Environment & Transportation Proposal

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# Team Name: Future Energy

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# Team Members and Responsibilities:

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| ***Member*** | ***Role*** |
| Cindi | Identify Topic/Ethical concerns/Reflection |
| Natasha | Develop Detailed plan/Reflection |
| Jesse | Develop Detailed Plan/Reflection |
| Herrisha | Thesis Statement/Subtopic/Reflection |

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# Energy & Transportation Proposal

## The Future of Transportation & Pollution (Cindi)

The topic at hand entails a detailed analysis regarding the future of transportation and pollution. Pollution is known as an abundance of harmful materials released into the environment. It derives from the burning of fossil fuels, coal, oil, and natural gas. Often, today’s vehicles and factories produce harmful pollutants such as nitrogen, sulfur oxide, and hydrocarbons. (National Geographic Society, 2020). Future Energy will dive into the current pollution levels, and decipher how to reduce the rates of pollution on planet Earth. Our analysis will entail possible solutions such as electric vehicles production to maintain low pollution levels post the COVID-19 pandemic. Tesla’s CEO, Elon Musk, believes that, with the current rate of fossil fuel use, we cannot last another ten years utilizing and depending on such without experiencing the consequences and effects (Gohd, 2016). Thus, the future of the planet depends on using alternate solutions to fossil fuels. Tesla takes the driver’s seat to ensure vehicles stop producing Co2; instead, power the world with electric and solar energy vehicles.

## Ethical Concerns (Cindi)

As of 2019, there has been a decline in pollutants (EPA, 2020). However, there are still some ethical concerns. As shown, there has been a decline in pollutants. Especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, there is significantly less abundance of pollution in the environment currently. When the pandemic declines, will the people of our planet strive to maintain this healthier aspect of our planet? Some may be concerned as to who, in particular, is going to assist in keeping the pollution levels as low as possible. A concern, that speculates whether or not companies are hungry for money or hungry to make the environment healthier and safer for the planet and its people, arises. There may be a possible risk of consumers not adjusting to the new environmental norms as well. Thus, making the predicament more difficult to control and eliminate.

A prevailing, innovative, company that aspires for a globally zero-emission future describes Tesla. Tesla’s mission is to “accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy”. The innovations of the company is to pilot consumers to a feasible method for a sustainable, yet efficient, ecosystem of energy (TESLA, 2017). Tesla’s innovations inspire others to go green. Competitors such as Ford and General Motors are racing to surpass Tesla’s innovations. Both companies are, currently, in the works of their own electric vehicles. Theoretically speaking, if companies begin to produce more electric and solar energy vehicles, rather than gasoline or petrol fueled vehicles, the world would have a significant decline in environmental pollution.

The following are ethical questions citizens of the United States should be considering:

1. *Are electric vehicles as ethically clean as manufacturers would have you believe?*
2. *Are the conditions by which the cobalt is acquired done by ethical means?*
3. *Should the United States enforce strict regulations for a more responsible cobalt initiative?*

## Thesis Statement (Herrisha)

Tesla is a strong competitor in the automobile industry. The company is a pioneer in the manufacturing of autonomous cars. These cars use electric energy, with limited to no carbon emission. The company's sustainability and eco-friendliness have made it famous and led to its increased sales and profitability (MWS, 2017). Tesla's focuses on environmental sustainability, safety, and innovation which have made its electric cars hugely popular. Despite other people's objections that electric vehicles just shift carbon footprints from the trail to the power plants, it is arguable that still, EVs are way better in reducing carbon footprints than cars that use fossil fuels (Miles, 2019). In fact, it should be our responsibility to promote the introduction of eco-friendly vehicles instead of coming with void theories regarding electric cars.

Climate change already has effects that can be felt by everyone, and Tesla has just provided a direction on what best needs to be done to combat this global disaster (Stein & Hawkins, 2020). For instance, Tesla acquired SolarCity in 2016 and grew its product portfolio to consist of battery storage, solar roof tiles and panels (MWS, 2017). Ultimately, Tesla has not only achieved a competitive advantage by integrating its business operations with measures for combating climate, but it has also provided a head-start and incentive for the adoption of "green" strategies and healthy environmental practices.

**Sub-Topics:**

## Benefiting the Environment & Going Green (Natasha, Cindi & Herrisha)

* Electric car companies should improve practices to ensure their role in this new energy revolution is truly clean and done ethically.
* Many have questioned if electric cars are currently as clean ethically as they should be. As we know electric cars are run by using cobalt which is a chemical element that is mined by children and adults in hazardous conditions.
* The advantage or disadvantage of the Tesla and Panasonic partnership.
* Panasonic struck an agreement with Tesla four years ago, in 2016. Together, they produced solar cells in Buffalo, NY. As of this year, Panasonic will be resigning from their agreement. However, this is not necessarily a loss for Tesla. Tesla could seek partnerships with Sunpower and LG for solar products.
* The Benefits of using renewable energy.
* The benefits of using renewable energy gives us an opportunity to fuel the planet in a safe and responsible way. Renewable energy gives way to economic prosperity and social progression.
* Renewable energy’s impact on environment
* The impact that renewable energy has on the environment is revolutionary. Using renewable energy would help to mitigate the earth’s pollution and secure what is left of the earth's natural resources.

**Team Members and the subtopics they will be responsible for: (Natasha)**

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| --- | --- |
| ***Member*** | ***Sub Topic*** |
| Cindi | * The advantage or disadvantage of the Tesla and Panasonic partnership. |
| Natasha | * improving practices to ensure manufacturers are using ethical means |
| Jesse | * Provided he is present: Benefits of reusable energy |
| Herrisha | * Renewable energy’s impact on environment |

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# The Next Step Detailed Plan (Natasha)

Some steps as a team that we can take in terms of a research plan moving forward are to first, define the problem or purpose of the research which I believe we have done well as per our thesis. We will determine the appropriate research methods which will include, using reliable and credible sources such as scholarly, peer-reviewed articles or books written by researchers for students and researchers. Team Future Energy will communicate effectively and efficiently, by having weekly meetings via phone or web, exchanging information and ideas as well as prioritizing next steps of completion for the week. We will collect and analyze data weekly for a coherent and fluid approach so that all information is clear and relative to the topic selected. Future Energy will maintain a clear distinction between our own words and the words and ideas of others, assuring all references and citations are concise and within the ethical parameters of a good research paper.

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# Individual Reflection:

**Cindi**

I maintain the responsibility of the record and document chair. To elaborate, I maintain the role of setting up and cultivate team databases and document sharing; such as google documents. I also submit assignments on the team’s behalf. In our project, I define and discuss terminology that relates to ethical concerns of the environment and transportation. I also discuss pollution statistics, along with defining a company that aspires for a more “green” world. Lastly, I elaborate regarding ethical concerns and questions citizens should consider. I also touch base on potential solutions to be discussed further along in the paper. Moving forward, I will lead our team to the discovery and analysis regarding reduction of pollutants and carbon emissions for the future of Earth and transportation. I also take co-chair, with Jesse who is chair of presentation. This entails assistance in a powerpoint presentation. I will assist in ensuring the slides contain all of the paper’s information in a single document; along with making it professional.

**Natasha**

My role as the paper chair (or co-chair) will be responsible for placing all drafts in a single document and reviewing formatting. Our topic is pollution, transportation and renewable energy, using Tesla as our benchmark. The topic for our research paper relates to the stated thesis because it embodies the notion of limited carbon emissions and smarter ways to reduce our footprint by making more responsible choices in terms of the cars we choose to have on the road.

**Herrisha**

My role as communication will be responsible for setting up our weekly meetings and taking notes during the meeting I will be using active communication.As well routinely checking in on the team to make sure we all are still on the same page and no new information needs to be communicated. I will provide Future energy with credible sources on renewable energy practices and how most renewable energy sources produce little to no global warming emissions. How those renewable sources can help with more efficient transportation.

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