Sustainability in your Sector: Exploring the Potential of Professional Sustainability Certification
November 27, 2012

Moderator: Ira Feldman
Greentrack Strategies
President and Senior Counsel
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Security & Sustainability Forum
Convening Global Experts to Guide Decision Making
Energy Efficiency Program Design, Marketing & Communications

• Why You Should Care:
  – Rising energy demands threaten energy security, economic growth, and the environment
  – Energy efficiency provides a low-cost, diverse, stable, and environmentally sound resource base
  – Consumers often don’t embrace the need to reduce energy use and don’t know how to do it

• What Are Your Next Steps:
  – Tailored energy saving programs that benefit the economy, reduce supply uncertainties, and mitigate climate change
  – Marketing that touches consumers, helps transform the marketplace for energy efficient products

• Cadmus Can Help:
  The Cadmus Group, Inc.:
  – Facilitates collaborative decision-making among multiple agencies and stakeholders
  – Factors in cost-effectiveness, economic stimulus, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions
  – Conducts market research to inform program design and consumer marketing
  – Orchestrates communications campaigns to produce sustained energy efficient choices
  – Evaluates the effectiveness of program and marketing initiatives

• Contact:
  – Linda Dethman, Linda.Dethman@cadmusgroup.com | (503) 467-7146
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- Managing water and wastewater services for public authorities and industry
- Designing technological solutions and building and managing the facilities and systems required to deliver these services
- Construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of networks and associated infrastructure

2009 Revenue $18.1 billion  
95,000 employees  

- Drinking water services to 95 million people  
- Wastewater services to 68 million people  
- Facilities managed +5,260 water +3,220
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Barbara L. Bowen, PhD, Principal & Knowledge Architect, has over 25 years of professional experience & leadership in the application of research-based cognitive technologies to enhance learning & performance.

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http://solutionsmapping.com
Ira Feldman, President and Senior Counsel with Greentrack Strategies, cuts an interdisciplinary swath across three usually distinct spheres: "big picture" environmental policy; environmental law and regulation; and environmental management. He is widely recognized as a thought leader in linking the regulatory and non-regulatory trends that form the basis of strategic environmental management (SEM) and sustainable business practices.
Session Agenda

• Introduction to the Panel
• Panel Presentations
  ➢ Ira Feldman, Greentrack Strategies: framing the issues
  ➢ Marsha Willard, International Society of Sustainability Professionals: developing competency levels
  ➢ Jeff Soule and Felicia Braunstein, American Planning Association: professional certification program logistics
• Panel Discussion Questions
  • Rich Goode, Ernst & Young
  • Ed Pinero, Veolia Water
  • Larry Falkin, Office of Environmental Quality, City of Cincinnati
  • Mitchell Thomashow, Second Nature
• Audience Questions: Send your questions through the chat box
• Summary Points
• Thank you!
  • Please fill out the audience survey
Marsha Willard, Executive Director of the International Society of Sustainability Professionals and Presidio Graduate School adjunct faculty

Jeff Soule, Director of Outreach & International Programs with the American Planning Association

Felicia Braunstein, Director of Professional Practice with the American Planning Association

Rich Goode, Senior Manager, Climate Change and Sustainability Services at Ernst & Young

Larry Falkin, Director, Office of Environmental Quality, City of Cincinnati, OH

Mitchell Thomashow, Director of Second Nature’s Presidential Fellow’s Program and Former President of Unity College

Ed Pinero, Chief Sustainability Officer, Veolia Water North America
Certification of Sustainability Professionals: Ready or Not?

Ira Feldman
greentrack strategies
November 27, 2012
The basics

• What do we mean by “certification”?  
• How does this differ from a “certificate”?  
• Don’t you mean “accreditation”?  

Certification, generally

• “Certification” refers to the confirmation of certain characteristics of an object, person, or organization. This confirmation is often, but not always, provided by some form of external review, education, assessment, or audit.

  – One of the most common types of certification in modern society is “professional certification,” where a person is certified as being able to competently complete a job or task, usually by the passing of an examination.
Accreditation, generally

• “Accreditation” is a process in which certification of competency, authority, or credibility is presented.
  – Organizations that issue credentials or certify third parties against official standards are themselves formally accredited by accreditation bodies (such as UKAS); hence they are sometimes known as "accredited certification bodies".
  – The accreditation process ensures that their certification practices are acceptable, typically meaning that they are competent to test and certify third parties, behave ethically and employ suitable quality assurance.
Drivers and Challenges

• Certificates are already popular – through executive education and professional societies – but does that mean we need or are ready for a professional certification scheme?
  – What are the drivers for moving ahead?
  – What challenges must be overcome in developing a certification scheme?
  – Is there a need to be filled that isn’t filled now?
  – Would employers benefit from a standardization of the profession?
Standards

• Why am I saying “certification scheme”?  
• Yes, there are standards in place to guide the development of certification programs and certain terms – like “certification scheme” – are already clearly defined.
• Where? In ISO 17024…
  – recently updated in 2012
  – “lays out a common sense approach to issuing a certification to an individual.”
ISO 17024

• What does this standard say about how to do it the “right” way?

• The credo of the other management system standards (per Bob Pojasek):
  – Say what you do (for the credibility not like the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain);
  – Do what you say (a complex operation to say the least);
  – Do it effectively (so the individuals are well-served by the program), and
  – Be able to PROVE that the certificate is valid and valuable.

• There is no room here for ad hoc solutions.
ISO 17024

• ISO 17024:2012 delineates a path for certifying individuals that has been voted on by over 100 participating countries.
• Organizations offering this approach must be certified to ISO 9001 or the management system outlined in ISO 17024:2012.
• The standard states that certifiers need to be free of conflicts; have financial and legal security; and, have a fully transparent process that is audited by independent bodies.
Other approaches

• Do we have to follow the ISO standard? No.
• What other options are out there? Many...
• An example: Centre for Sustainability and Excellence (CSE) is a leading global sustainability (CSR) consulting, coaching, and training firm.
  – “CSE has been approved by IEMA (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) a leading non for profit global institute and GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) in offering certified trainings for CSOs, CSR Managers, Communication Directors, HSE Managers and other executives.”
  – “At the end of our trainings, professionals have the opportunity to complete a Final Assignment, which allows them to qualify for certification and earn the recognized CSR-P Certification (CSR-P Seal) and GRI Certificate.”
  – http://www.cse-net.org/
  – http://www.iema.net/become-approved-training-provider
Well-known certification programs – or are they?

• We will hear more in this webinar about the programs in place from APA and ISSP...
  – Are these “certification” programs?

• What about LEED? Is this a model to follow?

• Others, recommended or trashed...
  – See, “credibility” and “competency” as defined by RABQSA in the auditing context. See, http://www.rabqsa.com/qb_mc.html
Returning to roles

- Who shall lead?
- What are the minimum requirements?
- Worst case scenario?

- Let’s return to these questions in the panel discussion that follows...
Returning to challenges...

• Do we know enough about competencies for sustainability professionals to design a certification scheme?
  – ISSP’s competency work is relevant here...

• Is the sustainability field mature enough or still emerging?
  – Note inconsistent “lexicon”
  – Moving target?
  – Do the relevant players or interested stakeholders even know each other at this stage?
Many structural options...

• One broad certification with a low bar?
• Multiple specialist certifications?
• Help other disciplines blend sustainability concepts and principles into their certifications?
• Levels of competency? (e.g., gold, silver or regular, masters)
• A core certification with “merit badges” for specialties?
Conclusions

• If it is going to happen, it needs to proceed carefully and with all the relevant stakeholders participating in design options...

• Leading organizations may want to stake out the high ground and identify deficient proposals...

• There will need to be a realignment of roles and a re-thinking of curricula...at a minimum, better coordination with higher education will be needed.

• “Who do you trust?”
Contact

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president & senior counsel
greentrack strategies

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202-669-1858
SKYPE: irafeldman
The International Society of Sustainability Professionals

Working to serve the professionals that are changing the world
Back Chaining to Competencies

Performance competencies

Job expectations

Competency components

Knowledge

Skills

Abilities
Who we asked

Years of Paid Sustainability Work Experience

- < 1 year: 11%
- 1+ but < 3 years: 26%
- 3+ but < 5 years: 19%
- 5+ but < 10 years: 17%
- 10+ years: 27%

Role

Current or Most Recent Paid Sustainability Position

- Consultant: 36%
- Sustainability manager or coordinator: 18%
- Educator: 5%
- Project manager: 5%
- Researcher or analyst: 5%
- Corporate social responsibility officer: 3%
- Environmental health and safety: 2%
- Community development/activist: 2%
- Energy analyst or manager: 1%
- Other (net): 23%

Q2, Q4.
**Sustainability Issues**

**Importance – Top Tier**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Issues</th>
<th>% Rating “Of Extremely High Importance” (6-7 on 7-pt. scale)</th>
<th>Ranked in Top 3 Issues</th>
<th>(n=317)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy-in from top mgmt.</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing business cases</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ. customers or clients about efforts</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for individual initiatives</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing business conditions/priorities</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming internal resistance to change</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental compliance/performance</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re/designing product/service offerings</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building support among employees</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q16. Next, please rate the importance of each of the following sustainability-related issues to [your organization / your clients’ organizations].

Q17. Please rank your top 3 most important issues in order of importance.
Q18. Thinking about the sustainability challenges facing [your organization / your clients’ organizations], what are the top skills that someone would need in order to be successful as a sustainability professional? Please list up to three skills. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Skills Needed for Success As a Sustainability Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills (written &amp; verbal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability principles, best practices and trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasion/influence skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic business knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic thinking/visioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking/creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business case for sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory expertise (e.g.,...)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Communication skills (written & verbal): 41%
- Technical expertise: 14%
- Sustainability principles, best practices and trends: 12%
- Industry knowledge: 12%
- Consensus facilitation: 11%
- Systems thinking: 11%
- Persuasion/influence skills: 11%
- Analytical skills: 10%
- Change management: 8%
- Basic business knowledge: 7%
- Interpersonal skills: 7%
- Strategic thinking/visioning: 7%
- Organizational skills: 6%
- Creative thinking/creativity: 6%
- Business case for sustainability: 6%
- Project management skills: 5%
- Leadership: 5%
- Regulatory expertise (e.g.,...): 5%

“The ability to facilitate dialogue among parties with divergent views and come to consensus.”
"Hard" Skills Needed for Success Now

% Rating “Of extremely high importance” (6-7 on 7-pt. scale) (n=385)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems thinking</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial analysis/ROI</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditing (GHG, sustainability)</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability accounting and reporting</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy expert. (env. comp., res. mgmt)</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life cycle costing and/or life cycle assess.</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendor management</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology and/or engineering expertise</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scient. expert. (chem., env. tox., climate)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process management (Six Sigma, etc.)</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ranked in Top 3 Skills (n=369)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Ranked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems thinking</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial analysis/ROI</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditing (GHG, sustainability)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability accounting and reporting</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy expert. (env. comp., res. mgmt)</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life cycle costing and/or life cycle assess.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendor management</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology and/or engineering expertise</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scient. expert. (chem., env. tox., climate)</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process management (Six Sigma, etc.)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q19. Please rate the importance of each of these skills in terms of how necessary they are for you to be successful as a sustainability professional.

Q20. Please rank your top 3 most important “hard skills” in order of importance.
### “Soft” Skills Needed for Success Now

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Rating “Of extremely high importance” (6-7 on 7-pt. scale)</th>
<th>Ranked in Top 3 Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n=385)</td>
<td>(n=299)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with internal stakeholders</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring and motivating others</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with external stakeholders</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility or adaptability</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building or collaborating</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing change within your org.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing and managing priorities</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus building</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovating / re-thinking the business</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating and/or training groups</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking with external colleagues</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing change outside your org.</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking with internal colleagues</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q21. Please rate the importance of each of these skills in terms of how necessary they are for you to be successful as a sustainability professional.

Q22. Please rank your top 3 most important “soft skills” in order of importance.
## Curriculum Integrity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Planning</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Supporting knowledge, concepts</th>
<th>Demonstration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systems Thinking</strong></td>
<td>Applies systems thinking to the creation of a comprehensive plan</td>
<td>Sustainability frameworks Backcasting etc</td>
<td>Write a comprehensive sustainability plan; the plan should illustrate the interconnections between social, economic and environmental considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choose strategies for buy-in from top management</strong></td>
<td>Express sustainability initiatives as strategic opportunities Select the most appropriate strategy for introducing sustainability into an organization</td>
<td>Options for implementation</td>
<td>Include strategic implementation approach as part of sustainability plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APA/AICP’s Certifications: Comprehensive and Advanced Specialty

Jeff Soule, FAICP and Felicia Braunstein
American Planning Association
November 27, 2012
APA/AICP

Comprehensive Planning Certification

- Oral Exam Established in 1960s
- Converted to a rigorous written exam in 1978
- Converted to electronic format in 2004
- Offered twice a year
- Eligibility requirements consist of various combinations of education and corresponding years of professional planning experience
- Application must be approved to sit for exam—pass rates have averaged 65%—rigorous but fair
- AICP members must meet continuing education requirements and uphold Code of Ethics
AICP’s
Advanced Specialty Certifications (ASC)

• Built upon the AICP exam foundation
• Medical model- specialized fields of planning
• Established in 2010
• First two areas: Transportation and Environmental planning
• Exam offered once a year
• Applicant must have at least 8 years of experience in area of specialization
Steps to Initiate ASC Development

1. Determine areas of expertise to pursue
   – Data on conference topics and workshop participation
   – Member’s self-identified areas of expertise
   – Membership in divisions

2. Collaborative work with leadership
   – Commission
   – Chapters
   – Divisions
Steps to Initiate ASC Development

3. Identify diverse group of potential experts for 5 tasks forces over a period of 2 years
   – Knowledge of subject matter
   – Public, Private, Academic
   – Geography
   – Demographics
   – APA members, AICP members, allied professionals
Steps to Initiate ASC Development

4. Prometric uses industry standard psychometric practices in accordance with the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* published by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

- Job Analysis
- Test Specification (Blueprint) Development
- Question Writing Workshop and Review
- Psychometric and Language Question Editing
- Administration of the Exam to...
- Question Analysis and Review of Statistically Flagged Items
- Standard Setting / Cut Score Analysis
Exam Maintenance

Exam is re-evaluated periodically to ensure it remains a relevant and accurate measure of candidates' expertise in the field.

To determine if adjustments to the exam are necessary, subject matter experts re-examine performance discrepancies and reassess test items for

- Fairness
- Reliability
- Validity
APA’s Perspective on Sustainability ASC

• APA’s Perspective on Sustainability ASC—Equity, Economics, and Environment

• Sustainability is extremely important in planning, but a broad area with numerous aspects

• Our members are clearly interested in the subject—is there an audience for an advanced credential?

• Our interest is sustainability in community planning (economic, social, physical) at all levels of government
Contact

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(202) 349-1012

Felicia Braunstein
Director of Professional Practice
APA
fbraunstein@planning.org
(202) 349-1029
What is the value to employers? (*business, government, academic and nonprofit organizations*)

• Why are professional certifications important to employers?
• What does a candidate with a professional certification add that someone without a certification may not be able to add?
• Do you have advice for people seeking professional certifications?

What are some of the things to look for and things to avoid?

*Moderated by Rich Goode*
How should a certification program best be delivered?

How should standards maintained?

Moderated by Jeff Soule
What stakeholders should be involved in the process?

Moderated by Marsha Willard
Audience Questions
Panel Discussion Questions

Where do we go from here?

What are the next steps?

Moderated by Ira Feldman
Summary Points
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Climate Change is in our Business: the Follow up Discussion
Thursday, December 6, 2012 1:15-2:45 EST

Shaping Urban Resilience: Business, Government and NGOs Working Together for Disaster Response and Preparedness
Thursday, December 13, 2012 1:15-2:45 EST