

Answers

A) Key Words in a New Context

The Tricky Issue of Sustainability in Companies

Sustainability has become an increasingly important issue for companies in recent years. Environmental concerns are mounting worldwide, and consumers are becoming more conscious of the the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions. Statistics show that 78% of consumers choose brands according to their sustainability record regardless of **the fact that** prices are soaring and the cost of living is increasing.

Nevertheless, many companies are hesitant to take the leap towards sustainable practices due to **the fact that** this often requires significant investment in the short term. The benefits down the line are plentiful - increased efficiency, lower operating costs, increased consumer trust, and improved employee morale just to name a few, but regardless of the benefits it is still impossible to change without significant investment.

Many larger companies operate with a structure **whereby** shareholders demand consistent growth, and taking a short-term hit for long-term benefits is seemingly not on their agenda.

One lower-cost approach that companies can start with is to minimize waste, and to resources are kept in use for as long as possible. Companies can also implement sustainable supply chain practices, **whereby** suppliers are evaluated based on their environmental and social impact, **thus** ensuring that their products and services are environmentally responsible throughout the entire supply chain.

In terms of monitoring energy consumption, companies can install an 'Energy Management System', which is a software allowing businesses to pinpoint areas of heavy energy consumption, set targets, and foster a culture of energy saving among employees. Such software itself doesn't have to be so expensive, **yet** it requires expertise and extensive staff training in order to implement it, **thus** adding to the initial cost.

As this is such an important issue, and one which influences consumer choices, companies may have no choice other than to take the leap and make the necessary investment. Change is inevitable, and companies are under pressure to raise the bar consistently **in terms of** sustainability in today's market and today's world.

C) Comprehension Questions

- What do you think that 'tricky' means in the title of the article?
If something is 'tricky', it simply means that it is difficult and requires a lot of care and attention. 'Tricky' can also mean 'deceptive' when referring to a person, but when talking about an issue or task it simply means 'difficult'.
- According to the article, why is it surprising that most consumers choose to buy products from brands who have a good reputation for sustainability?

The article mentions that this is potentially surprising due to the fact that prices are increasing along with the increasing cost of living

3. What are the 3 options mentioned in the article for improving sustainability in a company? Can you think of any more?

The article mentions minimizing waste, implementing sustainable supply chain practices by evaluating the sustainability of suppliers, and installing an energy management system.

4. The phrase 'take the leap' is used twice in the article. Based on the context of the article, what do you think it means?

'To take the leap' means to do something risky and uncertain, but something which will benefit you in the future.