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Preface

The Sustainable Business Case Book provides readers with a broad overview of the core concepts of sustainability and sustainable business practice. It is intended for use in undergraduate business courses and will also be of interest to students in environmental studies, engineering, urban planning, and government. This book is not meant to exhort all business people on the path to sustainability enlightenment but to highlight some of the benefits, opportunities, and challenges associated with sustainable business practices.

What distinguishes this book is that it provides a conceptual foundation to promote understanding of sustainability concepts and frameworks and also discusses real-world business examples of sustainability in action. It is believed that this is the best way to teach sustainability as it applies to the business world—a conceptual foundation with practical application.

Sustainable business involves businesses operating with interest and concern for their long-term economic, environmental, and social impact. For-profit businesses focus first and foremost on their own economic bottom line, oftentimes, with a short-term perspective. However, with a sustainability perspective, businesses also consider a longer-term and broader triple bottom line that takes into account not only company profits but also environmental and social impacts. The economic, environmental, and social perspectives are increasingly interrelated and relevant for businesses.

Organization

This book combines foundation knowledge about sustainable business with detailed studies of businesses involved in sustainability practices. The first part (Chapter 1 "Introduction to Sustainable Business and Sustainable Business Core Concepts and Frameworks" to Chapter 6 "Sustainable Business Marketing") introduces students to sustainability and sustainable business and presents key concepts, analytical frameworks, and contextual information. Part two of the book (Chapter 7 "Case: Sustainable Business Entrepreneurship: Simply Green Biofuels" to Chapter 13 "Case: Strategic Mission-Driven Sustainable Business: Stonyfield Yogurt") provides seven business case studies. These company cases illuminate sustainability principles and practices across business functional areas, including operation management, accounting, finance, marketing, entrepreneurship, and strategy. Each case chapter includes a description of the business context, the motivating interest in business sustainability, and the sustainable business practices used. The discussion of

sustainable business practice includes details on the practices, how they were established, and their results. Each case chapter ends with a discussion of future considerations for the company in its sustainable business efforts and exercises for students. All the chapters in the book include learning objectives, key takeaways, key terms, and exercises. All the chapter sections, except for the shorter case chapters, also include these. All the individual chapters in part two can be used independently as “stand-alone” case studies. The chapters will be relevant for general business, operation management, entrepreneurship, accounting, and finance courses as well as in science and engineering courses, introducing students to business applications.

Uncertainty in both the business and natural environments makes sustainability a valuable lens for the business practitioner to navigate the future waters of our continually evolving world. We hope that you enjoy the journey ahead in this exciting and pragmatic approach to business thinking.