

Staff Awareness and Motivation

A guide to gaining staff buy-in to your energy management programme



Businesses often believe that the key to better energy efficiency is to invest in new plant and equipment.

But the reality is that people – your staff – are just as important, if not more so. Staff help control equipment and how things get done. They also often hold important knowledge about what actually happens in the front line that can lead to savings.

So getting staff support for your Energy Plan therefore isn't just a 'nice to have', it's essential.

And the way to achieve this is to implement an effective staff awareness and motivation programme. The best approach is to develop this with staff to help generate ideas and gain buy-in.

Educating and motivating your people about energy efficiency is an effective and proven way of achieving valuable energy savings for relatively low cost. It's also crucial if you are to create long-term and sustainable change.

It can deliver other business benefits too, such as increased productivity and improved staff morale.

People enjoy being involved in a challenge that has rewards for the whole community, so make sure you engage them as members of an energy saving team and harness the impact they have on daily energy use.

There are three components underpinning lasting change:

Awareness

Getting people to change is far more successful if they appreciate why change is necessary. If they understand the 'why', staff are often able to identify how savings can be achieved, the results can often be achieved surprisingly fast.

Motivation

Motivation is a matter of getting people to take responsibility, individually and collectively, to understand that their actions are important. Getting people on board means helping them feel that their actions can make a difference.

Top level engagement

Senior management have a crucial role to play in a successful staff awareness and motivation programme. Without leadership and commitment from the very top, a project can be seen as 'soft', be starved of capital and shunned by managers who have other, 'harder' performance indicators to meet.

The following six step plan will make sure your team gets behind the Energy Plan for your organisation.

Lead from the Front

The energy manager's job of introducing change into the organisation involves helping move people's attitudes and behaviour. It involves influencing and persuading, as you usually only have limited direct authority over those who have a significant impact on energy use.

The energy manager needs to understand the culture of the organisation and develop strategies which are in line with it. Embedding an energy efficiency culture is an ongoing process.

Keep energy top of mind to ensure the positive changes you've created in your workplace will be cemented for the long term. Like any other workplace policy, the company's energy policy should be part of every staff member's conditions of work and be included in new employees' induction material.

How to set up an energy awareness and motivation programme

There are six steps to getting your programme off the ground:

1 Set up a team

Your ideal team includes representatives at all levels, from across the organisation

2 Research current attitudes and behaviours

Understanding your staff and organisation's key drivers is vital to building a lasting plan

3 Identify actions and timelines

Build a plan in stages with SMART goals, clear actions and defined timelines

4 Implement your plan

Clear responsibilities are integral to implementing your energy management plan

5 Evaluate and review

Reviewing your progress is essential to attaining energy management goals

6 Maintain

Continuous improvement results from changing organisational culture over the long term

Step 1: Set up a team

Having an ‘energy champion’ is a great start, but it’ll take a team approach to reach out across the whole business and gain ideas and support from the staff who’ll be implementing the energy management plan.

Having senior level endorsement or “sponsorship” of the programme is vital to long-term success, and for getting a programme off the ground quickly.

The team can be as big or as small as you need, so long as there are enough people with the right skills for the job.

The key is to choose team members wisely - look for people who have an impact on your energy use and who can provide complementary skills; who have some influence and respect in your workforce; and who share the same values and enthusiasm when it comes to energy efficiency.

Your ideal team is likely to include representatives from facilities management, site engineers, operations, procurement, sustainability/environmental, HR, marketing, communications, finance, project management and technical experts, all working together to design and co-ordinate your Energy Plan. It may also include external parties such as an energy management consultant.

You’ll need people with specific skills and experience in these fields:

- **Project management.** Able to lead the project and manage timelines, team members and implementation.
- **Operations or technology.** To provide technical advice on energy consumption, energy efficiency, and monitoring results.
- **Marketing and communications.** To advise on communicating to staff and help with marketing tasks like producing newsletters and web content.
- **Human resources.** To provide advice on how the programme could impact on staff, and on identifying the risks/benefits of changing staff behaviour.
- **Relationship management.** To help with getting buy-in from all areas of your workplace and making sure the beliefs in energy efficiency are filtered down to all staff.

The team’s first job will be to work out roles and responsibilities: the allocations should be recorded in writing. Ensure everyone knows clearly what they’re required to do and what the expectations are. It’s most important to schedule regular meetings. This helps maintain the momentum, keep everyone up-to-date, and ensure the programme is tweaked as lessons are learned.

Tips for Creating an Effective Energy Management Team

Changing staff behaviour is a big, but very important, challenge. It requires a variety of specialist skills, and the inputs of people from different parts of the organisation to create the buy-in you’ll need.

There are four key steps to create a successful team:

- Make it part of specific people’s jobs, including setting performance targets around it
- Have a senior level sponsor in the team
- Recruit people who think energy management is a good idea – don’t “strong arm” the unwilling, and
- Make sure they understand it’s not an “add on” but part of core business.

“There’s an excellent cross-section of people on the working group & it enables us to talk about subjects from all angles of the business”

Jon Kyle, CEO TIL Group

Step 2: Research current attitudes and behaviours



Before you can create an effective staff awareness and motivation programme, you'll need to know more about how your staff think, feel and behave when it comes to energy use.

This means understanding how much they know about the energy they use at work, what they think about energy efficiency and their awareness of energy efficiency and how it could affect the business, and them.

You also need information on the triggers that will drive action. Some people could be motivated by knowing they are doing their bit for the environment, others might respond better to a localised competition. By getting to know your target audience and what they think, you can tailor your programme for success. See Appendix 1 for further questions, presented in a questionnaire format.

Questionnaires

One very effective and cost-efficient research option is to introduce a questionnaire that people can complete in their own time. Make sure your questions are clear and easy to answer. Multiple choice questions, or questions with a ranking (say 1 for 'Always' and 5 for 'Never') often work well. And allow room for respondents to give you a few basic details. You don't need names – just knowing where people work can be hugely helpful in finding out if there are any departments that need special attention.

Distributing a questionnaire

You need as many responses to your questionnaire as possible. To maximise responses, consider these issues:

- **Timing.** The best time to introduce the questionnaire is usually when people are fresh – in the morning or at the beginning of a shift, for instance. Avoid Mondays and Fridays if possible.
- **Format.** You may have to send your questionnaire out in different ways depending on the different roles in your workplace, for example, by email to office staff and by paper in 'pigeon holes' to factory staff.
- **Response path.** You'll get more questionnaires back if you make it easy for people to return them to you. Usually the way you send the questionnaire out will dictate how people respond, for instance, by email or by slotting the response into a box.
- **Response time.** Be realistic about how long it will take to complete your questionnaire. Set a due date, taking into account people's work responsibilities, but no more than two weeks after the questionnaire is introduced.
- **Incentives.** An incentive for prompt response can encourage people to fill in the questionnaire while it's top of mind. For example, you could offer a prize draw from all responses received by a certain date or a small gift for every person who responds by the due date.

Step 3: Identify actions and timelines

Once you have the results from your research, you can begin to create your programme.

You can do this by:

- Using the feedback you've received to generate ideas amongst the team and staff
- Evaluating these ideas and incorporating the successful ones into your action plan
- Creating a launch plan for your programme
- Identifying how the results will be measured and monitored, and the programme maintained over time.

Creating your Staff Awareness and Motivation Programme will consist of a number of stages:

- Define your goals
- Consider an energy policy
- Set separate long-term and short-term goals
- Define your target audience
- Choose your key messages
- Decide your actions
- Develop a theme
- Set timelines
- Determine your evaluation methods.

Define goals that are SMART

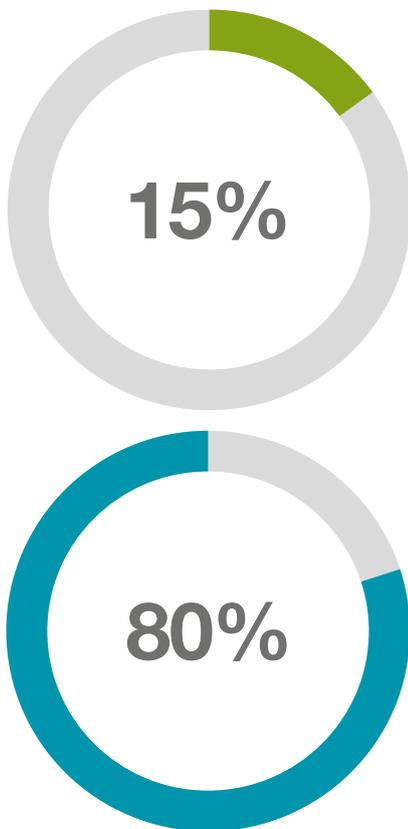
You should be very clear about what you want your programme to achieve. Like all goals, yours need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely – SMART.

Identifying SMART goals is a matter of thinking about why, what, when and how much. In this situation you should be asking:

- How much energy do we want to reduce, and by when?
- What type of energy is this programme about – electricity, gas, diesel, petrol, steam compressed air or all of them?
- What behavioural changes do we want to make and how will we measure the changes?
- How will we know if our programme is successful and how will we evaluate it?



SMART goals help you measure and manage your project



Before and after savings for Lorem Ipsum Company when program successfully implemented.

Consider an energy policy

One of the most effective ways of locking in change is to adopt an energy policy. A policy is a statement of your workplace's vision for energy efficiency, with clear guidelines to achieving that vision. It can help ensure the positive changes you've made to your workplace continue. Like any workplace policy, the energy policy should be a part of every employee's conditions for working at your organisation. It will set out why everyone should be energy efficient and how to go about it, and what your business is doing to help. A special energy policy section could be included in every new employee's induction pack.

Set separate long-term and short-term goals

Long-term goals are those you'd want to achieve in say, 10 years' time. They could be:

- Reduce electricity consumption by 10% by <year>.
- Reduce petrol costs by 10% by <year>.
- Reduce overall energy costs by 15% by <year>.

Your short-term goals need to be stepping stones to achieving your long-term goals, such as:

- At least 80% of lights in our building turned off in the evenings by November.
- All machinery switched off every night by Christmas.
- All computers' active power management features on by April.

Define your 'target audience'

Your research will help you identify areas and groups that are at different stages of awareness, motivation and action than others. For example, factory staff may already be using minimal energy and understand the benefits of energy efficiency, while your IT department may be the biggest user of energy in your workplace. Identifying different target audiences, and what you need to achieve with them, lets you tailor activities to specific needs and increases your chances of success.

Choose your key messages

Key messages are the main messages you want to communicate with your target audience. They have to be consistent right throughout your programme to be effective. You can have as many key messages as you need, and you can have different key messages for different target audiences. Some messages (such as switching off lights in kitchens and toilets) may apply across the whole of your organisation, while others may be more specific (e.g. installing energy control mechanisms on computers). It usually helps however if they can be grouped under one thematic umbrella.

The important thing to remember is that the key messages must enable you to achieve your goal, and they must complement each other. Also consider:

- What messages your staff would relate well to - try to talk their language
- What would motivate them
- What would make them feel they own the programme.

Choose your activities and channels

Now that you know your goals, your target audience, and your key messages, you need to decide the 'how' – which channels and activities to use to get your message through.

There are many different ways to communicate with your audience. What you actually end up doing will depend on:

- Who you're communicating with
- What your budget is
- Who you have to help you with launching your programme
- What resources you have to maintain the programme on an ongoing basis
- The standards your organisation has set regarding communications activities.

When deciding on your activities, consider channels already in place such as regular staff newsletters or emails, CEO updates and monthly meetings.

You should get staff involved. You may want to ask for their ideas as they'll probably have a different perspective on how to do things better.

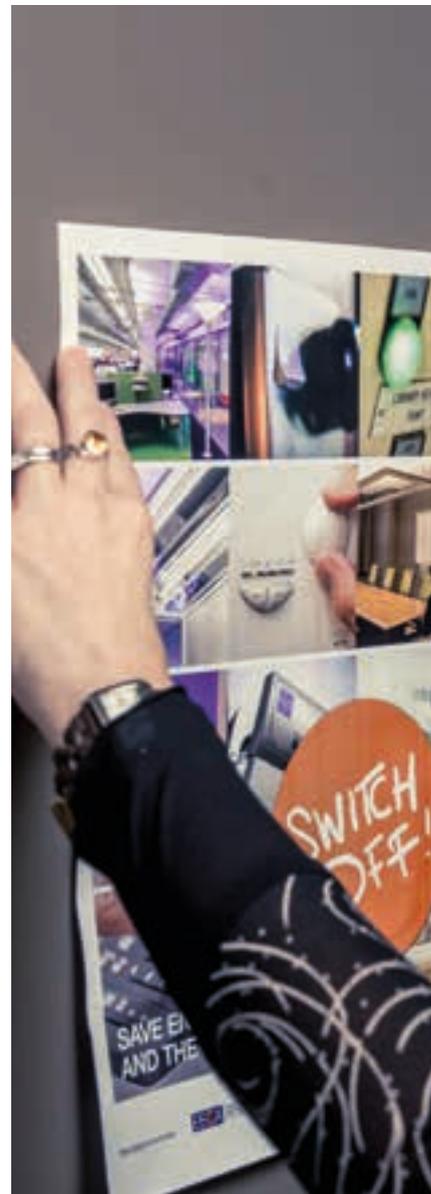
Simply getting them involved helps to build awareness and motivate people to change – people feel empowered and feel they've made a contribution.

Keep in mind that the activities you choose should give you the best results for your dollar. Always ask yourself why you should do a certain activity and weigh up the pros and cons of each activity.

As well as incorporating your message within existing company communication activities, you could look to introduce new promotional resources such as:

- Posters and leaflets
- Presentations from the CEO supporting the programme
- Reminder stickers, above light switches for instance
- Competitions to get people interested and involved

You could also hold a launch event – to celebrate the start of something great and get staff excited about the idea.



A sample timeline:



Develop a theme

A theme can give your energy saving programme an identity that people can relate to. The theme can be anything, from wacky and funny, to serious and simple. ‘Reduce the Juice’ is an example of a strong umbrella theme one NZ organisation has used. If you’re involving a design or advertising agency, they can help you create a specially-tailored identity for your programme. A theme will only work if it is applied to the whole programme and is consistent throughout.

Set timelines

An energy-saving project is like any other project and should have a formalised timeline.

Working backwards from your goal, decide when you need to launch the programme, how long your activities will go for and when your programme needs to be evaluated. This will be a high-level timeline, so make sure you allow enough time for all the programme activities to be developed and carried out, and for the time it takes for behavioural changes to have an impact before your evaluation. A well thought-out campaign could take two to three months to develop. Monitor your progress over at least twelve months.

In setting your timelines, try and avoid involving staff at times when your organisation has lots going on, or when staff morale is low. And make sure your timings are suitable for when management needs to be involved.

Plan your evaluation

You will need to decide ways to measure progress, so that you can make changes if things aren’t going to plan. Evaluation activities could include:

- Regular progress reports from team members
- Staff surveys
- Random monitoring of buildings and equipment
- Regular monitoring of energy costs
- Encouraging feedback from staff.

Step 4: Implement your plan

With the activities prioritised, you can now assign tasks to the people in your energy management team. For smaller projects, this may mean recording the responsible person and deadline to the opportunities register. However for larger projects, you may need to develop a more formal, detailed project plan.

All tasks need a timeline and delivery date (or regular reporting dates if they are ongoing).

To ensure all deadlines are met and the project is a success, your timeline needs to include:

- Every task that needs to be done
- Who's responsible for each task, and
- When each task will begin and end.

When setting your timelines, try to avoid involving staff (or management) at times when the organisation is expected to be busy, or when staff morale is low.

Management buy-in

Obtaining top-level support for your programme will be critical to its success so ensure the values you are trying to instil in staff start at the very top. Your energy efficiency programme must be backed by senior management before launch. This will ensure your programme gets the resources it needs and doesn't conflict with other company policies or activities.

Ideally, management buy-in will include an energy efficiency policy – making energy saving a formal requirement of your workplace. There's more about developing an energy policy in Step 3.



“From day one we've had the full support of our Board and senior management team.

This has really helped to make the way we use energy a top priority across the company”

Mark Clarkson,
Managing Director ANZCO Foods

Step 5: Evaluate and review

Your planning will have covered off how you'll evaluate and review your programme, now it's time to put your plans into place.

Evaluation

Evaluation should be ongoing and measure progress towards both short-term and long-term goals. Remember to give staff recognition and rewards, for example morning teas or certificates to successful energy-saving teams. Instant 'chocolate fish' type prizes reinforcing good energy behaviour can also be effective. A little recognition goes a long way – it can give your staff a huge boost and help to maintain their enthusiasm for the programme.



Review

Your team should meet regularly to review and share comments on your planning, implementation and results. Find out how the project has worked for different team members and different parts of the organisation. Ask what went well, what didn't and why. Seek ideas on how things could be done differently next time. Write an informal report and circulate to encourage more feedback and involvement.



Step 6: Maintain

To achieve enduring improvements in energy management you should be thinking beyond a programme and towards a culture change.

Keep energy efficiency top of mind

To encourage people to continue their energy-saving habits, you need to keep reminding them that energy efficiency is important. Use some of the programme materials you've already developed, and develop new ones for more impact.

Keep things fresh by swapping posters around, or by putting reminder stickers on light switches – by the lifts, in the toilets or in the staffroom. Think about producing mouse mats and coffee mugs or even squeeze toys or caps with key messages printed on them.

Keep seeking feedback from staff – try suggestion boxes – and keep them updated on progress via noticeboards and internal emails. You could develop an energy efficiency section on your intranet site to keep staff involved and interested. Ideally this site would be interactive, and include two-way dialogue such as an open forum section, and perhaps competitions and special offers. The clearer and more visible messages are, the more effective you will be in continuing the positive energy efficiency behaviours you've already introduced in your workplace.



Appendix 1

These are some of the questions you'll want answered in the research stage of your programme. They're expressed as if they could go in a questionnaire. If you're using a different approach eg. a workshop, use these questions to guide your agenda. Add extra questions to get information that is relevant to your workplace.

QUESTIONNAIRE TEMPLATE:

Q. How important is saving energy at work to you?

- a) Not important
- b) Slightly important
- c) Very important

This will tell you how interested a staff member is in saving energy at work, and how receptive they may be to your programme.

Q. How important is saving energy at home to you?

- a) Not important
- b) Quite important
- c) Very important

If the respondent believes saving energy at home is more important than saving energy at work, they recognise its direct effects but not the wider benefits.

Q. What different types of energy do you use at work?

By leaving this question open, you get to know how well a person understands what energy really is. Relate this question back to the person's role at work to see if there's any pattern of awareness according to job type.

Q. Please list five ways you could save energy at work.

This question is left open to gain as many new and specific ideas as possible.

Q. What would motivate you to save energy? (circle as appropriate)

- a) Saving money for your company
- b) Knowing you're helping the country conserve energy/the environment
- c) Donating the money saved to charity
- d) Using the money saved for staff bonuses
- e) Recognition for your team

This question identifies which incentives would be most effective.

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EECA BUSINESS offers information, resources, advice and funding to help you make the most of the energy you use.

For more information contact:
The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority
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