

# A Reflective Recipe for LEED: A Dash of Archimedes, a Smidge of Mead, a Pinch of Jobs...

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There have been many before us who have provided insight into the formula for creating positive change, paving the road through action and articulating ideas that catalyze and lessons that ignite. Their contributions resonate today and continue to instill in us the feeling and spirit of what's needed to successfully drive market transformation.

Reflecting on some of these ideas, I've put together my recipe of great thinking that in many ways has influenced, guided, propelled or inspired LEED and its remarkable, flexible, market-based approach to creating change.

I'd start with **two cups of Archimedes**, who said, "Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." *LEED is a remarkable lever in the world of buildings.*

We'll need a **heaping of Margaret Mead**, who said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." *I immediately think of our Greenbuild audience. [Check out last year's opening plenary.](#)*

Add **some Thoreau** to the pot. He said, "What's the use of a fine house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" *Leadership IN Energy and Environment.*

Include **a few dashes of Chief Seattle**, who said, "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." What does **Bill McDonough** say? "In planetary terms, we're all downstream," and, "Cradle to cradle." *Yeah, let's do that. Did someone say integrated design?*

Throw in **a bit of Bill Clinton**, who said in 1996, "I have never believed we had to choose between either a clean and safe environment or a growing economy. Protecting the health and safety of all Americans doesn't have to come at the expense of our economy's bottom line. And creating thriving companies and new jobs doesn't have to come at the expense of the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, or the natural landscape in which we live. We can, and indeed must, have both." *See the unassailable triple-bottom-line case for LEED.*

Add **a dash of Teddy Roosevelt**, author of "A Strenuous Life," who wrote, "I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes, not to the man who desires mere easy peace, but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph." *It can be easy being green, but leadership takes work, sacrifice and grit. And there's no complacency allowed in a system like LEED; just as the market starts to adjust, LEED evolves and challenges us to do much more (See v4).*

Let's definitely include **a tad of Steve Jobs**, who said, "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." Couple that with the Jobs-inspired Apple ad that reads: "Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. ... Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do." *Hats off to the University of Change and its Troublemaker mascot.*

We can't forget **a smidgeon of Henry Ford**, who said, "Don't find fault, find a remedy." Or should I say **Richard Buckminster Fuller**, who said, "You never

change something by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” Or am I thinking of **Peter Drucker**, who said, “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” Maybe it’s **a hint of Einstein**, who said, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.” *It’s that special ingredient that facilitates new thinking to old problems. Snap. Breakthrough.*

Finally, let’s **mix and prepare with this African proverb**: “If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Similar is **the Chinese proverb**, “Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand.” Or, a bit more recent reference of a similar sentiment is what **Judith Rodin of the Rockefeller Foundation** says: “Partnership is the new leadership.” *Together, thousands and thousands of experts from business, civil society, government and academia have worked side by side to develop, shape and guide LEED over the past 13 years. And now nearly 200,000 people have been trained and accredited to better understand and use LEED. That’s a village.*

Well, that’s my recipe. What’s yours?

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