



— Recycle —



Loop project - National research
INTERVIEWS: Entry # 59



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is a Human Resources specialist with a decade of successful experience in hiring and employee management. Giovanni specializes in Human Resource technologies and regularly attends national training sessions to showcase new HR tech trends, such as self-service, wellness apps, and people analytics tools. A strong believer in the power of positive thinking in the workplace, Giovanni regularly develops internal wellness campaigns to assist employees with effective mental health techniques. Giovanni enjoys a good Netflix binge but can also be found on long bike rides on hilly country roads.

WHAT recycling activities do you undertake on a regular basis?

1. Observe how organic and inorganic materials decompose, it's important to teach students why they should reduce, reuse, recycle. A hands-on activity that shows how different kinds of materials decompose will help bring the concept to life.

As a class, choose a few different kinds of organic and inorganic materials to observe. Have students predict how long it will take for each item to decompose and keep a journal of their observations (here's one example). Younger students can make drawings of the materials and older students can write more detailed descriptions of what they observe. The goal of this lesson is to show that only the organic material decomposes quickly – inorganic materials will sit around in landfills for a long time. Fortunately, many of these materials are easy to recycle.

2. Start a composting project. Composting is one way to reuse organic material that may otherwise end up in a landfill. This project can be done on a small scale inside the classroom or on school grounds, or you can make it an integral part of how your school works. Use this hands-on project as a way to introduce concepts about how organic materials decompose. This is another journaling opportunity for students as they observe how your compost project changes over time.



3. Make your own paper. One of the best ways to understand how recycling works is to do it yourself! Making your own paper using scraps requires a few materials and preparation for this activity to run smoothly in the classroom. You can use a guide like this one for step-by-step instructions, or this free activity Make Your Own Paper from Project Learning Tree's PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide. Watch a video of the paper-making process used in this activity.

4. Calculate your impact. We all want to feel like we're contributing to something bigger than ourselves and that we're making a difference. If we reduce our consumption, it's helpful to know what kind of impact it can make. Here are some questions and ideas to consider:

Calculate how much trash they generate in a day, week, month, and year.

Calculate how much trash their family, the school, their city or town, and their state generates per year.

What are some ways they could reduce their CO₂ emissions? Calculate how much it would reduce their emissions if their family used public transportation to go to school and work, used energyefficient lightbulbs in their house, switched to a vegetarian or vegan diet, etc.

If they reduced their CO₂ emissions by 1/3, how much CO₂ would they produce? How much CO₂ would they save?

For younger students, you can put together age-appropriate word problems. These estimates of CO₂ emissions and this information about how much trash Americans produce can provide some numbers to start with. For older students, it could be a project of its own by having them conduct research on the different scenarios you propose.





HOW DID YOU INTEGRATE

knowledge or technological processes to encourage a better circularity of your work?

The new industrial revolution, that of robots, automation and artificial intelligence, cannot be stopped.

Information and communication technologies make many things easier than in the past; services that previously required physical movement and long waiting times are now within reach, fast and immediate. The Internet, big data, blockchain technologies and artificial intelligence are revolutionizing every area of our life. Our generation - writes the philosopher Luciano Floridi - will probably be the last to still understand what it means to live offline and online, the future will be "onlife". We are facing a leap forward for humanity. But to make it an opportunity for progress and collective well-being, we must guide it.

The dangers, however, are not to be denied. The phase we are currently experiencing is paradoxical, with the creation of great opportunities, but with the worrying reduction in employment and the formation of pyramids and bottlenecks: if technology is not demonized, the risks it entails must be taken into consideration. We know that the well-being released after the Second World War has stopped for some time, also in terms of social protection (historians and economists agree on this point).



Jackboots recycled, photo by Ravin Rau on unsplash, <https://unsplash.com/photos/eNOLrYUx5ZQ>

An alarming fact is confirmed: the concentration of benefits. Income increases since the 1980s have been concentrated in the hands of a minority. This has generated inequalities and the quality of life of the middle class has deteriorated. In an attempt to become a more technologically advanced nation, we are running the risk of leaving behind a good portion of the population that is struggling to extricate themselves from the infosphere or that is not even familiar with technologies, especially digital ones. There is a training and knowledge gap that is just as deep and extensive as the infrastructural one. And the phenomenon is wider than you think. Moreover, technology pushes towards a specialization of knowledge and skills; the possibility of perfecting them is decisive in the work of the next few times. This aspect escapes the choice of individuals: often there is no possibility of adequate training.

It is therefore necessary that people prepare for the new digital world and that companies, encouraged and supported by politics, play an important role in preparing people and accompanying them creatively in the new digital economy. It will be important, in planning the future of the country, not to forget about those who live in that gray area where digital is struggling to see the light. The challenge is essentially open and primarily involves public authority and political action. Everyone should be given the same opportunities.



In any case, inequalities already belong to the current reality, even without machine learning and “predictive” software. It is an ancient reality, like the history that accompanies it. It should be contextualized with technology, another ancient knowledge with which man shapes and shapes nature for his own ends. For this reason, the digital age also concerns the system of rules and legal protections that we will be able to give ourselves to direct technological evolution towards more equitable objectives of sustainable development and general well-being. To have an ethical digital age, ethical men are needed.

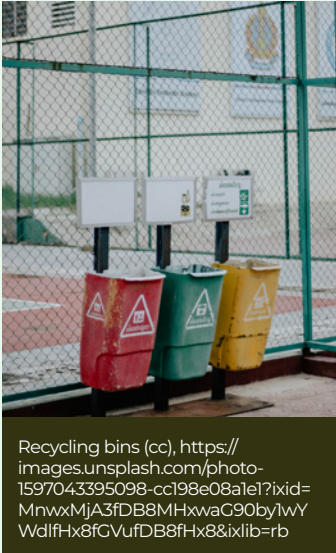


WHAT INNOVATIVE FUTURE

projects or objectives does it arise in relation to recycling and the potential that this has in its economic activity?

In a circular economy, resources do not end up as recyclables since products are made to last several lifecycles. Products' lifespans are extended via maintain, repair, redistribute, refurbishment and/or re-manufacture loops, thus they never end up in the low-value, high-need-for-energy loop: recycling. We live in a world in dire need of disruptive innovations. Closing loops next to where customers live while avoiding waste is a short and longer-term win-win for any leading re-manufacturer.

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Short-term because you are in direct contact with your customers, and taking back a product that needs maintenance is an opportunity to better understand their needs and help them with additional services. Long-term because you will lower your exposure to future financial risks. Any of the feedback loops that exist prior to the recycling loop are an opportunity to take back control over your stock of resources – taking control away from the raw material markets, which may become highly volatile. Increased interactions with your customers, both commercial and financial, and an in-depth understanding of their needs, would increase customer loyalty and a business' overall resilience.

Re-using, re-distributing and/or remanufacturing strategies are the preferred approaches in a circular economy, as they are based on parts durability. Caring for and preserving the value of product components increases corporate economic resilience, while diminishing external market risks. Whether you are acting in a highly advanced or a developing economy, these strategies make crystal-clear sense: they are less costly in the long-run because repairing a product made to last is always less expensive than producing it from scratch.



Following this approach, we must move away from activities that devalue the material, such as recycling, and instead invest in those activities that preserve it: reuse and remanufacture. These two are especially important since they create many more secure jobs. Walter R. Stahel, the godfather of the modern circular economy, introduced the metric of labor input-per-weight ratio (manhour-per-kg, or mh/kg) to measure job creation in relation to resource consumption.

He found that the ratio of mh/kg when building a remanufactured engine from used resources compared to making the same engine from virgin materials is 270:1. The impact on employment is huge.

The re-localization and the re-sizing of activities closer to customers become critical. Production sites should migrate from a highly centralized global hub to units designed to fulfill local needs. In developed markets, a possible plan could be to develop strategic partnerships with local service providers, who can provide the infrastructure. In emerging markets, where there is often an urgent need for jobs, leapfrogging straight into a national re-manufacturing strategy is the way forward.



The returnable glass bottles.
Photo by Lacey Williams on Unsplash
<https://economiecircolare.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/deposito-cauzione-lacey-williams-unsplash-1536x893.jpg>

Becoming the next 'world factory' hub is an obsolete vision today.

One way to start thinking like a leader in the next economy while creating jobs could be in order of priority:

- Reuse by repairing (goods) through re-hiring (people), while sharing the radical benefits (awareness) of such a model
- Redistribute by promoting access (goods) through collaboration (people), while sharing information (awareness) about this model
- Remanufacture via the ease of disassembly (goods) by training (people), while sharing the acquired knowledge (awareness) through this model
- Migration of recycling activities by diverting (goods) to service models, transferring skills (people) to remanufacturing processes (awareness).

All of the above make sense in a world where planetary limits have already hit most economies.

Adopting a circular strategy by avoiding reliance on recycling is the way forward. This is about genuine innovation derived from genuine leadership.

RECYCLE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the so-called “circular economy”?

A	B	C
22	2	6

2. Do you believe that a more sustainable economic system can be equally productive than the current one?

A	B	C
15	6	9

3. Which of these consumer choices have you decided to implement in the last 10 years to protect the environment?

A	B	C
0	23	7

4. How will the so-called “circular economy” affect the job market?

A	B	C
5	16	9

5. In your work, how many strategic choices related to sustainability have been made in the last 10 years?

A	B	C
10	15	5

6. Which of these 4 “Rs” is more important to ensure a better future for humanity?

A	B	C	D
9	9	7	5

7. Which of these 4 “Rs” is most present in your family’s daily life?

A	B	C	D
0	6	10	14

8. In your opinion, what link is there between technology and the “circular economy”?

A	B	C
23	7	0

9. Do you think we will be able to change the way we consume so as not to affect the environment and its limited resources?

A	B	C
9	15	6

10. Are you familiar with the UN 2030 Agenda or have you ever heard of SDGs?

A	B	C
18	2	10

QUESTIONNAIRE



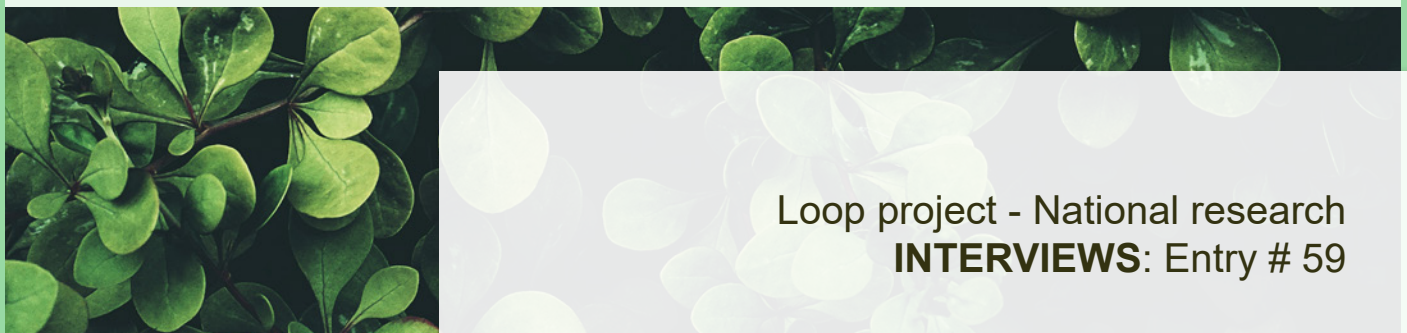
QUESTIONNAIRE

11. Do you think that the economy in the past was more sustainable than it is today?

A	B	C
20	4	6

12. Which of these 3 statements do you consider the most true and important?

A	B	C
6	18	6



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