
DAGENS NYHETER.

Reply

“Through the power of growth, let’s act together towards a climate neutral future”

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REPLY DN DEBATT 3/12. Today’s inability or perhaps a disinterest in assuming responsibility for the downsides of growth is a problem. Growth could even be positive in the context. An increase in growth has a great chance of creating lasting change, writes Johanna Lundén and Erik Ringertz, Netlight Consulting.

In the Swedish student manifesto “Wake up call on the environment”, students are demanding real change at companies to consider them as future employers. For the younger generation, the negative outlook is not a distant worry and they want to be part of the journey towards a more sustainable world.

We hear you and would love for you to join. As company leaders, we also have long-term goals stretching beyond 2050. Our future is therefore equally dependent on gifted students choosing us as their employer as well as preserving the world we live in.

The wording in the manifesto that “our system is based on growth without reflecting on the downsides of growth” can be interpreted as the growth itself is a problem. Rather, it is today’s inability or perhaps a disinterest in assuming responsibility for the downsides of growth that is a problem. Growth could even be positive in the context. An increase in growth has a greater chance of creating lasting change.

A few years ago, we examined our own business and found that a strategic key factor to success was the exchange between people in our organization. We also highlighted its downside, the need to travel. Over 1000 co-workers travel daily, both locally and between offices across Europe.

This led us to start estimating our emissions and making investments to compensate for the part of our travels we did not manage to switch to alternatives, such as travel by train or meeting online. The central location of all our offices made them easily accessible by bike and public transport.

The adjustment led to a positive experience and clear business value, which is why we the following year decided to increase our focus on the downsides. We then found that meetings have yet another side effect, the need for food. We order over 60 000 portions of food a year for

events and meetings. This led us to introduce the rule of offering vegetarian food rather than meat, to continue our growth and meetings without negatively impacting the environment.

Other similar measures were taken throughout the years to limit the consumption of plastic, among other things.

The importance of these measures has increased with our own growth. We have not just been able to inspire clients, but also ourselves in our own private lives. As over 1 000 climate-conscious evangelists in Europe that have a positive impact on our surroundings. To underline the responsibility of us as individual role models, we as a company made investments in the climate to compensate for every co-worker's ecological footprint in 2018, in a UN-sanctioned project through a partner, Go Climate Neutral, who also educates us on climate neutral lifestyle.

Without growth, the effect had not been the same. However, an ignorant attitude towards the downsides of growth had been completely devastating.

Having said that, we have not reached our goal. This is just the beginning. We gladly stand behind the requirement of the student manifesto to:

1. Continuously map and present total climate emission and environmental impact.
2. Adhere to a carbon budget that leads us to reduce our carbon emissions by 16 % each year.
3. Regularly measure and follow up on our environmental impact and our carbon budget.
4. And we could add: Act in a transparent way to share our solutions and create greater exchange together.

Not only do we take your concern seriously, but we share it with you and look forward to us as a company together with others, together with you students embarking on a sustainable journey in creating change through growth.