

Week 1

Activity 1

By:

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Question:

Spend some time thinking about what sustainability means within your own context – this maybe with regard to work, within your community, or to you personally. You may want to make some notes to refer back to later.

Having thought about sustainability for yourself, now perform a search for definitions of sustainability. Think about how your first thoughts compliment or differ from the definitions that you have found. Which aspects of the definitions you have found relate to your own position? Is there a definition you particularly liked and would you amend it in any way to fit your own conception? Make your own notes.

From your notes, post in the forum that your tutor has set up for you, either a definition you have found, an amended version or your own definition. Try to explain why you have selected this definition by identifying two or three things that have stood out for you and how this relates to your personal or professional life. Read other people's posts and consider any different viewpoints. Ask for clarifications of other people's postings to try and come to understand why their definition fits for their personal or professional context.

Answer

According to LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design), sustainability is the improvement of human life in relation to the optimal use of natural resources. Usually there are three areas of sustainability; environmental, social, and economical. I truly like this definition because, it is very feasible to me as a civil engineer.

As a civil engineer, In the construction field, increasing the performance of concrete members allows the use of smaller member dimensions and thus demands lower cement, concrete quantities and more usable space for the same compressive strength.

Additionally, from the economical aspect, during my working in the construction projects, I minimized the use of high carbon emission released materials by adopting smart/environmental materials. I optimized the design by using cementitious materials e.g. Silica Fume and allow reuse of polymer members in other site with the consideration of the embodied energy of the project.

From social side, respect for the individual and the diversity are main points that need to be covered as part of the sustainability. For instance, in the construction site, the primary thing was to understand their culture, concerns and needs, and even some language as well. Following this awareness, I studied their rules and custom and prepared project presentation and associated documentations. Meanwhile, I also noted different Mid-east country's traditional festival and send some small gifts as well, like sweets holiday days; New year, Eid, Diwali, etc. Gradually, I made friends with these people, as a feedback, they supported my project to go on smoothly.

As shown above all the examples that I mentioned are methods on how to improve human life and this why I prefer The LEED definition of sustainability.