

Getting Noticed

Your Guide to Self-Promotion

Humility is a virtue that can sometimes be over-rated in the workplace because getting recognized for the work you do is vital to your career, your budget, team morale, and team effectiveness. Yet, as important as recognition is, most of the opportunities are self-created rather than given, even in the best organizations.

For those of us who's natural inclination is to run away from the spotlight, it's hard to be convinced that we need to be pro-active in showcasing our department's day-to-day contributions. But if you don't, who else will make the case that environmental services and facilities play critical roles in the provision of patient care? Who else will educate your community that what you do has a strong public health component? You have an important story to tell; so how do you do it?

In corporate communications, it's best to keep your message simple. Even though healthcare engineering covers a broad spectrum of services that can be publicized – from facility operations and Environment of Care%, to security and project design to name a few - choose efforts you want to highlight. At ENERGY STAR®, we believe a valuable promotional opportunity is in your role as an energy manager. Using energy wisely saves money. That's a message everyone understands, from patients to members of your board. What is not well known is that energy efficiency is good for the environment. This is why increasing the energy performance of facilities ultimately benefits public



Money Isn't All You're Saving

health. The connection is clear. When fossil fuels are burned to produce energy, greenhouse gases and other are released into the air. As we use energy more efficiently, we burn less fuel and pollute less.

Where to Start?

Convincing top management to join EPA's voluntary ENERGY STAR® Partnership is certainly a good place to

begin. (Partnership letters can be downloaded at www.energystar.gov.) EPA has a team of marketing and communications specialists available to support partner communication activities and to help you brainstorm specific project ideas. We also have communications tools, such as camera-ready logos and sample text, to make communications easier for you.

Whether or not you join ENERGY STAR, working with your Public Relations Department will be a necessary component to any communications strategy you create. Their mission is to be your hospital's communications center, telling the hospital's story on and off-campus through publications, the news media, and other outlets. Work with them to develop comprehensive marketing plans, internal communications, news releases, or for event planning. Consider these ideas:

Create an Image

Leave no doubt in the minds of employees that facilities is responsible for managing and conserving energy at your hospital; tout your energy management activities in daily communications, where appropriate:

Add banners to outgoing departmental emails and faxes stating energy savings. Emission reductions and energy savings are sometimes difficult for the average employee to understand or fully appreciate. By translating benefits into real-world terms, you can be better assured that your audiences will get the message. See sidebar for details.

Use the ENERGY STAR logo if you are a Partner – Featuring the logo as part of your informational project is easy and effective since 40% of the American public recognizes the ENERGY STAR as the symbol for energy efficiency. But you don't have to stop there. Participants like MD Anderson Cancer Center have used the logo on T-shirts, caps, mouse pads, and uniforms to help employees feel part of something big. Most product vendors can manufacture patches. Please refer to the ENERGY STAR Identity Guidelines at www.energystar.gov for more information.

Inform Employees

Meetings and Presentations. Schedule an open-invitation seminar with a presentation on how energy management plays a critical role in saving money and protecting public health. Take the time to explain things in more detail and provide explicit information about how energy efficiency makes a difference. Informational presentations will engage your audiences and raise their interest in environmental issues as a whole. They'll also appreciate the fact that you are making an effort to help them understand.

- **Develop a Poster or Cafeteria Tent Card Contest.** Award prizes to the employee group that develops the most compelling informational poster or tent card.
- **Create a screensaver** containing energy messages to hospital staff and offer the screensaver as a free download on your website.
- **Display Public Service Announcements (PSAs).** Request free ENERGY STAR PSAs from EPA (Call Jill Abelson at 202-564-8966) to run on your hospital cable channel. Tell employees and patients how to save energy with these award-winning announcements. In 15, 30, and 60-second versions.

- **Employee Handbooks.** Encourage employees to use energy wisely. Provide tips on how to save energy and explain why it's important.
- **Internal Newsletters.** Work with editors to place an informational article in all of your hospital's internal newsletter(s) or magazine(s). It only takes one article to get the word out to employees.

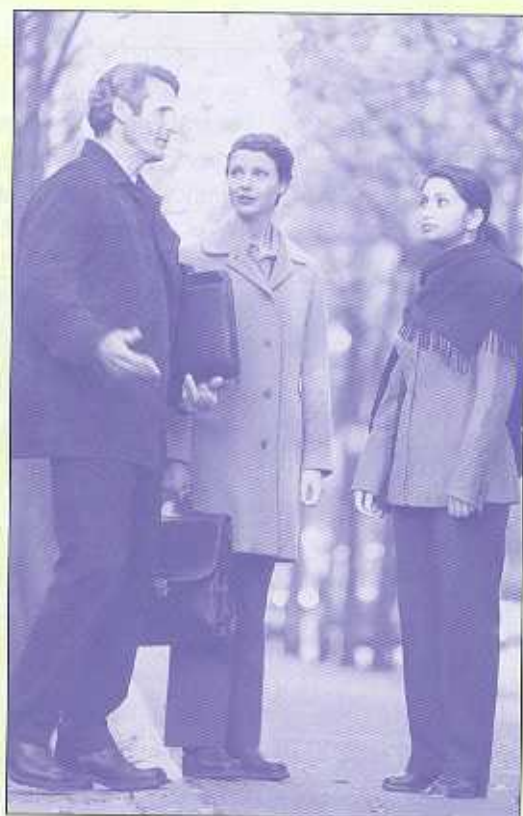
Educate Your Community

Press Announcements. Work with your Public Relations Department to write a press release announcing energy saved or other milestone achievements to local media.

Annual Report. Feature efficiency improvements and emission reductions in the environmental section of your hospital's annual report.

Profile Your Hospital on ENERGY STAR's Website. Describe how your facility achieved the ENERGY STAR Label, EPA's award for superior energy performance, by completing a one-page Profile found in the Portfolio Manager benchmarking tool.

Web pages. The Internet has become an important vehicle for communicating information about your hospital to the public. Environmental issues like energy efficiency make excellent additions.



Special Events. Special events are a great time to highlight your department's energy management activities. Use Earth Day (April 22), Healthcare Facilities Engineering Week (October), Energy Awareness Month (October), or your hospital's own Departmental Showcase Day to celebrate your contributions to the environment or the healthcare profession. Special events are an excellent opportunity to foster good will towards the people whom you serve. Engage hospital employees by enlisting their support for your efforts. Ask for their cooperation during upgrades, and make them aware of when and what changes will be taking place in case they are affected.

Translations You Can Use

6,750 kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved \approx 10,000 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) prevented*

6,750 kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved \approx 1 car off the road or 1.4 acres of trees planted

9,965 kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved \approx 14,750 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) prevented*

9,965 kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved \approx Energy to power 1 American home per year*

*Based on average of all fuel types'CO₂ emissions

Note: This table contains outdated information and should not be used for reporting. Please visit www.energystar.gov for the latest conversions.

Earn Accolades

Winning awards bring prestige and credibility. It helps increase your corporate visibility and assures the administration of your effectiveness. It's also important to staff and their careers to be associated with a prize-winning department. The following organizations offer energy-related awards. Check their websites for more details.

Sustainable Building Awards. ASHE's Sustainable Building Awards recognizes sustainable building practices in the design, construction and management of healthcare facilities. Eligible facilities include hospitals, ambulatory care facilities, long-term care facilities and medical office buildings. Applications are due in September. www.hospitalconnect.com/ashe/recognition/vista.html

ENERGY STAR Awards. Each year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy honor companies and organizations that have demonstrated their commitment to energy efficiency through the ENERGY STAR program. Entries are due in December. Web: www.energystar.gov

ENERGY STAR Label. Hospitals that score 75 or greater on the national energy performance rating system are eligible for the ENERGY STAR label when a Professional Engineer verifies the facility's energy usage and indoor environment quality. Ask your Public Relations Department to help fund a Professional Engineer (if one is not on your staff) when applying for the ENERGY STAR label. Applications are accepted year round. Web: www.energystar.gov

Federal Energy and Water Management Awards. Awards are given for low-cost programs that demonstrate a significant reduction in energy or water use, or expanded use of renewable energy. Open to U.S. federal agencies and organizations that have worked with the federal government on energy and water management. Entries are due in May. Web: www.eren.doe.gov/femp/prodtech/awards/

Canada's Energy Efficiency Awards. Honors innovations in buildings and five other categories. Past winners have been recognized for energy upgrades to buildings and energy-efficient architectural design. Open to companies and government agencies throughout Canada. Applications are due in August. Web: <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/awards/home.cfm>

Remember the riddle, "If a tree falls in the forest and nobody is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" Well, consider an offshoot of this about success: If your department succeeds and no one notices, was it really a success? Promotion says to your administration, your employees, your community, 'Here's what we do. Here's how we contribute. Here's why we're important.' It starts with focusing on a particular service you provide, creating an image, and then telling your story, day after day after day. **ASHE**

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