

# Workplace behaviour change

## Introduction



Behaviour change is quickly becoming a useful approach to support pro-environmental behaviours, helping households and workplaces to become more energy efficient and reduce impacts on climate change. An approach adapted originally from the health sector, it has been successfully used to design interventions around reducing obesity, smoking and other negative health related behaviours. Using schools of thought derived from behavioural psychology, sociology and behavioural economics it tries to understand why we behave in ways we know have a negative impact on our lives. Rather than assuming what the solution is, approaches are designed to

work with the target audience to design ways of removing barriers and help people move towards more positive behaviours. Over the last few years momentum has been gathering in the environment sector and there are now some inspiring examples of best practice from around the globe especially within the UK, USA and Canada. Below you will find links to further reading on useful tools and approaches or organisations as well as some top tips gathered from lessons learnt from a recent Welsh Government funded scheme run by Cynnal Cymru and Environment Wales. This piloted a number of approaches and enabled further research into behaviours associated with energy use and climate change adaptation.

### Don't assume

### Baseline

### Replication

### Right buy-in

### Champions

It's important to research or "scope" your ideas thoroughly. This will help you identify real barriers to change, ensure you communicate effectively and avoid turning people off. It will also avoid wasting money on the wrong interventions or solutions.

Gathering baseline data is important as it will help you "set the scene" and understand where you're at. It's also essential information you will need to measure the impact of your intervention – this can only be done BEFORE you begin.

No matter how tried & tested a successful behaviour change approach may be it is still important to take account of 'local' context – don't assume anything – it takes far less time to do a little scoping before rolling out any approach.

Senior buy-in helps push through bureaucracy, secure funding & resources and helps ensure work is prioritised. It's also important to align responsibilities with the right department and worth taking time to consider which this is as it may not be as obvious as you think.

Champions are very important – these are key people within teams who already believe in what you want to do & are well respected by others. It helps if they also have a keen interest in the behaviour, or skill or technology e.g. cycling, energy efficiency.

## Green Teams:

Business In The Community implemented a “workplace challenge” project which aimed to set up and enable Green Teams.

They used a training programme which started by engaging senior management, providing project overview and understanding about the impact of using employees to drive change. It was then left to the senior management to recruit green champions and green teams within their organisation. Over the challenge period BITC then brought the Green Champions together regularly to provide specific training on how to run successful green teams, using online monitoring tools, sharing best practice as well as how to embed the work into responsible business practice. The champions were given resource packs with tools and advice on how to run teams. Key to it’s design was the intention to leave a lasting legacy once the challenge was over. Once set up the teams have the potential to continue to impact behaviour in these workplaces, and produce not only carbon and cost savings, but also the important business benefits of employee morale, stakeholder engagement, sharing of best practice, profile and reputation, and enhanced shareholder value that comes with being a responsible business.

## Peer to peer learning

The Emergence project used peer-to-peer learning in a project that engaged and supported eighteen theatres and arts venues in Wales. The project aimed to identify attitudes that reinforce behaviours that result in persistent high emissions of greenhouse gasses. The 18 venues came together to share best practice and learn from each other. The venues were all at very different stages of embedding sustainability but between them had a wealth of experience and could advise each other on various issues e.g. solar panels, cycle to work schemes, funding, engaging staff, food waste strategies, embedding sustainability into business plans.

Most of the venues highlighted the peer-to-peer sessions as one of the most valuable parts of the project and are all keen to keep working together as a sustainability network.



## Aligning responsibility

It is important to ensure there is appropriate buy in from the “top” and align it with the right authority.

Challenge for Change usually work closely with cycling officers or officers from transport departments as lead officers from local authorities when developing their cycle challenges. In one authority however it was the Human Resources department who were keen to implement the challenge as part of their staff health and wellbeing programme. As the chief officer involved was a keen cyclist himself it was very easy to demonstrate the benefits of holding such a challenge and he acted as a strong Champion for the project internally, securing senior management buy-in as well as securing match funding and in-kind contributions towards the challenge from the council’s own resources. Without senior support, this had proved more challenging in other local authorities even though there was strong support from colleagues.

Transport departments are not necessarily the most appropriate department for cycle challenges as they are concerned with costly infrastructure and strategic issues whereas benefits from a cycle challenge designed to reduce co2 emissions are much easier to align with staff wellbeing and sit more appropriately with HR.

### Make it relevant

Tailor the message to your “audience” – research shows this is key to engaging people in behaviour change. It’s also important to focus on positive messaging and rewarding good behaviours rather than focusing on what people are doing wrong.

### Quick wins

Starting with “small wins” helps test out approach & gather momentum – although savings can be greater with more complicated behaviours.

### Follow ups

Sustainable change is tricky as interventions can focus on short term impact – it’s important to follow up & keep monitoring and you may need to re-visit to keep people on track.

### Measure!

Using a logic model can help plan how you measure & evaluate. This will help you think about what data to gather and what successes looks like and ensure you can report on value for money.

### Reading list links

- [WWF Common cause](#)
- [Progressive Behaviour Change](#)
- [NSMC – Social Marketing](#)
- [DECC Carbon Culture \(MINDSPACE APPROACH\)](#)
- [Setting up a green team](#)
- [Global Action Plan](#)