

How to implement behaviour change and develop an environmental awareness campaign



Micro Business Fact Sheet: Behaviour Change



This fact sheet explains how to develop an environmental awareness campaign and provides guidance on successfully communicating change within your business.

Behaviour change is not only about communication but also a whole package of interventions which, when combined, drive and sustain new attitudes, behaviours and practices.

The benefits of a successful environmental behaviour change programme are:

- improved stakeholder communication and involvement;
- better staff morale, motivation and retention rates (i.e. 'I'm proud of where I work');
- improved workplace efficiency;
- compliance with legislation;
- increased competitiveness;
- improved protection from increasing resource scarcity (energy or raw materials) and rising costs;
- reduced operational costs (lower waste, energy and transport costs);
- increased profitability;
- enhanced business reputation; and
- attainment of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals.

Unfortunately, reluctance and resistance to change is normal.

There are many reasons why people don't like change. Typical reasons include:

- fear of change itself, failure, or simply the unknown;
- not being consulted;
- poor communication;
- changes to routines and workplace practices;
- moving people out of their comfort zones;
- lack of trust; and
- not understanding the need for change.

Risks to the successful implementation of behaviour change include:

- adherence to the letter but not the spirit (i.e. 'I'll do just what I'm told, but not a thing more');
- managers not leading by example, therefore undermining the perceptions and performance of their staff;
- old habits persisting, affecting performance;
- old habits returning after a period of time;
- improved performance quickly tailing off; and
- growing scepticism and cynicism, making it harder to reinvigorate resource efficiency programmes once initial momentum is lost.



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How to develop an environmental awareness campaign – 8 Steps to success

1. Gather all the information relevant to your campaign, including:

- background facts and figures (e.g. waste, water and energy costs and usage); and
- other supporting information (e.g. baseline performance data).



2. Review and set out your current position and what you want to achieve.

Develop a clear understanding of the high-level business benefits you seek and consider what environmental improvements could support the achievement of these.

3. Set your campaign aims and objectives.

An aim is a broad statement of what you want to achieve. Generally, you should just have one aim, (e.g. 'our aim is to improve our resource efficiency to meet and exceed legislative targets' or 'our aim is to send zero waste to landfill').

An objective is a specific statement of what you want to achieve. Objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)

You can have several objectives combining to achieve your aim, for example:

- reduce waste by 10% per year for five years;
- reduce energy consumption by 20% within one year; and
- increase recycling by 50% within one year.

4. Identify your target audience.

Different target audiences may require different communication channels and messages. Examples of your audiences may include:

- operational/production staff;
- office staff;
- maintenance and cleaning staff;

- contractors and suppliers; and
- customers and the public.

5. Develop your branding and key messages.

Consider the look and feel of your campaign. Perhaps use a logo or a slogan which, once chosen, should be used consistently. Your messages should be clear and simple and direct people to a straightforward action which helps achieve your campaign aims or objectives, for example, a 'switch it off' message aimed at office staff.



6. Establish communication channels.

Consider your key target audiences when selecting the appropriate communication channel. Examples include:

- posters and team briefings for operational, office and cleaning staff;
- email for customers and suppliers; and
- a website for the public.

7. Consider your budget and timetable.

Once you know which activities you want to use in your campaign, you should consider how much it will cost and how much you have – your budget. You may need to prioritise your activities by assessing which will have the biggest impact, which will be easiest to organise and which will cost less/take less time. Plan your overall campaign to be delivered over a period of time.

8. Carry out monitoring and evaluation.

Consider how you will provide feedback on progress as the campaign continues. Introduce additional messages and further motivation as required. Towards the end of the campaign, review the results and feed this information into the development of future/on-going activities.



Environmental Champions need to be enthusiastic, personable, good communicators and have a positive attitude to environmental issues (but don't need to be eco-warriors!).

Communicating your change

Getting your message across can be challenging and may involve a range of techniques to target different stakeholders. Your message will probably have to be repeated many times for people to take it fully on board and for the new behaviour to become a fixed habit.

Styles of communication

Instructional posters

Instructional communications provide staff with simple, clear direction on what changes in behaviour are required. For example, giving guidance on how to use equipment efficiently or how to recycle.

Instructional materials need to tell your audience:

- what you want them to do;
- how to do it;
- when to do it; and
- why they should do it.

Instructional communications should be carefully targeted in e-mail communications or through posters placed in prominent locations.

Stickers

Small stickers may be a suitable for communicating simple messages. Stickers can be located on walls adjacent to equipment (e.g. near light switches, next to windows or above radiators). Alternatively, they can be stuck to the equipment itself, if this is a safe option (e.g. on bins and shredders).

As with other methods, stickers will lose their effect after a while as staff stop noticing them. Update your designs and messaging to keep them fresh and maintain their impact.



National campaigns

Government bodies and trade associations run a range of national campaigns aimed at promoting resource efficiency within organisations. For example **Recycle Week**, **Energy Saving Week** run by the **Energy Savings Trust** and **Green Office Week**. These campaigns are normally free to join and often come with a pre-prepared selection of materials to promote their campaign message. Taking part in an initiative of this type can therefore provide a low-cost way of encouraging staff to make the changes you want and for promoting your commitment.

You should establish a campaign notice board and a 'suggestion box' or similar means for staff to contribute their ideas.



Embedding your change – appointing an environmental champion

Two of the key barriers to behaviour change are:

- lack of knowledge – what to do, how to do it, why it is being done and who to ask for advice; and
- peer pressure (i.e. 'If no-one else is adopting the change, then why should I?').

Appointing an **environmental champion** can help with addressing these issues. The champion can set a positive example of the benefits of adopting the changes you are promoting. They need to be enthusiastic, personable, good communicators and have a positive attitude to environmental issues.

Champions can help to deliver your campaign by:

- leading by example – exemplifying excellence;
- communicating programme aims, objectives, targets and business benefits to their colleagues;

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- monitoring staff attitudes and changes in behaviour;
- putting up posters; and
- establishing a campaign notice board.

Remember: Champions also have 'day jobs' so be careful not to overload them.

Behaviour change is difficult and takes time, so expect that your environmental awareness campaign will take 12-24 months. Be sure to follow through activities to reinforce the message over time. New behaviours need time to embed themselves into people's subconscious routines ('the way we do things around here') and during that time they need constant (or periodic) reinforcement.

Sources of further information: Behaviour change

- **Environmental Improvement Through Behaviour Change – An Introduction.** Zero Waste Scotland.
- **Knowledge enhancement** – On Course for Zero Waste online training course.

Further information

If you have a specific query or require more information on an area covered in this fact sheet, please visit www.zerowastescotland.org.uk or contact the free Helpline on **0808 100 2040**.

On Course for Zero Waste

Zero Waste Scotland offers a free online training course for Scottish small and medium-sized enterprises/organisations (SMEs) – On Course for Zero Waste. This training has been designed to give individuals the skills and tools they need to improve the resource efficiency and environmental performance of their organisation – and, of course, save money too. For more information visit <http://smetraining.zerowastescotland.org.uk/>



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First published December 2011

All hyperlinks in this document were checked on 20 December 2011