

**Eco-Imagining
Sustainability Through Improvisation
for Business**
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Video Demonstrating Activities Described Below--
<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1125311309>

Our group focused on sustainability in business. Businesses impact our daily lives, from the products we use to the places we work. Promoting sustainable practices among current and future business owners is key to building a healthier planet and a stronger economy for future generations.



Introduction: This focus on eco-imagining education—what is taught, by whom, who decides, and how— is in 3 parts. The 1st is a warmup to introduce the topic and begin playing with the subject in fun ways. The 2nd is a short-form improvisation based on a semi-structured set up. The 3rd is a long-form improvisation with more creative freedom for collective re-imagining. Audacious possibilities can abound in this made-up enactment of an educational setting in a post-transition (equitable, survivable, thrive-able, and post climate crisis) world. Do this 3-part activity to support your group in collectively imagining the world that they want through their interaction with education. Together strengthen your ability to imagine what you want to move towards and work for.

Part 1 → Warm Up:

The warmup is a way to break the ice and get people present in the space. Start in a circle, and there will be an object in the middle of the circle that everybody will use as a prop. For example, a water bottle, but this can be anything. Everybody will take turns going into the circle, picking up the object, and miming out a scenario with the object as something that it's not. For example, the water bottle as a steering wheel. The rest of the group will guess what the object is meant to be. When it is guessed correctly, a new person will enter the circle with the object. You can continue this until everyone in the group has gone, or everyone comfortable with going has gone

1. Make a circle with the object in the middle
2. Take turns entering the circle and miming the object as something that it's not.
3. The group guesses what the object is meant to be.
4. The next person enters the circle.
5. Continue until everybody who wants to go has gone.

Part 2 → Short-Form Improvisational Prompt: “Blind Handshake”

This short-form improvisational exercise is designed to explore connection, trust, and embodied awareness through nonverbal movement. It invites participants to tune into their bodies, notice subtle shifts in energy, and practice sensing others without relying on sight or speech. By removing verbal communication and encouraging mindful exploration of space, this prompt creates opportunities for participants to engage with presence, empathy, and intuition. The “blind handshake” becomes more than just a physical action—it transforms into a shared act of discovery that highlights how we navigate trust and connection in unfamiliar or uncertain environments.

1. Begin by having everyone spread out and slowly explore the space. Encourage participants to move carefully, becoming aware of their bodies and how they occupy the environment.
2. Ask participants to shift their pace as they move:
 - First, as if they are rushing to a meeting and running late.
 - Next, as if they are simply moving through an ordinary workday.
 - Finally, as if they really don't want to go to work at all.
3. Invite everyone to notice how their body and energy change with each imagined state. Encourage them to vary duration and speed, exaggerating or softening their movements as they “travel” through the space.
4. Without speaking, have each participant find a partner and connect through a handshake.
5. Once they've connected, instruct both partners to close their eyes, back away from each other into the space, and then attempt to find one another again—still without speaking—to meet for another handshake with eyes closed.

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*This short form improv prompt offers a structured yet creative space for participants to explore how awareness and trust can transform simple actions into moments of authentic connection. It emphasizes presence, sensitivity, and the relational experience of movement.

Part 3 → Long- form Improvisation prompt: Image Theater and Live Sculptures

Image theater is the idea of working in small groups to take a story that resonates within the context of the topic by making a living sculpture. This is done by each person taking a turn to utilize the other bodies in the group to physicalize their story and create a picture to share with the other groups in the room. An example of this, which is featured in the video above, is telling the story of how putting motion-censored lightbulbs into classrooms/office buildings can be a sustainable business practice. This living sculpture was created by one person guiding the physical embodiment of the other members in the group.

1. Break into groups based on topics people care about regarding sustainability practices in business education
2. Once in these groups, take a minute to think about how to physicalize their stories and decide who will start guiding the bodies in the space
3. Once the picture is created, have the rest of the class/collective share a few ideas about what story they are seeing within the living sculpture and how it is effective
4. Once the comments/ideas are shared amongst the collective group, have the person who facilitated the creation of the picture share a brief description of what is happening within the living sculpture and reflect back the ideas from the collective
5. Continue on with the same process until all persons in the group have created a sculpture and shared their thoughts

Closing/Reflection questions: Come back together as a collective group and share thoughts/ideas about how this experience went, you can use these questions as a guide

1. Go around the room and have everyone share a word about their experience
2. What's one way you could implement these themes and ideas into your business practices?
3. How can creativity be used to design business solutions that are both innovative and sustainable without compromising one for the other?
4. How does your background or culture shape the way you view the intersection of business and sustainability?
5. How can we maintain momentum in our sustainability journey?

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Options for reading:

<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/4/1597>

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-50168-5_14

https://hbr.org/2025/05/sustainability-as-a-business-model-transformation?utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=domcontent_businessmgmt&utm_term=Non-Brand&tpcc=domcontent_businessmgmt&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=20712405344&gbraid=0AAAAAD9b3uTu1L_6yxDRRn_EpEVR5Uh_H&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIvKCDmKGBkAMVeSWtBh0v7ihvEAAYBCAAEgLuwvD_BwE