



Sustainability

Step Ahead is hugely committed to sustainability in all areas of its operation. Specifically our methods for ensuring that every strand of decision-making takes into account the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability are:

Social

At Step Ahead we have an ongoing concern for the impact our business has on its people and the community. We are a 'people business' and it is therefore considered imperative that every action within our organisation has a positive impact in this area.

- Contracts of Employment and Terms and Conditions for temporary workers are reviewed annually and amended whenever appropriate or beneficial
- We ensure that our benefits package for staff is the best in our sector (e.g. private medical insurance, personal pension plans, annual leave allowances etc)
- Our employee handbook is reviewed at least annually and updated regularly to ensure that it is current and reflects best employment practice
- Step Ahead is committed to promoting a healthy work/life balance including having permanent staff who work part-time and from home.
- As committed members of the REC, every REC bulletin is circulated amongst all staff and acted upon as appropriate
- Staff training and development is equally accessible to all staff (permanent and temporary)
- All temps are debriefed weekly and have continual access to their Step Ahead consultants
- All staff have 'mini-appraisals' monthly with their manager and six monthly appraisals with their manager and a director
- We have a Processes Manual for our staff which clearly and succinctly outlines our business processes
- We have comprehensive Diversity and Equal Opportunities policies
- All staff have comprehensive induction training which includes all relevant legislation e.g. Employment Agencies Act, Health and Safety, Sex Discrimination, Race Discrimination, Disability Discrimination, Immigration, Working Time Regulations
- All new regulations and amendments are presented to staff during group training sessions
- Step Ahead has won a number of awards for its commitment to staff training and development

- Our adherence to OHSAS 18001:1999 the Occupational Health and Safety Management System is monitored and regularly reviewed and subject to external audits annually
- Step Ahead sponsors its local college
- We regularly sponsor staff, temps, clients and suppliers in charitable events;
- We have an annual budget for charity donations
- We have worked in partnership with local organisations on an ESF project to help get the disadvantaged back into the workplace.
- We have effective risk management in place in respect of harm to the vulnerable, security, confidentiality, health, fraud and professional malpractice

Economic

Again, it is critical that our business is able to maintain sound economic sustainability – indeed, our very existence depends on this.

- Management accounts are produced and reviewed every month;
- Regular reviews are held with the company's auditors;
- Our debt turn and current debtors are reviewed monthly;
- Suppliers are paid at the end of every month (or sooner, where appropriate) without fail;
- We conduct regular review meetings with our clients to gain feedback on the quality of our service versus our pricing;
- Quality assurance feedback is sought for every temp supplied;
- Competitor analysis is conducted on an ongoing basis;
- All feedback is acted upon accordingly;
- Our accounts are subject to full annual audit by external auditors.

Environmental

Because of its commitment to running its business in an environmentally friendly manner Step Ahead has achieved ISO 14001, the international standard which evaluates organisations' environmental management systems.

- As the result of regular environmental assessments, the Directors determine operational procedures and best practices for its key activities. These are conveyed to the staff by appropriate means, such as:
 - Verbal/written instruction
 - Notices and posters
 - Do and Don't guidelines
- All staff are trained on our environmental policies and are expected to pay particular regard to the minimisation of waste and greenhouse gases;

- As part of initial induction and on-going training, staff are made aware that they are responsible for reporting environmental observations and suggestions to the Environmental Manager
- Whenever it is considered relevant to the goods or services required, a copy of the Organisation's Environmental Policy is issued to all suppliers and sub-contractors. In addition, when appropriate, suppliers and sub-contractors are made aware of the Organisation's position relating to the environment, in particular with regard to:
 - Prevention and/or mitigation of all forms of pollution
 - Recycling of materials
 - Waste management
 - Materials sourced from sustainable and/or renewable resources
 - Support for environmental protection
- Suppliers and sub-contractors are subject to a review of their environmental performance as part of the approval process before being appointed as approved suppliers. Procedures relating to the approval process and criteria for approval are as set out in Section 7.4 – Purchasing of the Organisation's ISO 9001:2000 Quality Manual.
- Our ISO 14001 and ISO 9001:2000 processes and adherence are regularly reviewed and subject to annual external audits;
- We have committed major investment for cutting-edge technology, e.g. SPRINT which minimises waste such as paper, toner etc.

The Global Compact

Our company has signed up and made a commitment to the United Nations Global Compact which asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment, and anti-corruption. These principals are derived from:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

We therefore adhere to and promote these principles as an integral part of our business strategy and include the principals in our policies, the day-to-day management of the business, our staff training programme and our service delivery to customers.

The Ten Principles We Embrace, Support and Enact

Human Rights

- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour Standards

- Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

- Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption

- Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

A key requirement for participation in the Global Compact is the annual submission of a progress report that describes our company's efforts to implement the ten principals.

All Step Ahead's policies and procedures, as published in our employee handbook, reflect the above principles and all staff, from the Managing Director to our newest recruit, are expected to reflect the above standards in all aspects of their day-to-day duties.