

第1回全国高等専門学校英語プレゼンテーションコンテスト
プレゼンテーション部門発表原稿

富山商船高等専門学校国際流通学科3年

棚田 祥太

助田友季奈

山崎早紀子

ARE YOU GREEN?

Thank you for introducing us. I'm Shota Tanada from Toyama National College of Maritime Technology. I'm Sakiko Yamazaki. I'm Yukina Sukeda.

Nowadays, one of the most talked about topics is the environment and how we need to take care of it. Do any of you think about environmental problems such as carbon dioxide emissions, global warming, melting glaciers and extraordinary weather? Do you think about these problems, or how to help reduce these problems?

Many people think that the best way to help the environment is to do without something. We have hard choices to make, and we have to balance these choices between what is good for the environment, and what is inconvenient for us. This creates a big dilemma.

How can we reduce environmental problems? There are many environmentally friendly options, such as hybrid cars, solar-paneled houses, and green taxes. These ideas are practical for adults, but they don't seem to be related to the daily life of a student.

How many of you drove your Toyota Prius today? Please raise your hand. Thank you. Then, what can students do? Well, how many of you went to a convenience store last week? Please raise your hands. Many students went to a convenience store, didn't they? Thank you.

How can you help? Believe it or not, the simple decisions that you make each day are linked to the solutions of many environmental problems. Your choices when buying something at a convenience store can affect the environment. If so, should we stop buying? No!

By being aware of the environment when shopping and identifying which products are environmentally acceptable, you can take a small step towards reducing environmental problems. These suggestions were put forth by John Elkington and Julia Hailes in a book called "The Green Consumer Guide." They state that by choosing better shops and stores, consumers can play a large role in dealing with environmental problems. The key is not to stop buying, but to make good choices when buying.

When you do something to help the environment, you are being "green." So how can you reduce your negative impact on the environment? What criteria can you use when shopping? How can you be a "green-shopper"?

The Green Purchasing Network in Japan proposed four measures; buy only what you

need, choose goods that last a long time, choose goods with environmentally friendly packaging, and choose recycled or recyclable goods. This is good information, but what can we students do with it?

To find out these answers, we visited two stores near our college to research the products that were sold there. At first, we weren't able to easily find information about green companies and green products. However, we realized the packaging tells us many things. The first thing you can realize is how much packaging is being used. "Too much" packaging is a waste of paper, plastic and natural resources.

From sorting garbage at home, everybody knows these marks for paper, plastic, steel and aluminum. These marks tell us whether it is recycled or recyclable. But do you know the meanings of the various Eco marks? Actually, if you can understand these marks, the packaging gives us a lot of information. You can find out whether the manufacturing companies are "green" or not.

This brings us the questions: what is the current level of students' awareness of green shopping at our college? Are students at Toyama National College of Maritime Technology actually green-shopping?

First, on Oct. 15 we distributed a questionnaire to our class and got 22 responses. Then, on Nov. 26 we distributed the same questionnaire to the first year class and the second year class, and got 65 responses. The first question was; "what criteria do you use when shopping? Students could choose a maximum of three out of the 15 criteria. As you can see, most students care about the taste, price and appearance of the packaging. The next question is: what factors do you consider when buying? These are the results. Only 6% of the students cared about the amount of packaging used.

We found out that consumers are not environmentally conscious or eco-conscious when purchasing products. Why? It is because they aren't well-informed. Information is not readily available at shops, and many people don't know about eco-labels. Even advertisements on TV are too short to give enough information on green companies. Do you think that all of you are well-informed consumers? We weren't before this presentation.

Then what can you do?

What did we do? We did two small things. One was to share information on how to become a well-informed consumer. The other was to put out recycling boxes for raising environmental awareness.

Our first step was to promote the idea of eco-awareness to students. On Oct. 22, and on Nov. 28, we had a presentation in our class and two junior classes, and introduced three guidelines. Goods using less packaging reduce waste. Recycled goods use fewer natural resources. Marks on packaging give a lot of information. If you keep these easy rules in mind, you too can be a green-shopper.

After the presentation we received many comments from students. Here are some examples; I'll read the packaging well, next time I shop. Recycling or reading packaging

seems easy to do. I understand why reducing waste is important. They became better informed, and they understood more about buying goods. The eco-awareness level was raised in three classes.

The second plan was to put out recycling boxes at our college. Of course we recycle at home, but at school we often throw different types of garbage into the same container. Why? So we posted colorful posters to show students how recycling was connected to saving natural resources. We thought it would help raise students' eco-awareness through the simple action of recycling.

About one week after the presentation, we distributed the same questionnaire to three classes and got 86 responses. Did students' purchasing behaviors change? How many factors did students consider when shopping? We summed up the numbers of all criteria students used in Question One and got an average. Before the presentation, on average, each student used only 1.1 factors. But after the presentation, each student used 1.6 factors.

Let's look at all the results of the second question before and after. After the presentation, 43% of the students chose goods in less packaging, but before the presentation only 6% of the students cared about this. The number of the students who chose goods with eco marks on nearly tripled. The number of the students who chose products made by environmentally friendly companies almost doubled. In the after-presentation comments, 32% of the students wrote that they would be a wiser consumer by reading packaging or reducing waste.

Through this research we can conclude that the presentation and recycling boxes at school were effective at promoting awareness of students' purchasing behaviors.

Enjoy shopping. But, please think about the connection between you and the environment. Then you can take a small but positive step towards reducing environmental problems.

The key is not to stop buying, but to start smart-buying.

Thank you for your attention.