

GREEN BPM

Defining the Green Aspects: Green Business Models

The term Green Economy was incorporated in 2012, after the Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+208). The definition offered for the UNEP states that Green Economy is "one that results in improved human well-being and social equality, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities".

Along this article, the relationship between the Green Economy and Green Business will then be established. The report "Adapting for a Green Economy: Companies, Communities and Climate Change" provided by UNEP (2011, p. 4) highlights that green businesses arise from initiatives taken from the private sector as a way to respond to the negative impacts of climate change. Thus, aligning the objectives, strategies, investments and opportunities of business processes and supporting sustainable business activities can accelerate the transition process to a Green Economy and help reduce environmental negative impacts. There are many terms and definitions on how companies apply business models. The chosen definition for this framework was provided by the Nordic Council of Ministers: "Green business models are business models which support the development of products and services (systems) with environmental benefits, reduce resource use/waste and which are economically viable. These business models have a lower environmental impact than traditional business models" (Nordic Council of Ministers, (2010, p.8).

It is known that business processes are carried out to add value to the supply chain in terms of profit, good image or other incentives. Green businesses are built upon conventional businesses. In this context, the term "green" refers to the improved quality of business activities which deliver products and services with a better economic, environmental and social value proposition. In previous decades, companies have focused the management of their processes under economic imperatives such as time, cost, efficiency and quality. The authors Dumas et al. (2018, p. 304) reflect on the classic management to perform the company's processes through the devil's quadrilateral. The figure below (left side) shows the different dimensions that classical business face while carrying out their operative processes:

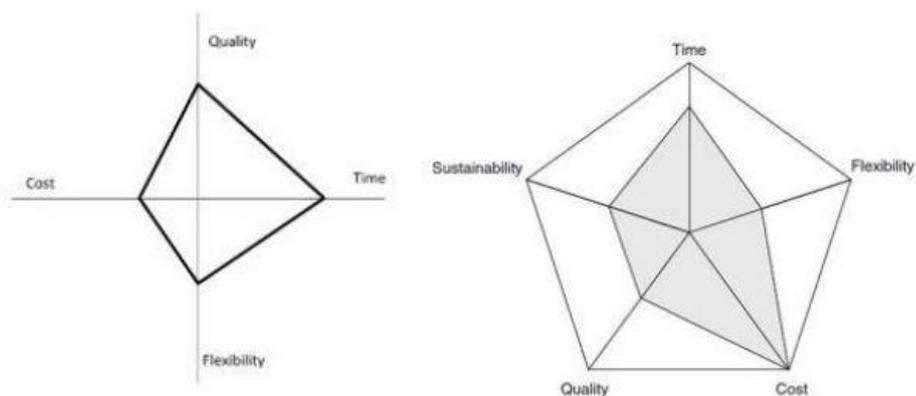


Figure 2: Devil's Pentagon

Agreeing with the authors Vom Brocke, Seidel and Recker (2012, p.4-5), as soon as the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development emerged, the traditional way to carry out operational processes by companies began to be questioned and critically tested. The authors continue affirming that sustainability appeared as an additional dimension of organisational performance and as soon as key ecological indicators gradually became part of the corporations' agenda, the Devil's Quadrangle became a Devil's Pentagon (see figure above, right side), recognising sustainability as an important dimension in the management of operations. Considering the implications of the devil's pentagon, the management of business processes is presented as a key point to contribute to environmental objectives.

As Nowak, Leymann, Schleicher, Schumm, Wagner (2011, p. 1) state in their research, while green process management is a discipline in its early stages of experimentation, the number of organisations looking for different ways to apply it to their business operations is increasing. Furthermore, the authors remark that what differentiates this discipline from the classical approach is its fifth perspective: the dimension of sustainability. Summarising the researched literature, the importance of BPM for solving environmental problems was pointed out, keeping in mind sustainability as a goal to be incorporated into its classical structure and understanding as a consequence that the main goal of "green" BPM is to reduce the environmental impact generated by business processes without neglecting the economic goals of an organisation.

Literature

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