

Energy and Materials Efficiency: Engage your Staff

Engaging the Team on Energy and Materials Efficiency

Having your business team engaged on efficiency pays dividends. Working with your people to develop and implement efficiency ideas leads to greater productivity, increased motivation and therefore greater resilience and competitiveness for the business. Your staff are your best resource and a great source of ideas on how to run leaner and keener.

The Conditions for Staff Engagement

These tips will help set up a program within your business to keep motivation and productivity up and keep those bills down! Like any process, a successful efficiency program needs:

- Company vision
- Strong Leadership
- A Win for all involved
- An Action Plan
- Support and Skills
- Resources

Company Vision

Does the whole company know the company's vision and strategy? Can they see the connection between that and what they do? Do you have any efficiency, and sustainability goals or objectives? If not, Set a company vision and goals for sustainability.

Strong Leadership

Employees respond to strong leadership and efficiency is no different. Leaders and Managers need to be committed to the program and walk the talk!

A win for all.

Your people are motivated by a lot of factors including:

- Concern for the environment and society.
- Job satisfaction and security.
- Working for a company with a good reputation.

- Working towards the company's vision.
- Customer satisfaction.
- Meeting regulatory requirements
- Competition.
- Financial rewards.

A combination of these will motivate your staff to participate. Some ideas are provided below.

An Action Plan

An action plan for efficiency translates the company vision into practical steps that employees can take in their day-to-day work. It might involve targets, strategies and tasks.

The action plan needs to be clear, tangible, actionable, practical, and suitable for the skills and knowledge of the employees and incorporate reporting back.

Actions can be included in Procedures, role descriptions and other operational plans.

Support & Skills

Set people a challenge, but don't throw anyone in the deep end on this – give people enough support and offer suitable training or research time so that they can develop the skills they need.

Resources

Providing suitable resources is important. The program will succeed where enough resources are provided. It doesn't always mean committing money – ask for the no-

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cost and low-cost ideas first, and roll savings over for the capital projects.

Staff Engagement Tips

Set Targets and report on them

Set realistic targets for the company to reduce its environmental performance. Know your company's resource consumption and waste output and track it by production units – such as kWh per m², lineal metre or garment. You can then set a target to cut by 5% or even by a number of kWh per unit. Celebrate when you reach the targets!

Don't Double up!

You don't need to start from scratch - Use established teams or committees to find some efficiency ideas and turn them into action.

If you have lean manufacturing teams, a quality management group or an environmental management committee, ask them to oversee your efficiency program.



