

## Green Incentives



Bringing greener habits into the workplace is an important aspect of tackling climate change. A significant proportion of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come from business related activities so it's up to employers to provide employees with the opportunity to become more energy efficient.

According to the Carbon Trust, businesses account for 40% of the UK's annual carbon emissions and poor energy efficiency costs businesses an estimated £2 billion. By actually making it attractive to them to save energy with easy to set up schemes and incentives, a greener office is more easily achievable and easier to maintain. It'll also help slash energy bills.

It's certainly clear that employees are more than willing to get involved in green issues and that they care about the environment. A recent survey conducted by the Carbon Trust indicated that 67% are keen to help their organisation cut carbon emissions but are lacking leadership and direction in how to do it. Crucially, only 18% believe that their company is doing enough to develop a working green policy in the workplace.

It's important to think of creative ways of encouraging people to bring their green attitudes into the workplace so that environmentally friendly working is part of the norm rather than a quick fix fad.

### Getting Started

There is a helping hand out there for your business to get started when it comes to becoming more energy efficient. The Carbon Trust provides awareness raising material for the UK workforce. This will help provide you with a general overview of energy usage in offices and businesses, training material for conducting sessions with staff, and even posters to help remind people around the office to do simple things such as switching lights off, or turning photocopiers and computers off each night.

In the meantime, why not think about the following ways to give workers incentives to becoming greener?

### Green Ambassadors

One way of harnessing the green enthusiasm of your employees is by getting them directly involved in the company's sustainability and environmental policy. Appointing several individuals to act as 'green ambassadors' in the company, and even awarding them a bonus for their efforts, is a great way of getting everyone involved in being more efficient in the office. Everyday activities that could be completed in a more environmentally friendly way could be from urging workers not to waste their paper to ensuring the office recycling service is being used. It would be the responsibility of the green ambassadors to ensure that the office is run more energy efficiently and advise on new ways to help save energy.

### Commuting to Work

The daily commute to work accounts for a large chunk of CO2 emissions, so encouraging workers to arrive to work in the most sustainable way is important. Being able to provide extra incentives to use public transport can help even more. One good way of doing this is working with the local public transport companies in the area to better communicate the range of public transport options they can take.

A season ticket allowance as part of a benefits package is a great way of making public transport a plausible and affordable option for workers. Or, devise a car sharing pool that employees can sign up to, meaning workers will save money on petrol and be able to share the daily journey to and from work in one car instead of several.

