

Communicate and educate

Make staff aware of the changes made and let them know that their efforts are making a difference.

Communications plan

An effective communication plan will ensure the achievements of the program are made known throughout the organisation and that communications are given a high priority within the implementation of the Action Plan. The plan should communicate new initiatives, progress against targets, the approach to create change in the organisation and to communicate with external stakeholders.

Use different communication tools such as staff presentations, emails, handouts, reports, signage, role plays, tender specifications and media promotion. The style and content, particularly for communications within the organisation, will depend on the culture of the receiving audience and the message to be conveyed.

Feedback on staff actions and participation in delivering the outcomes is a critical component to assist in overcoming the resistance to change. When people see their efforts are making a difference, they will more readily accept further incremental changes in the future.

The communications should outline clear achievable goals and feedback on progress, and emphasise losses related to a behaviour rather than potential savings, for example: *“45% of landfill bound waste is paper. This costs us \$5000 per year that could be used for a new printer, and results in 10 trees being lost”*.

Communicating for change¹

The production and distribution of communications materials is an important and common task undertaken by most change agents. Included in this definition of communications materials is anything that you create that aims to generate positive environmental change. The medium may be a presentation, email, poster, handout, report etc. In our role as change agents all opportunities to communicate with the subjects of our desired change should be taken. The manner in which this communication is framed and delivered should always be specifically designed to create change. It doesn't matter if you are simply advising staff of waste audit results – the question to ask is 'so what'.

Remember, an important skill of the change agent is to be able to think creatively and 'outside the box'. Don't be limited by what you have seen before – be creative and have a little fun with your communication materials. This will not only make the communication devices more effective in creating change, it will make your job a little easier and more enjoyable!

General tips

Things to remember before creating the communication

The aim of the exercise is to create change. The aim is not to generate a communications device, that is simply the method.

- > Infrastructure must be present and as perfect as possible to support the desired change.
- > Write a list of all the excuses that you are likely to hear from people so that they don't have to comply with the change. Remove as many as practicable and have prepared answers for those that you cannot remove.

¹ This information has been reproduced from the Communications Checklist with permission of Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd 2007.

- > The effectiveness of communications materials require heavily on prior research; this is why market research firms exist. As you are unlikely to have a budget to enable such detailed research, you will need to be a little more creative.

Communications research ideas

Talk to your OHS manager and find out what they think the most effective means of communications is:

- > Talk to group secretaries or PAs and ask the same question
- > Run your communications assumptions (ie. your first response to the table provided) past a group of people who have been in the organisation for extended periods – they will have an intuitive understanding of the culture and will have seen many communications attempts both work and fail
- > Ask members of your target audience what works for them (face-to-face conversation). This might seem a little unusual but what better way of working out what buttons work than asking the people themselves.

General tips

Things to remember during the creation of the communication

- > Your values, opinions, motivations, perceived barriers to and benefits of action, behaviours, level of education, understanding of the issues, attention span etc will probably be quite different to your audience. Solution: Get together an informal reference group, representative of the diversity of your audience, to run your communication materials past prior to delivery.
- > You may need to put together more than one communications device – would an IT department respond to messages in the same way that a Facilities department would?

Things to remember after the creation of the communication

- > Consistently, between 5-10% of people are extremely resistant to change ('late adopters') and around the same number very easy to change. You are not aiming to change these people – it is the mainstream that you are after. Once the majority has changed, the 'late adopters' will follow.
- > Don't be put off by a vocal minority. Ensure that your management sponsor/s are ready for the easy to anticipate grumblings from these people.
- > Ensure that you follow up by providing feedback on the attainment, or otherwise, of goals.

Education and training

Changing the culture of an organisation and requiring it to embrace new directions and strategies requires the education of all staff, both existing and new. For new staff, incorporating environmental targets and objectives into staff induction programs will ensure that they are aware of the requirements and directions of the organisation.

The training requirements for existing staff will need to be tailored to the culture of the organisation, and in some cases, the particular individuals receiving the training. The format can vary significantly, from face-to-face (one-on-one, or group) or online. As far as practicable, the training should relate to the existing organisational processes and communicate the competencies required for particular activities. The training should be also designed such that existing staff understand the new processes and how they can be incorporated into the existing activities.

Another important component of any training or induction process should be to receive some degree of feedback to gain an insight into the effectiveness of the training method and what the recipients have learned. This may take the format of a questionnaire or demonstration, for example, taken immediately or at some time after the training or induction has been conducted.

Change organisational culture

Changing the way we do things around here

Organisational culture describes how an organisation operates and the ways in which staff members interact. Culture is typically complex, and having become established over time, can be very resistant to change. The effectiveness of your ResourceSmart Action Plan can be reduced if it does not suit your organisation's culture. The development of action plans should aim to be compatible with existing culture, however sometimes the culture needs to be changed to deliver environmental outcomes. The rate of change can be accelerated through the development of a change strategy.

Such a strategy needs to influence an organisation's culture by:

- > opening up strong two-way communication channels
- > broadcasting clear messages
- > aligning people around a common purpose
- > involving everyone in taking action.

Organisation benefits

Some of the likely outcomes of any program entailing organisational culture change are:

- > Increased value of the human resource within your organisation as workers become more knowledgeable, acquire new skills and develop greater leadership capacity
- > Increased productivity of your organisation through increased motivation and greater satisfaction in the workplace
- > Greater flexibility within the organisation as people adapt to change and strive for continual improvement.

Understanding culture

Culture permeates an organisation and encompasses the following:

- > the way things are done in an organisation
- > the values of the people in the organisation and their relationships with each other
- > the history of the organisation shaping the way it is now
- > hopes for the future.

Strategies to impact on organisational culture change are to:

- > engage your organisation in creating a vision of its sustainable future
- > create and support project teams to initiate and lead change
- > encourage organisational learning and participation in change initiatives
- > integrate sustainable resource use within your organisation's culture

Create a shared vision

- > Select a strategy for building shared vision
- > Engage the organisation in defining what they want to create
- > Establish core guiding principles for waste prevention and sustainable use of resources

When we ask the question "What do we want to create?" a shared vision is the key. It is shared pictures or images people carry in their heads and hearts that connect and bind them together to achieve a common purpose. Engaging the organisation in building a shared vision will help to create motivation and readiness to change.

Peter Senge and others (1994) describe strategy for building shared vision in organisations that acknowledges the five development stages below:

- > **Telling** – the organisation follows the *boss'* vision.
- > **Selling** – the organisation buys into the *boss'* vision before proceeding.

- > **Testing** - the organisation reacts to one or more of the *boss'* ideas before proceeding.
- > **Consulting** - the organisation provides creative input into the development of the *boss'* vision before proceeding.
- > **Co-creating** – the members of the organisation and the *boss* build a shared vision together using collaborative process.

The stages build the listening capacity of top leadership and the leadership capacities of the rest of the organisation. Organisations tend to be predisposed to one of the stages. Assessment of the current stage may help with planning.

In taking up the challenge of sustainability, guiding principles need to be developed to align people around a shared purpose and destiny. The core of guiding principles is the organisation's vision, values, purpose or mission and goals. These need to address not only the economic aspirations but encompass social and environmental aspects of the organisation's activities.

Managers with a sense of vision communicate in such a way that others are encouraged to share their vision. Shared vision emerges from personal vision and is spread through personal contact, dialogue and networking, therefore, managers need to listen to people and channel their enthusiastic initiative without stifling it. Appendix 1 describes an activity to help begin creating a vision for the organisation and Appendix 2 provides information on core guiding principles adopted by other organisations.

Build the project team

- > Establish project team.
- > Define the operating parameters and the goals to be achieved.
- > Ensure the team has adequate time, resources and support.

The organisational model based on hierarchy and conformity is proving less able to meet competitive challenges. A new 'team' model environment has evolved. A 'top down', 'stay in control' management approach is being replaced by a learner role open to broader participation by all staff members.

The advantages of the team model are:

- > the acquisition of knowledge through the generation of new ideas
- > improved relationships through the establishment of new connections between departments
- > momentum for change as individual ownership and commitment develop
- > increased productivity as people think for themselves and accept responsibility for their actions.

When establishing project teams:

- > Gain senior management commitment and support by spelling out the business case for sound environmental practice.
- > Create a diverse working group that involves representatives from different levels of the organisation and relevant sections of the business/organisation to ensure that the work will get done.
- > Ensure that the team is neither too large nor too small (minimum of three and maximum of twelve).
- > Appoint a team leader to manage group processes and facilitate the achievement of goals.
- > Clearly map out the responsibilities of the team and define the relationship between the team and other parts of the organisation.
- > Specify realistic goals to be achieved.

Support the team by providing:

- > time for the team to meet and for actions arising from meetings to be implemented
- > training to develop skills required to work effectively in teams.

Examples of such skills are:

- > decision making
- > communication skills for dialogue

- > self-management
- > planning
- > data collection and analysis
- > ability to acquire resources such as information, money and mentoring.

Ensure there are outcomes by:

- > fostering a positive, safe team environment where a high level of trust exists
- > creating a framework for tasks to be completed for example agendas, minutes and action sheets specifying responsible people and time frames
- > providing feedback on team performance and rewards
- > maintaining links between the team and the rest of the organisation.

Provide information and share ideas

- > Provide clear messages.
- > Opportunities to share ideas.
- > Feedback to the organisation.

Communication is the key to transforming organisational culture. The provision of information builds understanding, allows people to engage in respectful conversation to build commitment, aligns people to work toward a common purpose and contributes to continual improvement.

Provide clear and memorable messages that:

- > demonstrate the environmental impacts of your business/organisation's activities and the environmental issues associated with these impacts
- > highlight the benefits to be gained from implementing new initiatives to improve environmental performance
- > contain information about new organisational initiatives outlining the 'who, what, where, when, how and why'
- > suggest personal actions to be taken to reduce environmental impacts
- > challenge people to participate to meet goals.

Encourage respectful conversation and the exchange of ideas by:

- > providing time in meetings for people to share their endeavours, promote successes and explore difficulties
- > organising forums for the discussion of new ideas and their applicability to the organisation
- > fostering the practice of listening
- > valuing individual contributions and promoting broad participation.

Feed information back to the organisation:

- > present information in a variety of formats such as pictures, charts and lists
- > provide feedback on outcomes and recognition of participation and achievement
- > establish clear lines of communication to disseminate information from the top down and the bottom up and to spread knowledge from one part of an organisation to another.

Involve everyone

- > Put systems in place to facilitate change.
- > Provide guidance.
- > Encourage participation.

Establishing and maintaining individual commitment is the key to the success of your program. Many environmental initiatives are actively dependent upon staff involvement, for example, paper recycling schemes and energy efficiency campaigns. Stakeholder involvement is also important to the success of initiatives such as working with suppliers to reduce packaging.

Put systems in place to facilitate change by:

- > analysing the factors that contribute to current behaviours
- > identifying systems that will support desired behaviours and outcomes
- > introducing systems to assist improved environmental performance for example
 - materials substitution
 - technology change
 - process change or equipment and layout changes.

Provide clear guidance to help individuals participate by:

- > briefing people on any changes to their daily work and the benefits of the changes
- > displaying clear instructions for new procedures
- > listing people who are available for further explanation and help
- > outlining personal action to reduce environmental impact that individuals may take during their daily work.

Encourage participation by:

- > promoting the environment in engaging, relevant and creative ways
- > developing understanding of the connection between personal action and outcomes
- > consulting, collaborating and providing mechanisms for suggested improvements to be considered
- > taking a light hearted approach so that people may enjoy participating and striving for improved performance
- > acknowledging, rewarding and celebrating individual, team and organisation achievements
- > integrating targets within key performance indicators
- > introducing disincentives for non-participation.

Collect data and plan for improvement

- > Decide on measurements of success and collect data.
- > Compare data before and after a change initiative.
- > Review progress.

It is useful to review and evaluate progress on a regular basis. These processes can provide a valuable confirmation of progress and give an organisation the opportunity to identify and highlight strengths or weaknesses. Data available from monitoring provides feedback on system performance, allowing for corrective measures to be implemented. For example technical advice from specialists is much more effective when coupled with educational programs for personnel at all levels.

Decide on measurements of success and collect data to:

- > examine a variety of measurement tools for example, \$ saved, audits, surveys, shipping dockets, absentee rates, number of people participating, observations and stories told
- > select several measurement tools and match them with established targets
- > document a process for collecting data, establish time lines and allocate responsibility.

Compare data before and after a change initiative, for instance:

- > audits can be very useful in establishing baseline data and give a snap shot of the current state of play
- > photographs taken before and after help to map the changes that occur
- > recording peoples' perceptions of the organisation's environmental performance at the beginning and the end of a project or a set period of time.

Review process and recommend improvements that:

- > include feedback and input from staff, suppliers and contractors
- > answer questions such as:
 - What worked well?
 - If we were to do it again, how would we do differently?

- What do we feel proud of?
- What has remained undone?
- Now that we have a better understanding, what are the next most important targets?

It may be useful to write a report documenting what happened, achievements and recommended future actions. This report should be tabled with senior management.

Integrate within core business

> Make sustainability fundamental to your organisation.

Although early initiatives to improve environmental performance will be the responsibility of a particular person or team, sound environmental practices need to become ingrained within the organisation and become part of the way work is done as has become the case for Occupational Health and Safety.

It is essential that environmental issues are integrated into all departments, including:

- > Finance (eg include an environmental impact assessment for major investment decisions, reporting cost of managing environmental issues).
- > Purchasing (eg purchasing policy could specify environmental requirements for all suppliers, require reusable packaging, source materials with recycled content).
- > Maintenance (eg ensure oil spills are contained and cleaned up, ensure equipment meets any licence operating requirements).
- > Operations (eg minimise offcuts at end of production runs, monitor quantity of off-specification product, optimise use of resources and energy during processing, include environmental issues at meetings).
- > Marketing (eg look for opportunities to promote environmental benefits of the products/services offered, educate customers about how to minimise environmental impact during product use/end of life).
- > Training and development (eg include environmental competencies for all staff, build environmental responsibilities into all position descriptions, include individual contribution towards implementation of the environment policy in personal appraisals).

Potential pitfalls

It is easy to become discouraged when trying to change culture. People and systems resist change for many reasons. Introducing different ways of doing things confronts peoples' prior learning and their assumptions about themselves and their workplace. Working in teams can reorder power and give rise to fears about loss of power and anxiety about whether new power can be managed. Try to understand why the system responds as it does and your own attitude toward it and look upon your experience of change as an opportunity to improve.

Listen for the comments in the table below. They indicate challenges that may thwart the change process. Understanding the real problem or concern that people have will help you to develop strategies to overcome them.

Stage 1 Initiating change: - beginning to work in unfamiliar ways

Comment	Challenge
We don't have time for this stuff	Control over time and having the flexibility to devote time to reflection and practice.
We have no help	Inadequate coaching, guidance and support for innovating groups and of ultimately developing internal resources for building capacity.
This stuff isn't relevant	The case for change, articulating an appropriate business focus and showing why new efforts are relevant for business goals

They're not walking the talk	Leadership clarity and consistency. The mismatch between behaviour and espoused values.
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Stage 2 Sustaining momentum as early successes are achieved and linking with the larger organisational culture.

Comment	Challenge
"This is a waste of time" "Interesting" and "Out of control".	Fear and anxiety - Underneath people have deep concerns about exposure, vulnerability and inadequacy triggered by the conflict between increasing levels of candour and openness and low levels of trust among project group members.
This stuff isn't working!	The negative assessment of progress represents the lack of connection between the organisations traditional ways of measuring success, both metrics and time horizon and the achievements of a project group.
"We have the way" say the people in the project team; 'They're acting like a cult' say the people around them.	Isolation and arrogance occurs when the true believers in the project group confront their non-believer counterparts outside the group. The project group and the rest of the organisation system consistently misinterpret one another.

Stage 3 Rethinking and redesigning systems to incorporate changed practice.

Comment	Challenge
Who's in charge of this stuff?	The prevailing governance structure and conflict between project groups seeking greater autonomy and managers concerned about autonomy leading to chaos and internal, fragmentation
We keep reinventing the wheel say people through out the organisation.	Lack of diffusion occurs when people can't easily transfer knowledge across organisational boundaries making it difficult to build upon each other's successes around the system.
Where are we going and what are we here for	Inconsistency of strategy and purpose where the organisation as a whole must get involved in revitalising and rethinking it's business focus, its contribution to it's community and it's identity.

Further information

- > Sample Behaviour Change Campaign Plan
- > Communication Plan Example
- > Sample Induction for Contractors & Temporary Staff