Building a culture of environmental stewardship through workforce education

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# ABSTRACT

Environmental stewardship is often treated as the responsibility of a few, usually the on-site environmental scientists—frequently referred to as the “enviro cops.” In reality, achieving genuine sustainability requires shared responsibility across an entire workforce. From the office to the field, environmental care should be part of everyone’s role. With increasing attention on sustainability and the environmental impacts of mining, it is no longer enough to rely on compliance alone. A collective focus on environment must be part of business culture.

However, it’s hard to expect good environmental practices from people who don’t understand the “how” or the “why.” Many workers want to do the right thing but lack the knowledge to follow through. That’s where workforce education and environmental champions becomes crucial. Explaining the reasons behind environmental protocols, how poor practices can damage country, ecosystems, and long-term operations, bridges the gap between intent and action. These conversations can be informal, practical, and tailored to site or office conditions, making the message more meaningful and accessible.

Small everyday actions, when done consistently by many, can make a huge difference. But these efforts won’t have lasting impact unless supported from the top. Leadership needs to set the tone, led by example, and go beyond minimum requirements. True environmental stewardship is not just about ticking boxes it’s about creating a culture where caring for country is part of the way we work.

This presentation explores how education and leadership can embed sustainability into everyday mining practices. Because meaningful change comes not from doing the bare minimum, but from empowering people to understand, care, and act.