

# WASTE NOT, WANT NOT: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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Not teaching but transforming – an educational process which is easy to espouse but frequently hard to achieve in practice. This case study, set in the building technology environment of a tertiary institution, shows that by immersing students in the practicalities of construction waste management, they can cross a threshold of understanding of the wider principles of sustainability (Timmermans, 2009). By persuading our degree students to climb into construction waste bins, analyse the contents and investigate re- or up-cycling for all of the products, they become able to appreciate the role that waste reduction can play at each stage of a product's life cycle, from sensitive design to careful deconstruction. Using the guidelines provided by Jaques (2013) and Arnott and McIntyre (2014) teams of students are subsequently required to search for examples of recycling and debate the relative advantages and disadvantages critically in an online forum as part of their degree course. This process in turn encourages transformational thinking, clearly evident in students' critical analysis and implies that all trades and disciplines, including the construction industry, can transform their perspectives on sustainability. The Construction and Building industry is New Zealand's fastest growing sector with employment currently forecast to grow at 2.6% (Daly, 2014). With this growth in the building and construction industry, it is clear that many more students will be entering this trade in the near future. Therefore, this research indicates that educating these future builders on wider principles of sustainability will be a determining factor in the sustainable development of New Zealand. It is imperative that the systemic approach of sustainability is embedded into their curriculum to ensure that there is transformation in values and attitudes of the future New Zealand workforce.

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