

4. Communicating Your Green Program

Actively communicating information about your green program lets your employees, customers and community know about your commitment to the environment, your green initiatives and the improvements you are achieving. Your staff will be incented to continue and broaden their efforts.

Potential and current customers will recognize how your green program can support and facilitate their green practices. Your community will appreciate the contributions your company is making and be inspired to implement their own green initiatives. Consider adding a green component to your website to share your successes more broadly.

If your business is very small, communication to your employees about your green program may be accomplished in the natural course of day-to-day interactions. But, for many businesses, making sure everyone who has a need to know stays in the loop requires some dedicated effort.

Keep your employees and supervisors involved with your company's green program, make sure they understand your green policy, and ensure that can provide a consistent message about your business' commitment to sustainability and environmental performance. Make sure your business is providing information to employees and others as required by regulations.

By developing, implementing and monitoring a Green Communication Plan, you'll ensure that Going Green becomes part of your culture and day-to-day operations, rather than a one-time project.

The following steps will help you create an effective communication plan.

Step 1

Identify ways to inform all the employees at your business about your green policy and its goals. To get this information out efficiently, you may want to look for opportunities through existing business meetings or events. If you have an existing newsletter, consider adding a "green" column to keep everyone updated.

Step 2

Identify all the people outside of your company who need to, or would be interested to, know about your business' sustainability/environmental policy and its goals. State at least one reason why it would be strategic or beneficial for your business to inform them.

Step 3

Referring to the information you developed in Steps 1 and 2, decide who will be included in the Communication Plan for the coming year, how you are going to get the information to them, and who will be responsible. Organize this information using the following table. (Helpful hint: If you do not feel your business is ready to present its green policy and its goals "to the world," you can leave out people listed in Step 2 until ready)

Sample Green Program Communication Plan

Who	Internal/ External	What	How	When	Person Responsible
All Employees	Internal	Promote Sustainability/ Environmental policy, goals and current efforts	Presentation during "all staff" meetings	Quarterly Monthly	Business Owner
			New employee orientation	Quarterly	HR Manager
			Company newsletter	Quarterly updates/ as required	Communications Coordinator
			Posted at entrance and throughout building		Communications Coordinator
Customers	External	Promote Sustainability/ Environmental policy, goals and current efforts	Discuss in any performance reviews/ scorecards	Bi-annual Bi-annual/as required	Business Owner Business Owner
			In response to Customer RFPs	Ongoing	Account Manager
			Present in company marketing materials	Ongoing	Communications Coordinator
			Company Web-site	Quarterly updates/as required	Communications Coordinator
Suppliers	External	Promote preference for green product/services	In company bid solicitations and during contract negotiations	Ongoing	Procurement Manager
			Report to customers on your sustainability metrics	Quarterly updates/as required	
Community	External	Promote Sustainability/ Environmental policy, goals and current efforts	Community picnic on company grounds	Annual	Outreach Coordinator
			Host student field trips/company tours	Per schedule	Outreach Coordinator
			Company web-site	Quarterly updates/as required	Communications Coordinator
Chamber of Commerce	External	Promote Sustainability/ Environmental policy, goals and current efforts	Presentation at Small Business reception	Annual	Business Owner

Green Program Communication Plan Worksheet

Who	Internal/ External	What	When	How	Person Responsible
All Employees	Internal				
Customers	External				
Suppliers	External				
Community	External				
Chamber of Commerce	External				