

How One Furniture Manufacturer Goes ‘Beyond Sustainability’

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It's no surprise that more companies are paying attention to their impact on their environment. However, some stand out by going beyond reducing their carbon footprints, to cultivating socially conscious corporate cultures in which making a positive impact is as important as making a profit.

Humanscale, a leader in the design and manufacture of high-performance ergonomic office products, demonstrates how one company's leadership can set the example.

When it comes to environmental impact, “‘less bad’ is not good enough,” says Humanscale's founder and CEO, Bob King.

“We took a look at our manufacturing and operational

activities to understand our key impacts: energy, water, emissions, resource depletion, wildlife preservation, social responsibility and healthy materials,” says King.

“In each area, we consider what it would take to go beyond sustainability to making a truly positive impact on the world around us. If a company can make a positive impact in all of these ways, it will be acting like a tree,” he explains.

“While trees aim to grow, they’re self-sustaining and they replenish the environment. If we want to live at peace with the planet, then our factories must be like trees, our companies like a forest.”

Humanscale is set to release its annual Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report in time to coordinate with Earth Overshoot Day, the date calculated to mark when humans have depleted Earth’s resources beyond its ability to regenerate these resources within a given year.

Company achievements highlighted in the report include the use of solar energy for nearly 70 percent of electricity used by the company’s main manufacturing facility in 2018; reduction of normalized greenhouse gas emissions by 63 percent since 2011; and the use of rainwater for 100 percent of production water in the United States.

In addition, in the last year, nearly 500 of Humanscale’s employees voluntarily completed more than 10,340 activities that involved saving energy, reducing water use, and cutting down on their emissions.

Humanscale has also made material transparency a priority. Material transparency means labeling products, such as furniture, similar to food ingredient labels that clearly state what materials a product contains. Material transparency labels, such as Declare labels and Health Product Declarations (HPDs), identify potential toxins and unhealthy materials in products so consumers can make informed decisions before

choosing these products for their homes or offices.

Humanscale has taken the lead in this area. Their products contain no Red List chemicals, and as of December 2018, the company has published 60 percent of all Declare labels and 54 percent of all HPDs that exist in the entire furniture industry.

In 2018, Humanscale received a BIFMA (Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association) Level 3 (the highest level of that association's certification) for all its products. The BIFMA is based on analysis of product manufacture, including water and energy use, emissions, chemicals, waste, and environmental design.

For more information about Humanscale and its sustainability efforts, visit [humanscale.com](https://www.humanscale.com).