

A Future Built On Mountains of Waste



We've all seen garbage on the streets and cursed those who so carelessly litter. We've heard stories about industries dumping tons of waste every year in the environment. We've learnt to call them the enemy. We write about it on social media, take pictures and carry on living our lives.

Then there are those few, who care for the environment beyond measure. The Novelis team is made of such people.

Novelis, the leader of aluminium rolled products, started its battle early and regularly recycled 40 billion beverage cans a year, while sourcing 30% of their total raw material from scrap input. But this was only a start for the CEO and President Phil Martens, and his team. They knew they had an ongoing

responsibility not just to their customers but to the world around them.

The team passionately pushed sustainability high up on the strategic agenda. After considered debate and deliberation, John Gardner, Chief Sustainability Officer, and his team embarked upon an ambitious journey of achieving 80% sustainability targets across the company operations and output by 2020. All their lives, they'd waited for this chance, to make a real difference. To give Earth a few years of its life back. To make it a happier, cleaner, greener place. It was now their opportunity. And they were determined to grab it.

The competition was sceptical and customers raised their doubts. But the leaders were confident of their intentions and intuition. It was this purpose that was their sole motivator and guide. They needed seamless commitment from every member of the team. And commitment was what had them going.

Derek Pritchett, Global Vice President of Recycling, was brought on board to strengthen the effort. The team focused on four important things. To come up with innovative endeavours such as assembling a global network to buy scrap metal, aligning the company technologies of scrap separation, to have refined product specifications in place and a way of encouraging the consumers to recycle end products.

They'd taken a road less travelled, and so they had to take a few unconventional steps. They started buying scrap aluminium from thousands of small suppliers rather than from a few big primary suppliers. This meant multiple types of aluminium scrap, needing new manufacturing management

systems and an enhanced level of quality control. When faith takes a leap, every doubt is left behind. Slowly, the worried partners and sceptical consumers began to see the depth of this purpose and the revolution it could bring.

Novelis today has shown a 20% increase in its scrap input percentage, raising the total recycled content to nearly 50%. But the most powerful impact has been on the environment. With this plan in action, 10 million tonnes of greenhouse gases will have been removed from the ecosystem by the year 2020. This isn't just a glorious chapter in the company's history, but an ongoing victory of passion and purpose. A purpose that was much greater than an individual or a team.