

Bring Your Green to Work with ENERGY STAR®—Create a Green Team

One person cannot do it all! So when it comes to making your workplace greener and more energy efficient, nothing beats a team. Forming a green team is a great way to help reduce office waste and increase energy efficiency. Follow these tips to hit the ground running.

Organize Your Green Team

To get started, meet with management to get approval and buy-in for the idea. Not only does support from management add legitimacy to your team, some of the measures needed to “green” your workplace might require an investment of time, money, or both.

Next, encourage co-workers from different levels and parts of your organization—from senior management and interns to facility managers and human resources personnel—to get involved. A team approach improves buy-in from all levels of the organization, which helps to ensure greater support and success. Once you have recruited a core team, conduct a kickoff meeting to develop a plan of action.

Start Your Green Program

Careful planning and effective outreach at the launch of your program creates momentum for your green team. Identify project areas and opportunities, develop work plans, and prepare for an official launch or kickoff event. Consider implementing a pilot project to showcase at the program’s kickoff. Small steps such as encouraging employees to replace at least one incandescent light bulb at their desks with an [ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulb](#) (CFL) can make a big difference and motivate employees to become more involved.

Raise Awareness

Share tips and advice on how to save energy and reduce waste with your co-workers. Order ENERGY STAR posters and magnets from energystar.gov/publications to help raise awareness of your green team’s efforts. Place them in your workplace’s kitchen, break room, conference room, or other places your co-workers gather. Add information about energy efficiency and its benefits from the [ENERGY STAR Challenge Toolkit](#) to your intranet, newsletter, or employee bulletin board.

For Earth Day in April, Energy Awareness Month in October, or other special environmental occasions, hold an event to teach employees about energy efficiency and other green habits. Hand out Bring Your Green to Work with ENERGY STAR tip cards (available at energystar.gov/work) to share information about good environmental practices at work and at home. You also can help motivate colleagues by organizing a green competition between offices, or hold brown bag lunches and invite in-house and outside technical and operational experts to speak about energy efficiency or other green topics. Organize an employee training session using EPA’s interactive tool, ENERGY STAR @ work, to help your co-workers learn what they can do at work to save energy and help fight global warming.

Once your green team has gained momentum and management support, consider working with your company's energy team to conduct an energy review or audit of your office space to identify areas for improvement that do not require large investments. Use [EPA's Portfolio Manager](#) to measure and track energy use over time. You can also encourage employees to take the [ENERGY STAR pledge](#). Employers or building owners can take the [ENERGY STAR Challenge](#) and [Low Carbon IT Challenge](#).

Recognize Success

Who doesn't like rewards? Recognize the contributions of teams and individuals to reinforce the value of energy efficiency and encourage even greater improvements. Acknowledging success will help sustain motivation. Simple gestures such as a thank you and a handshake go a long way; a public e-mail or newsletter acknowledgement are other ideas to consider. Depending on the resources available, your green team might also work with management to explore the possibility of coffee mugs, certificates, plaques presented at award ceremonies, gift cards, bonuses, salary increases, and stock options, among others. Your company or organization can also join ENERGY STAR as a partner, apply for an ENERGY STAR award, and join some of the nation's leaders in the fight against global warming through energy efficiency.

The long-term efforts of your green team can lead to happier and more productive employees, while benefiting the environment—an achievement of which your entire organization can be proud.

For more information, check out EPA's [Teaming Up to Save Energy](#) guide, which provides step-by-step instructions for forming an energy team—many of which apply to green teams, too—as well as real-world examples from other businesses and organizations committed to saving energy, saving money, and fighting global warming.