



Clean Energy & Green Building Careers in Silicon Valley

Train the Trainer Workshop

Developed by Jim Cassio
www.cassio.com

© 2008

Definitions & Statistics: Green and Sustainable

What does *being green* mean in today's world?

Below are ten principal values that help to define being green. Nevertheless, this is not a checklist. There is no absolute list of green values or agreement on how to define them. Together, however, the following values reflect an approach to life – including home, family, community and work – that centers on an awareness of our impact on the planet and its people:

- Environmental protection/preservation
- Eco–friendly design
- Sustainable development
- Renewable energy
- Organic/natural products
- Fair trade
- Holistic health
- Clean technology
- Peace and justice
- Social conscience

Sustainable/Sustainability

A method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.
-Merriam–Webster

Sustainable Development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs.

-Brundtland, 1987

Sustainable Agriculture

A method of agriculture that attempts to ensure the profitability of farms while preserving the environment.
-Answers.com

Sustainable Business/Sustainable Organization

When an organization is committed to:

- Conserving energy
- Using renewable energy sources
- Preventing pollution
- Reducing waste
- Recycling
- Conserving water

Definitions & Statistics: Job, Career and Occupation

Despite the fact that many people use these terms interchangeably, they each mean something different. Understanding those differences will help avoid misunderstandings when using or interpreting data. And, for a job seeker, understanding those differences may give you an edge on the competition – or at least help you avoid embarrassing yourself in a job interview.

Job

The word *job* can mean different things, such as a task or a set of tasks. In the context of occupations and careers, however, a job usually refers to a role created by an employer in which an employee performs certain tasks in exchange for payment (compensation).

Green Job

A *green job* is a job focused on sustainability and/or environmental protection and preservation. A green job can be defined either by the nature and purpose of the job, or by the nature and purpose of the employer. Green jobs include jobs at all levels of education, skill and experience.

Note: a job's title rarely reveals whether it's a green job or not.

Green Collar Job

Sometimes defined as manual-labor type jobs that are a) green and b) don't require a college education. Other times, green collar jobs are defined as jobs that are green (without regard to education).

Career

A series of jobs that have some common thread, or a profession for which one trains and which is undertaken as a long-term relationship.

Green Career

A series of green jobs, or a green profession.

Occupation

A way of categorizing similar jobs. For example, the occupation of journalist encompasses a variety of journalist jobs, including those that specialize in subjects ranging from politics to entertainment to environmental issues. Journalists who specialize in environmental issues can be said to work in green jobs. A given occupation typically describes both green jobs and non-green jobs. The reason for this is simply because occupations are, traditionally, not defined on the basis of the greenness of their jobs. As a result, you will virtually always need to assess each individual job and each individual employer to know whether a job is green or not.

Definitions & Statistics: Clean Energy and Green Building Industries

Clean Energy

Includes industries associated with generating electricity from renewable sources such as solar, wind, biomass, fuel cells, geothermal, hydrogen, and hydro/marine. This includes electric utilities (public and private), energy companies, research & development firms, manufacturers, and wholesalers (including, for example, solar contractors). For our purposes, clean energy also includes industries related to alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles.

Green Building

Includes industries associated with sustainable design and green building. This includes architectural firms and construction companies that design, build, retrofit or repair homes and buildings that are energy and water efficient, environment-friendly, and healthy places for people to live or work. For our purposes, green building also includes industries involved in green or sustainable building materials, sustainable landscape architecture, and planning, operation and maintenance activities associated with green building(s).

Employment Statistics

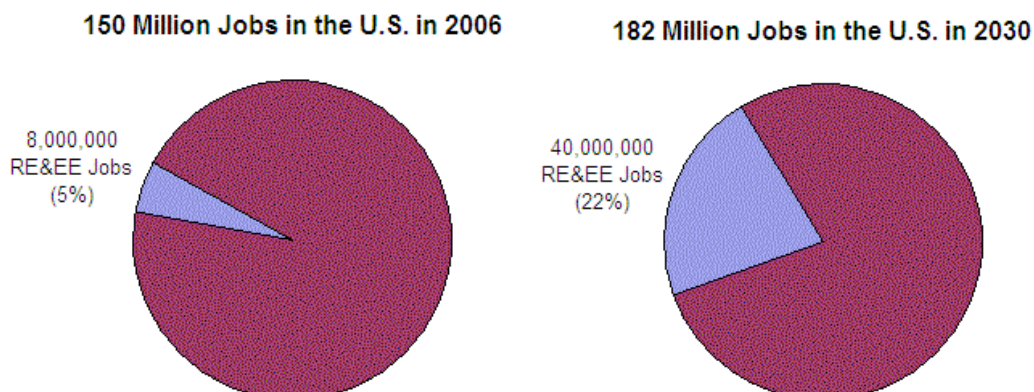
Because these are new and emerging industries, our traditional data sources aren't able to provide us with relevant industry employment projections. However, there have been various attempts to estimate the employment and economic contributions of the new green economy and its various subsets. For data miners, the most comprehensive listing of these studies can perhaps be found on the website of the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division:

www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

Under the 'Most Popular Data' menu, select 'Understanding the Green Economy.'

Now look for the 'Digest of Green Reports and Studies' and then start by selecting 'Index to the Digest' - a pdf document that is regularly updated and functions as a research bibliography.

One of the most significant studies to-date is entitled *Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency: Economic Drivers for the 21st Century*, by Roger H. Bezdek, commissioned by the American Solar Energy Society (ASES). While this study was specifically looking at Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) industries and not at the larger green economy, it is one of the first studies to identify a comprehensive set of industries that, together, define the RE and EE sectors of the economy. Because Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency industries are essentially the same industries that define Clean Energy and Green Building, this study provides us with relevant employment estimates for our industries at the nationwide level. As you can see from the pie chart on the left, about 5 percent of all jobs in 2006 would be considered RE&EE jobs. That's one in twenty, or 8 million out of a total of 150 million jobs across all industries. The pie chart on the right shows one reasonable possibility for the year 2030 – depending on the direction and force of our public policies. By 2030, the youngest of the Baby Boomers will be in their late 60s. This scenario suggests that 22 percent of all jobs (in 2030) would be considered RE&EE jobs. That's more than one in five, or 40 million out of a total of 182 million jobs across all industries.



Green Job Hunting Strategies and Resources

Is it best to look for jobs advertised online, offline, or neither?

Answer: *All the above!*

The Hidden Job Market refers to the vast world of job openings that get filled but are never advertised. While there are no statistics kept on this method of recruiting, many experts have suggested over the years that the Hidden Job Market accounts for at least half of all job openings. It is especially common among small employers who often find they can staff their business in whole or in part through word of mouth and/or referrals from employees who already work for them, supplemented with unsolicited job applicants. These employers learn to rely on referrals because it's easier, cheaper and, arguably, better. A common belief among employers who rely on referrals is that people tend to work harder when they are not only representing themselves, but also the person who helped them get the job.

Two ways to take advantage of the Hidden Job Market:

1. Utilize the information network between people and make it work to your advantage

Make it known that you're looking for work. This means network, network, network, and then network some more! Talk with your family members, friends, former supervisors and coworkers, and even new acquaintances to let them know you're looking for work. Be enthusiastic and positive. Briefly mention to each of them the kind of job you're looking for and why you'd be a good match for such a job. If you have the opportunity to do so, briefly mention a few of your skills or abilities that are relevant for this type of job. If you need a survival job, however, don't be too specific in identifying your job goal. (Even on your resume, there is always going to be a balancing act required as far as not being too specific or too broad in stating your job/career objectives.) Be sure they have a reliable way of reaching you if they hear or think of something. Leave them with your card or resume. Follow-up with them a week or two later to ask if they may have heard or thought of anything for you. (The real purpose of this follow-up contact is to remind them to keep you on their radar.) Don't become a pest, but also don't assume that mentioning it one time is all that's needed. People need to be reminded or they forget. Whenever someone tries to help, show your appreciation regardless of whether it works out or not. Simple thank-you notes are a nice touch. Remember that part time, temporary, freelance, and volunteer positions are excellent ways to network and gain valuable experience at the same time. Depending on your skill set, a temporary staffing/placement firm can put you in several different worksite locations (temporarily) in just a few short weeks. Think of that as several opportunities to show someone you have what it takes. In a way, it's like getting paid for an interview. Temp jobs commonly lead to full-time employment if you can show that you have what they're looking for. Relevant volunteer work is especially important for green/sustainable employers. It shows that you are committed to being green and not just trying to greenwash your way into a job. If you find an employer that you really want to work for, you should consider all these options (including a volunteer position) for getting your foot inside their door. If none of these are possible, ask them what is possible. An informational interview? Job shadowing for a day? Applying at another location, or with a subcontractor?

2. Research and develop your own list of employers to pursue

There are many ways to develop such a list, depending on your needs and interests. Here is one way: Start by identifying your geographic area so that you can stay focused on the possibilities within your area. To do this, you'll need to carefully consider the transportation issue (to/from work) and whether you are interested in relocating. Next, try to decide whether you *need* to work for a green/sustainable employer. If you do, you'll need some way of identifying green/sustainable employers (in your area). This is not something you will find in the Yellow Pages, nor do you want to conduct a survey of 1,000 businesses to ask if they are eco-friendly. However, through one of many green/sustainable certification programs, there may be a list available to help you. Most are geographic area-based (e.g. local city or county); some are industry based (e.g. green restaurants). Or, depending on your geographic area and the type of employers you're looking for, there may not be any such list available (yet). In either case, it will help if you have a nose for research so you can learn more about your prospective employers in order to

determine whether they would be a good fit for you. If your interest is more focused on the type of work rather than the type of employer, then you might consider identifying the industries that provide employment in your job interest area. Once you've identified the industries, you can then use one of many resources (ranging from the Yellow Pages to employer databases) to identify employers within those industries. How do you identify the industries? First, most sources of occupational information will include some details on the types of employers that provide the jobs (types of employers = industries). The U.S. Department of Labor also has a useful website for this purpose: www.bls.gov/emp/home.htm Look for the National Employment Matrix. Here you can either search by occupation, to see what industries provide the jobs, or search by industry, to see what occupations they provide employment in. (Note: this resource is most useful for traditional industries and occupations, and less useful for new and emerging fields.) Once you've identified your target industries, you can use whatever source of employer listings you're already familiar with, or you can check with your local library or career center and ask a professional for help. Your task here is to identify employers within the industries on your list. This process will require some work on your part, so don't expect it to be easy. Once you have your list, start with a search of the employer's website. If your list doesn't have their website address, a Google search with the employer's name and location (city) usually produces the website address. Lots of employers, however, use multiple organization names and/or have multiple locations, so this is not always an easy process. There are also plenty of employers who don't have websites, or who no longer maintain them. Nevertheless, don't automatically rule out a potential employer just because they don't have an online presence! Once you've researched the employer through their website, you will likely do one of the following:

1. Cross them off your list (if you believe they are longer relevant to your job search);
2. Apply for a job through their website;
3. Contact them by phone or in person to see how and where they list their jobs, and how they recruit for the type of position you are interested in.

Even if it is possible to apply for a job through their website, it might still be a good idea to try #3 before you apply. You may avoid a mistake, or learn of some advantage that can be applied when you submit your online application.

Jobs that are advertised

While the Hidden Job Market may account for half of all jobs, searching for jobs that are advertised online or offline accounts for the other half. The vast majority of employers now advertise their jobs online; however, it's still possible that your dream job can only be found if/when you look online *and* offline. It may appear in a newspaper without also appearing in the online edition. It may be listed in the printed journal of a professional or trade organization. It may be posted on the wall at a union hall or a postsecondary school, or it may be sitting in someone's rolodex at a local employment agency/office.

Can you find a job by utilizing *only* online job search resources?

Of course, and many people do just that. But why limit your chances of finding the best possible job? Why not expand the possibilities and then focus on the best choices? You will expand the possibilities if you conduct your job search in both the online and offline worlds.

Job and career fairs are also part of the offline world

These have become important events for the recruiters of many organizations who see them as an opportunity to meet large numbers of potential employees. If the employer representative is not too busy, this can also be a great opportunity to talk in more detail about the types of jobs they offer, the hiring requirements, and the best job hunting strategies (for that particular employer). Job and career fairs are sponsored by all kinds of organizations, including chambers of commerce, schools, employment agencies, government agencies, nonprofit community-based organizations, and private corporations. They are usually advertised in the local media, but there is no single source you can use to find out about all of them.

Using online resources

Online job websites (often referred to as *job boards*) have much in common as they usually offer the same *free* features (to job seekers):

1. The ability to post resumes for employers to find;
2. The ability to do your own search for current job openings;
3. A resource center giving advice, tips and tricks to help you with your job search.

Job websites can be grouped into the following categories:

- General purpose job boards (e.g. Monster, CareerBuilder, Yahoo! HotJobs, etc);
- Search engines for jobs (e.g. Indeed, Simply Hired, FlipDog, etc);
- Niche job board sites that specialize by career field or industry;
- Niche job board sites that specialize by geography (e.g. cities, counties, metropolitan areas);
- Job boards at employers' sites;
- Professional or trade association sites with job boards.

According to a recent job board survey with more than 1,500 job seekers, when asked "In general, which job boards are most helpful?" – the responses were:

- 37% said niche sites that specialize by career field or industry;
- 36% said general purpose job boards;
- 11% said search engines for jobs;
- 7% said niche sites that specialize by geography;
- 5% said job boards at employers' sites; and
- 4% said association sites with job boards.

Top general purpose job boards:

Monster.com – www.monster.com

Yahoo! HotJobs.com – <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com>

CareerBuilder – www.careerbuilder.com

Even though there has been a massive consolidation of job boards over the last decade, there remain hundreds of general purpose job boards across the nation. The three listed above are consistently ranked at the top of most "Best Job Board" lists. Each of these sites serve as repositories for huge numbers of job listings posted by employers.

Another general purpose job board that deserves mention here is Craigslist. Most people don't think of Craigslist as mainstream because it is decentralized into 450 Craigslist websites in 450 different cities around the world. All together, however, and Craigslist would probably rank as the top employment site on the web: www.craigslist.com

To find niche, local or association job boards, use one of the top Internet search engines (like Google) and use keywords such as 'job' and 'Chicago' (insert your geographic area name). You can also add keywords based on the occupation or industry. For green job boards and other online resources, see the *Green Careers Resource Guide* – which can be downloaded (for free) at: www.cassio.com

Whatever job boards you end up using, remember that job search experts consistently suggest using several of them (and not just choosing one or two).

Competing for a job

The best jobs usually go to the best job hunters, regardless of whether they are also the most qualified.
-Career Pathways Handbook

Nine guiding principles for successful job hunting:

1. Set goals to guide you

Set realistic goals that will help to guide you through your job search. Not just the end-goal of a job, but smaller goals along the way. Then remember to reward yourself as you reach those smaller goals.

2. Maintain high confidence

Confident job seekers have a competitive edge, so it is important to utilize or create a support system that will nurture your self-confidence. However, it is perhaps equally important to conduct periodic reality checks – to ensure that your plans are practical and that your goals are achievable.

3. Be organized

Use a calendar or appointment book to stay organized so that you use your job search time efficiently. Don't miss *any* appointments. Don't reschedule *any* appointments - unless you have no other choice. Don't ever be late for an interview.

4. Take your job search as seriously as you would a job

Take your goals and responsibilities as a job seeker seriously and commit your time to finding a job as if it were your regular work schedule. This means that your job search efforts deserve no less energy, time and priority than you would give to your job.

5. Be prepared with the right tools

For successful job hunting, the right tools include a master employment application, resume, and a cover letter that you can use when filling out applications or when creating employer-specific resumes and cover letters.

*Tip: An employer's application is a legal document and you should **never** substitute it with your own application or resume. Don't ever write 'see resume' on an application!*

6. Get the inside scoop

Play the investigator and find out how people typically get jobs in your occupation, industry, or area. Don't assume you know the correct answers before you have conducted at least two informational interviews with people who definitely know the answer.

7. Utilize the hidden job market

This refers to the vast world of job openings that get filled but are never advertised in newspapers or on job websites.

8. Be clear about your objectives and qualifications

Be as clear as possible about your employment objective – both in terms of the jobs you apply for and the way you apply. For many employers, saying you'll take anything they have makes you look desperate and without direction. But for some employers, everyone starts at the bottom and works their way up. Be prepared and able to talk about your qualifications for the jobs you seek. Don't just list your skills or your job tasks, but be ready to talk about 2-3 examples of your accomplishments that, in the process, also describes your skills.

9. Be willing to seek help when you need it