

Personal Statement

David Attenborough said that “No one will protect what they don’t care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced.”. In today’s difficult times for the world, and the environment, understanding the value and importance of sustainability has become even more important. So too has the need for the right leaders who can show the way to achieving the necessary sustainability and economic achievements the world needs. In this respect, General Montgomery said a true leader is one who “has the capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character to inspire confidence”. I agree strongly with both these comments and it is for this reason that I wish to undertake the MSt in Sustainability Leadership.

As a leader in a commercial enterprise, I believe that it is vital that I have the knowledge to undertake today’s global challenges and to empower and inspire my subordinates to do the same.

I consider that I already have a strong foundation in understanding sustainability issues and that any business strategy should incorporate a long-term view of how to tackle climate change and deliver sustainable solutions to business challenges. However, if I am to inspire future generations to have this mindset, I also recognise that I need to further my knowledge.

The course content at the University of Cambridge will provide me with this increased knowledge and understanding, not just in sustainability but in effective leadership skills. In addition, the reputation of Cambridge university and particularly the institute of continued learning have a global reputation for excellence which affirms my choice of your institution as my place to study.

At present, my role is with a manufacturing company and I have been taking steps to increase a long-term sustainability with initiatives such as adoption of smart lighting in our premises, improved logistics to reduce greenhouse emissions and the introduction of home working to reduce travel requirements. I introduced the opportunity for home working prior to the Covid-19 outbreak to reduce both stress and travel impacts for our employees and believe strongly that this has helped my organisation to deliver on our sustainability goals for the next decades.

Furthermore, I wish to develop my understanding of how to effect long term change through transformation of organisational cultures so encourage commitment to sustainability and it is here that

I believe my chosen course is strongly aligned with my own goals. In particular, Government policy and regulation, and sustainable production and consumption systems are areas which I eagerly anticipate studying.

My future goals are to operate at the Senior / Board level and ensure that all business decisions are framed on a foundation of sustainability, because I recognise the current social, ethical, environmental, and commercial challenges being faced by all firms. It is not only how to manage these areas post-COVID-19 that I am concerned with – since leaving university I have followed with interest the work of several sustainability not for profits such as the European Environment Agency, the Earth System Governance Project, and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. In addition, I have noted the growth of sustainable start-ups such as Pavegen and their electricity via walking floors which has inspired me to learn more about the area.

Furthermore, in the context of leadership, I am an advocate for servant leadership. In other words, that it is my role as a leader to empower and interact with those around them, projecting authority but also the individual wellbeing of my subordinates. I also believe that I can apply this ethos to my student life; although the course is part-time, being able to visit the university will enable me to indulge my other passion – cycling and I hope to be able to join the CUCC (Cycling Club) so that I can explore the area and encourage those new to the sport to consider this as future means of transport. I would also like to become involved with the Cambridge Zero Carbon Society and learn from those already involved in environmental justice. In short, I believe sustainability should not just be in terms of the planet, but in terms of humanity as well. In essence, that a good leader cannot achieve success without a balance between people and sustainability.