

Biography of Joseph Fiksel



Dr. Joseph Fiksel is an author, consultant, researcher, and educator who retired from The Ohio State University in 2018. His publications and real-world projects have advanced the science and practice of sustainability and resilience, earning him an international reputation as an expert in environmental risk analysis, design for sustainability, supply chain resilience, circular economy, and complex systems modeling.

A native of Montreal, Joseph began his career at DuPont of Canada. He immigrated to the U.S. and founded the Decision and Risk Management group at Arthur D. Little, Inc. in Cambridge, MA. After a stint in Silicon Valley, he became Vice President for Life Cycle Management at Battelle, where he also directed the Responsible Care® program. His consulting clients have included leading multi-national companies such as 3M, Apple, Dow Chemical, Eli Lilly, Ford, General Motors, Nestle, Owens Corning, and Procter & Gamble.

Joseph led several major projects for the Global Environmental Management Initiative (GEMI), a consortium of over 40 leading U.S. companies, producing tools and publications that capture the business value of environmental excellence and sustainability. He also directed a \$2.5 million study of the global cement industry on behalf of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, leading to a consensus action plan in 2002.

In 2005, Joseph joined the Integrated Systems Engineering department at The Ohio State University where he co-founded the Center for Resilience with Prof. Bhavik Bakshi. The center secured multiple contracts and grants, and engaged both faculty and students in developing innovative computer-based tools for decision-makers. From 2010 to 2014, Joseph served as the Special Assistant for Sustainability at the U.S. EPA, helping to embed sustainability, resilience, and systems thinking into the agency's programs. He led a Triple Value modeling team that earned the agency's award for research excellence in 2013.

Returning to Ohio State, Joseph launched into a new venture under the Discovery Themes initiative. He became Executive Director for the interdisciplinary Sustainable and Resilient Economy program, co-led with Prof. Elena Irwin. In this role, he developed collaborations with major companies, government agencies, and non-profits to evaluate and improve the sustainability and resilience of enterprises, communities, and global supply chains. This innovative program continues to flourish, rebranded as the Sustainability Institute.

Joseph has served on numerous advisory and editorial boards, including the U.S. Technical Advisory Group for ISO 14000. He was an officer and founding member of the Society for Risk Analysis, and has testified on cancer risk attribution to Congress and the White House. He has published over 100 articles and 5 books, and has been a frequent invited speaker at professional conferences throughout the world. In 2009 McGraw-Hill published the second edition of his landmark textbook, *Design for Environment: A Guide to Sustainable Product Development*. His most recent book, *Resilient by Design: Creating Businesses That Adapt and Flourish in a Changing World*, was published by Island Press in 2015.

Joseph holds a B.Sc. degree from M.I.T., a Ph.D. in Operations Research from Stanford University, and an applied mathematics degree from La Sorbonne, University of Paris. He and his wife, Diane now reside in Washington, DC, and they continue to devote time to projects in both the U.S. and India. In 2019, Joseph was appointed a Visiting Scholar at George Washington University's Environmental and Energy Management Institute.