

ACCO Climate Leadership Summit

November 8-9, 2010 | Hyattsville, Maryland

Marriott Inn & Conference Center, University of Maryland University College
(The nation's first LEED certified conference center)

ROUNDTABLE NOTES

Track 3: Energy Efficiency

Session 1: Energy Efficiency Overcoming Barriers to Energy Efficiency in Commercial Buildings

Moderators: Diana Lin, Victoria Mills, Maurice Bechard

Takeaways:

Key barriers when trying to improve energy efficiency in corporate buildings include:

- Cost of carbon/carbon value
- Establishing metrics and methodologies that account for probability and absolute return on investment (negative past experiences due to promises of high returns and not seeing a pay out)
- Building aesthetics
- Compromises and value engineering throughout the design and construction phases
- Lack of data on the physical structure of the building, and lack of submetering by tenant space and by system
- The educational system is not relevant anymore..."newbies" are being trained by people who learned the game 30 years ago...is what was relevant then, relevant now?
- Overcoming "know-it-all" syndrome
- How do we make energy efficiency sexy?
- Retrofits can be disruptive to occupants/operations
- Split incentives: landlord/tenant, operations/capital budgets
- Patchwork of building codes
- Upfront financing
- Lack of dialogue across different departments

3 major themes came up during discussion:

- Building design/construction
- Finance
- Lack of data

Next Steps:

Establish a working group that develops best practices and thought capital on issues including:

- **Enterprise Governance of Energy Efficiency:** Should there be a designated person or leadership group assigned with overseeing energy efficiency throughout the organization or facility? How do small steps taken across the board come together and how should those steps be encouraged/managed? How can corporate leadership be compelled to make public sustainability or energy reduction commitments?
- **Developing Avoidance Strategies:** Identifying when it is necessary to consume energy at all, and when avoidance can be achieved.

- **Establishing Bottom Line Oriented Metrics and Strategies:** How do products/projects stand on their own financially as well as environmentally? What are best practices for blending portfolio and integrating bottom line strategies?
- **Emerging Challenges and Unanswered Questions:** Addressing questions such as when design/construction is a suitable solution, identifying solution technologies, developing less invasive approaches to building retrofits and upgrades, and establishing a system with transparent energy billing for tenants.
- **Education Programs:** Establishing clear and concise messaging related to successful approaches and victories, benchmark data, operational implications, etc. Standardized training for facility management, in areas of project and contract management as well as building science. Include incentives and recognition for energy efficiency performance for facility management staff.