

ESG Budget Hacks for General Counsel



It's a big day.

You are presenting to the executive team on the legal risks related to ESG.

You ask for budget to prepare the company.

The response

Do we have to do this now?

Could we wait until next year?

**How about we put XYZ
(inexperienced resource) on it?**

The truth is that spending more money on legal and compliance is a tough sell.

But the story does not end there for ESG.

ESG is not just about regulations. It's about business performance.

**Here is how you put together
an ESG budget ask that will get
approved.**

1

Legal Risks

Your Ground Zero

ESG risks are increasing.

Make this real to the executive team.

Examples

- ✓ The SEC is expected to release its climate disclosure rule this Fall.
- ✓ The EU has already adopted regulations (the CSRD) that will impact companies outside the EU.
- ✓ Climate litigation has doubled since 2015. Greenwashing claims are grabbing headlines.

2

Cost Savings

Create the "Aha" Moment

ESG is seen as a cost.

Work with Finance to identify
how it will save money.

Examples

- ✓ More efficient equipment reduces energy costs and carbon.
- ✓ Policies limiting air travel reduce travel costs and carbon.
- ✓ Circularity reduces waste costs and trash to landfill.

3

Sales

Move to Revenue Positive

Sustainability sells.

Work with Sales to identify
client requirements and expectations.

Examples

- ✓ Potential clients are requiring ESG data in Requests for Proposals.
- ✓ Your competition is marketing their sustainability practices.
- ✓ You have an opportunity to be an industry leader.

4

Marketing

A Must-Have

How is your company
walking the talk?.

Work with Marketing to ensure you have
action to back up your statements.

Examples

- ✓ What are the climate and DEI commitments expected in your market?
- ✓ How can you incorporate sustainability into your value proposition?
- ✓ How do you protect the company against greenwashing allegations?

5

Talent

The War is Real.

Gen Z cares about sustainability more than any generation before.

Work with HR to quantify how ESG will help attract and retain talent.

Examples

- ✓ 48% of Gen Z would consider leaving a job due to lack of sustainable practices
- ✓ Workers are willing to accept a job that pays less at a company that is taking climate action.
- ✓ DEI is at the heart of the "S" in ESG and growing a strong workforce.

6

Product

The Big Opportunity.

Companies and consumers want products that help them be sustainable.

Expand or reposition your offerings to capture this demand.

Examples

- ✓ Fewer consumers are buying fast fashion. Shift to quality.
- ✓ 26M electric vehicles will be on the road by 2030. What's the next revolution in your market?
- ✓ Companies want new solutions to meet their own sustainability objectives.

"We must manage legal risk related to ESG and prepare for regulations.

It will take us 12 months to launch a program. We must start now.

We need 2 headcount, a consulting budget, and new technology."

"It's time to invest in ESG. We need this to manage risk, comply with regulation. And if we do it right, the financial benefits will be substantial."

Insert

- **cost savings**
- **revenue growth**
- **market differentiators**
- **talent**
- **product opportunities**

And the best part . . .

You won't be making the pitch alone.

You will already have the CFO, CHRO, CMO, and Heads of Sales and Product on your side.



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