ahead of the curve now and will reap the rewards – brushing greenwash aside – and preparing for a future when the only option available is a low carbon one.

GREENWASH IS SIMPLE. IT COMES DOWN TO ONE POINT AND ONE POINT ONLY AND THAT IS HONESTY

The CBI is campaigning for a government framework, as well as developing practical solutions, to enable businesses and consumers to take action on climate change. For more information visit www.cbi.org.uk/climatechange
OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS SUPPORT
www.envirowise.gov.uk
www.futurebiz.org
www.greenyouroffice.co.uk
www.londonremade.com
www.green-works.co.uk
www.ethical-company-organisation.org
www.ethicalaffiliate.com
www.ethical-junction.org
www.etheco.com

SHOPPING
www.ethicalconsumer.org
www.farmfreshexpress.co.uk
www.ethicalsупerstore.com
www.guidemegreen.com
www.thegreenshoppingguide.co.uk
www.mygreenerhome.co.uk

www.businesslink.gov.uk offers lots of useful information and tips, including ethical buying, sustainable procurement, supply chains, environmental legislation and what applies to you, and how to save money and be greener.

GENERAL INFORMATION
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
www.ethicaldirectory.co.uk
www.ethicaltrade.org
www.foe.co.uk

Find out how sustainable your business is at www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/how sustainable and see their guide on writing an environmental policy at www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/environmentalpolicy.

THE ETHICAL BUSINESS GUIDE WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY BLUE ROCKET AND THE GOOD FOLK

Blue Rocket is a well respected ethical PR company that works with a mixture of businesses and third sector organisations.

Our team of ‘rocketeers’ genuinely care about the work they do for clients and work hard to ensure that every campaign produces the best results. As an ethical PR agency our reputation is paramount and this runs through everything we do, from the way we approach the media to client relationships and the nurturing of our people. We pride ourselves on the high profile results we constantly deliver and the growth we have achieved through client recommendation.

In an industry that doesn’t always have the most positive reputation we make it our job to stand out from the crowd by refusing to accept anything less than the highest standards.

The Good Folk is a design company working across branding, print and the web, delivering creative solutions that inspire and connect. We believe strongly in sustainability and can help you with ideas that have powerful environmental, social and business benefits. For more information please visit www.thegoodfolk.co.uk

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