

“Where do I start?”

Whatever the forum, whatever the audience, it’s always the first question I hear when I talk to people about sustainability and personal impact.

We all want to make a difference on climate change, but many of us don’t know how we can or where to begin. It can seem overwhelming.

The good news is that even on a challenge as huge as global climate change, everyday people can make a real difference in their everyday lives. We’ll be talking a lot about this at the upcoming Climate Reality Leadership Corps training in Los Angeles from Aug. 28—30 and you should be there.

Join Climate Reality for the training in LA and learn more about all the ways you can have a real impact on your local and global community with the decisions you make daily. As a preview, here are four ways to start.

Individual Impact: Start the Conversation

Do you ever think about how many decisions you make on a daily basis? Research shows that the average person makes around 35,000 decisions every single day.

For all of us, these decisions are opportunities to have a powerful impact on our climate. Some may be inconsequential (like which shoe to put on first or what to listen to on your way to work). However, the majority can have a tremendous positive impact if we’re intentional about them. Decisions like:

What should I eat for lunch?

How should I commute to work today?

Should I work for an organization aligned with my values?

Should I work for a large company where I can help drive change from the inside out?

Your individual decisions as a consumer not only signal demand for certain products to companies, they show your friends, family members and colleagues what kind of world you support. And your example goes a long way.

Community Impact: Your Neighborhood

What communities do to fight climate change comes down to the people who live there. So whether you’re living in a town already committed to renewable electricity or a city yet to start recycling, you can help push your hometown forward.

If your community is already moving in the right direction, show your support. Use social media and write a letter to the editor of the local paper to show that people in the neighborhood are behind climate action.

Plus, many communities have advisory groups where residents can give feedback and advice on initiatives from electric vehicle charging stations to restaurant composting programs to

green home educational programs for residents. It's your chance to help shape local policies that directly affect you and the planet.

If your community is still just getting started, you can push for sustainability programs that encourage broad participation and buy-in across sectors. One example would be the creation of an environmental task force or advisory committee to help develop local environmental policies and programs.

The business community can be a powerful ally. In some cases, including the chamber of commerce or leaders in the local business community may be an easier lift than working directly with city departments. Chambers across the globe have seen the benefits of creating "Green Business Programs," which educate businesses about how to go green and promote those that have sustainable practices.

Industry Impact: Your Workplace

No matter where you work, from corporations to nonprofits to government agencies to universities, there are lots of ways to help create change within your workplace.

As a first step, research whether there are environmental standards, certifications or industry organizations for your field. If you found some, great! Start talking to decision-makers at your organization to find out how you can engage them. If not, find others in your field who are passionate about sustainability and develop your own.

For instance, the events industry has developed green event standards (ISO 20121 and APEX/ASTM), green event certifications, and industry organizations (Green Meeting Industry Council, Sustainable Event Alliance, Green Sports Alliance).

These standards have pushed all industry stakeholders, like venues, event producers, caterers and suppliers of event products, to up their sustainability game—with huge results. Why are industry standards such a big deal? Consider that the Olympics is essentially one large \$5 billion event. The importance of the International Olympic Committee embracing the ISO 20121 standard as a requirement for all Olympic Games from 2012 onward is massive in terms of the carbon emissions, pollutants and waste it prevents.

Global Impact: Your World

Yes, the climate crisis is a global challenge. Yes, it's big. Too big for any one person to solve on their own. But together with thousands and thousands of other committed activists spread across every time zone? Now that's a different story.

That story is the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, nearly 14,500 (and growing) everyday people of all ages who all decided that our climate and our planet are too important to leave in the hands of others.

They all believed they had to do something themselves. So they came to train with former

Vice President Al Gore and others. They learned how to organize their communities and create pressure for action that policymakers couldn't ignore.

Together, they've become a powerful force for change, helping push cities and universities to go 100 percent renewable and making business more sustainable all around the world. You can train as a Climate Reality Leader and join them. You can be part of this global movement that is reshaping the world we live in. After all, these Leaders are working for solutions in ways that ripple across the planet, but they all started off as someone just like you. Someone asking, "What can I do?"

Ready for Action?

If you're ready to learn how you can make a difference in your community and for the planet, join a host of incredible speakers like former Vice President Al Gore at the Climate Reality Leadership Corps training in LA Aug. 28—30.

It's three days of inspiring sessions on climate science and solutions. Three days of conversations with other world-changers just like you. Three days that point the way forward to a sustainable future. Three days that will change your life.

Applications are open and the training is free to attend, so apply today.

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