



Sustainability: A furnishings perspective

1. Insist on what you believe you need – it won't have to be replaced in a few years.
2. Stay involved in the process; don't allow others to make decisions that will affect your ability to teach and research in the fashion you desire.
3. Don't let aesthetics take priority over function.
4. If you cannot reconfigure the room by yourself, will it meet your needs next semester? Next year? In two years? Ten?
5. Can more than one subject (even non-science) be conveniently taught in each room?
6. Don't allow your facility to be "over designed" with costly features you won't value, e.g. grade AA veneers on AWI Premium grade cabinets.
7. Don't let your facility be "under designed"; it is a buyer's market so *some* vendors will try to provide lower quality product. They will try to convince you, your architect, your lab planner, your construction manager and/or your contractor that a substitution is okay – get a second opinion! You don't want to replace product in a few years because it didn't hold up to normal use!
8. *Some* vendors may say they can't do something you want; often they just don't want to do it because it is not a part of their standard offering. Make them prove it's not possible.
9. Be afraid – very afraid – of "value engineering". (Why doesn't value ever go up?)
10. If you want formaldehyde-free materials, you also cannot allow plants in the building. With today's materials only those allergic to formaldehyde are affected. (See previous comment regarding plants!)
11. Solvent-free wood finishes are possible only if a UVA flat-line finish system is used. Even water-based finishes have some level of solvent to bind the solids together.
12. Something recyclable is not necessarily the "greenest" option. Know how much energy it takes to recycle steel? Ever see anyone replant an "iron-ore tree"?!
13. "Systems" product features can be oversold; as usual, the simplest products are often the best products. Use systems where frequent reconfiguration will likely happen (but don't epoxy the tops together like one major university did!).
14. Don't buy cabinets if tables will do.
15. Use fume hoods where you need them; don't where you don't! They often become expensive storage cabinets! There *are* other, simpler exhaust devices.
16. Low-flow, high-containment fume hoods save on energy and are proven.
17. Overhead service carriers can get utilities out of the way and can be more cost-effective in bringing services to the room, now and in the future.
18. A LEED certificate doesn't necessarily make your facility more "green".
19. LEED currently has an anti-wood bias.
20. LEED is not geared toward science facilities. A "LEED for Labs" is proposed, but likely will take over a year for acceptance.
- 21. It works in buildings also: Reduce, reuse, recycle – in that order.**