

Best Practices

1. Title of the Practice

Reuse of paper-stationary

2. Objectives of the Practice

The aim of this practice was to make the optimum use of the papers partially used by the students. It was also intended to sensitize the stakeholders towards the judicious use of paper as a part of adopting ecologically sustainable practices, especially on the campus of higher education. There are some corollary benefits of the practice including, litter-free campus and a substantial drop towards the expenses of office-printing/writing stationary. The practice also helped spread the legitimacy of the documents on and around the campus printed on partially used paper. It encouraged the students and the staff members to reuse the papers wherever they could do so.

3. The Context

Every academic year the students of science stream used hundreds of reams of papers to write their assignments and practical-experiments records. Most of the record is written or printed on one side of the paper as mandated by the university. After the mandatory period of record-keeping is over, these partially used papers go waste. In order to arrest this great waste of resources the institute decided to use these papers for printing and writing purposes. In order to make it a structured effort, the responsibility was given to the Department of Computer Science. The HoD of CPS worked as a coordinator for this practice. He collects the partially used stationary from all the departments and distributes it to the office and the departments.

4. The Practice

Higher education in India is still “paper-centric” at least the assessment and the evaluation practices are concerned. Every year in our college hundreds of reams of paper are used by the students and teachers. In many cases where the students are required to use one side of paper especially in their practical-experiments books, the other side remained unused. Such books after the assessments were kept as record for three years. After that, these record-books were either destroyed or sold. In a way it was a waste of both natural resources and money.

Secondly being a centre for higher education Environmental Science it was our natural duty to show the world a way for adopting ecologically sustainable practices. On this backdrop it was decided to make reuse of any such partially used papers. For this department of computer science was chosen to coordinate this activity as it housed largest number of students. The head, department of Computer science devised a mechanism to collect, distribute and keep an account of the usage of “PK” as most of the users called it. “PK” being an acronym for “Path-Kore” “one-side blank paper” in Marathi soon became the unofficial title of the practice. Now every year around 72 reams of PK are reused by the teachers and the administrative staff for various printing and writing purposes. This way we save around Rs. 13000 on the purchase of the papers. Moreover we think that in our small way we are making our contribution in reducing the consumption of natural resources. In addition to that we are being able to spread this message of environmentally sustainable practice among the students, the staff and the other stakeholders. Lastly we hope that other institutes of higher education should also adopt this innovative practice and help reduce our carbon footprint.

5. Evidence of Success

The college has been using “PK” for last 10 years. A systematic auditing has been done for last five years. Due to the use of this practice the college saves about 72 reams (more than 34000 pages) costing about 13000/- every year.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Since the whole point of the practice was to make optimum use of available resources, we did not encounter any problems on this count. However in the initial years, the challenge faced was to overcome the reluctance of the staff in making the reuse of the papers. Many of the staff-members felt uncomfortable while printing some documents on used papers. As the office and IQAC started using the PK for printing and writing purposes, the initial reluctance was finally removed.