Giselle Weybrecht – Transcript.

My name is Giselle Weybrecht, I am the author of a book called the Sustainable MBA, a manager’s guide to green business and a lot of what I’m trying to do is change the way the next generation of leaders learn about sustainability. To really make it so they can bring sustainability into the business world and make it the norm. I spent 10 years working in the United Nations, working in around 30 different countries on sustainability issues, sustainable development to be particular. In particular around water issues and then i left in 2005 to do an MBA at London Business School. The book is really about introducing students and young managers to what they can do around sustainability. How they can bring sustainability into their job regardless of what type of job they have. So understanding that to really push sustainability forward in a business you have to get the whole business involved. Whether it’s marketing, accounting, finance etc and so students understanding how they can bring sustainability into all of those different jobs and all those different parts of their jobs.

Its really important to understand what it is that the business sector is doing, the business sector is so important in society and understanding how sustainability is brought into the business sector. I really made a point to write it in a way that is accessible to anybody who wanted to read about it whether you’re a high school student interested in these issues, whether your an artist, whether your an MBA student it doesn’t really matter it’s accessible to all those audiences. I tried to focus on providing a range of examples from around the world. These are issues that all countries are looking at and all around the world are looking at in different shapes and ways so the book was really meant to be international and it is being used by individuals around the world.

I do at lot of workshops and spend a lot of time in businesses and some of the concerns often brought up by senior management is that the graduates that they are hiring straight out of MBA and other business programs don’t have the knowledge about sustainability. A lot of the time they know a little bit about sustainability but they don’t know how to implement it, and a lot of the managers and CEO’s are hoping and expecting the next generation to come in and push the company forward.

There are so many different things we can do in this area as individuals, at work there are different ways you can bring sustainability into your job regardless of what job you do. Everybody makes decisions on a daily basis from what type of activities they get involved in at work to decisions on suppliers for example so they can have an impact at work. For consumers it comes down to what kinds of products you choose to buy, the kinds of stores you choose to buy from and having that conversation with the companies that you buy from if there’s things they can do better or you can show your support for the activities that they have. As an individual we don’t think we have a lot of power but we have a lot more influence over pushing sustainability forward than we realise.