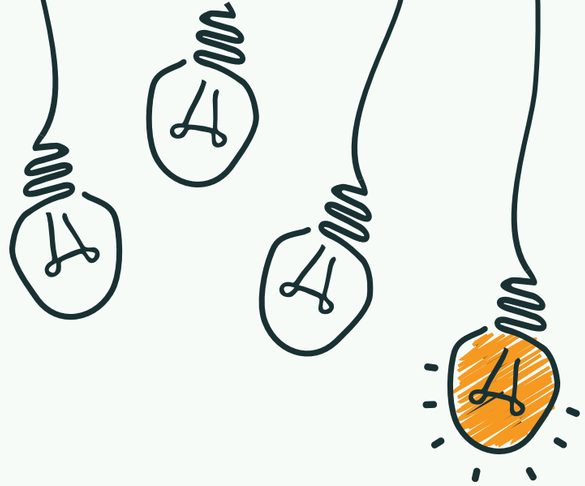
Sustainability Champions Guide



PlanetMark



Guide contents

3 **Introduction**

3 Who is this guide for?

4-5 Who should be a sustainability champion?

6 **Getting started**

6 Get senior management support

6 Define a clear vision

6 Delegate clear responsibility

7 Communicate

7 Monitoring and feedback

7 Ideas to get you started

8 **Top tips**

9 **Benefits of a sustainability champions programme**

10 **About Planet Mark**

11 **CEO Statement**

Introduction

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Your role as a sustainability champion can help propel the environmental CREDENTIALS of your organisation and enhance your individual skills. It can be a great way to expand your business network, unite departments and effect high-level change.

This guide provides some practical tips and ideas on how to positively INFLUENCE your world of work and inspire the people around you to do the same.



Steve Malkin
Founder and CEO, Planet Mark

Amelie Trolle
Head of Engagement, Planet Mark

Who is this guide for?

Organising a progressive and effective green team or sustainability committee within your organisation can be one of the most empowering and significant initiatives on your sustainability journey. It can, however, be a bit daunting to get one started, particularly if you don't have a pre-existing focus on sustainability within the business and commitment from senior executives.

Today, despite the resource demands, an increasing number of organisations have a productive sustainability committee or team of champions that are driving real change.

This guide will help you set up and manage your internal sustainability champions team. These champions will help you to deliver improvements to your organisation by promoting and implementing actions to achieve a reduction in your carbon footprint.

This guide is focused on the initial steps of assembling a sustainability champions team. For guidance on gathering data and measuring your organisation's carbon footprint, consult our beginners guide to carbon footprinting.



Who should be a sustainability champion?

Sustainability champions can help boost the sustainability credentials of your organisation. It can be a great way to expand your business network, foster inter-departmental collaboration and effect high-level change.

Anyone in your organisation can be a sustainability champion. Participants do not need to have particular expertise in sustainability – motivation is the most important factor.

Encourage participation from a cross-section of staff in order to ensure that sustainability becomes part of the way you do business and that you get a view from all corners of the organisation.



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> **Steve Malkin**
> Founder and CEO, Planet Mark

Recruiting participants

- Hold a lunchtime event or join another event to publicise the idea and attract members.
- Signpost information for staff to be able to understand what the programme is and what is required of them, especially in terms of time.
- Offer freebies, prizes and other incentives to encourage take-up.
- Ask colleagues to promote the initiative at meetings and team briefings.
- Ask existing champions to recruit within their own networks.
- Highlight the opportunity for skills development - being a sustainability champion can increase skills and help networking around the organisation.
- Have a participation form or other similar formal process to ensure that participants understand the commitment they are making.

Getting *STARTED*

1. Get senior management support

Obtain the support of senior management for your sustainability champions programme by highlighting the business benefits. Agree the remit and resources available to support the positive actions of the group, as well as availability of resources such as staff time, budget and responsibilities.

Having a mechanism for sharing your work with your organisation's senior leadership team can help keep actions on-track, support prioritisation and fast-track development.

Consider adding a standard sustainability or green item to the board agenda. It can benefit the programme immensely to have a senior management representative as a sustainability champion.

2. Define a clear vision

Have objectives and specific strategic goals and timeframes for the programme, ensuring that it aligns with your wider sustainability strategy.

Are you looking for a core team, a Sustainability Committee for example, to meet regularly and deliver projects? Are you looking for an army of sustainability advocates who communicate your messages in their teams? Or are you planning to have both?

Ensure that you understand your objectives from the outset and this will determine which colleagues around the organisation you want to recruit.



3. Delegate clear responsibility

Sustainability champions should have a clearly defined role, which will depend on the nature of your programme. Ensure that responsibilities are reasonable, achievable, measurable and timed, and agreed by line managers as necessary.

Ensure that this includes the expected time commitment including attendance at meetings and events. It may be a good idea to have sustainability champions on a rotating basis, to give everyone the opportunity to be part of the programme.

These processes are not set in stone, and you might find it useful to modify them. You know your colleagues the best and will also have valuable insights into how certain individuals respond. It is important to tap into your instincts and institutional knowledge.

4. Communicate

Plan how you will share information, ideally using communications channels which are already widely used in your business.

Consider where and when to host regular meetings to provide updates, gather feedback and maintain momentum.

Think about how and where others within your organisation will be able to find out about your sustainability programme. Keep colleagues up to date with progress and celebrate your successes, by circulating a monthly newsletter, or arranging regular update meetings.

5. Monitoring and feedback

Actions, initiatives, events and meetings should be monitored to track performance, identify further opportunities and flag areas of resistance or concern. The results of initiatives should be reported to staff and senior managers with clear facts and figures. Remember to thank participants and reward success. Enjoy the process and have fun!





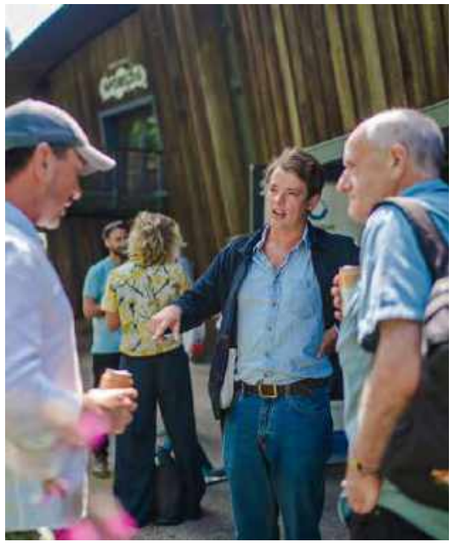
Ideas to get you started

- Encourage positive behaviour change such as turning off lights and equipment when not in use. Where possible follow the refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle model.
- Set up interdepartmental competitions to encourage behaviour change.
- Communicate key sustainability messages including new policies, initiatives and reports as well as organisational changes which may affect them.
- Run workshops, events, meetings and training sessions on sustainability topics.
- Support data gathering for your carbon footprint and improving data quality.
- Generate ideas for improvements and initiatives from within their teams.
- Dispel 'myths' and confusion in the workplace about typical focus areas. Run sessions to explain and demystify sustainability terms.

Top tips

- Focus on the quick wins first. It will encourage further action, show early success and perhaps attract new champions.
- Tackling sustainability is an ongoing process and you are more likely to achieve goals if they are manageable. Small but regular steps to progress are better than no progress at all.
- Realistically, certain members will take on more work than others. Ensure that this is recognised and that the responsibility doesn't fall on to just a few people.
- Ensure that initiatives match your sustainability strategy. Colleagues may want to tackle issues such as waste but if your focus for the year is energy, steer actions accordingly.
- Encourage creative ideas and make it clear that this is not just a cost-cutting exercise but a way to increase the value of your business while having a positive impact on the planet.
- Offer incentives for good ideas, achieving targets or regular participation.





- Maintain a positive narrative. Keep negative messages infrequent or low-key. Sustainability messages that are negative or filled with threats of fear can immobilise or disempower employees.
- Invite people from outside the office who have already undertaken a range of sustainability initiatives to attend and share their experiences.
- Disclose your commitments and goals publicly and share your challenges and successes transparently. Pin them up in the office where employees can see them. Review the plan regularly so that individuals can report on their specific goals or tasks, and the group can monitor overall progress. Staff may come up with lots of good ideas as part of the review process.

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Benefits of a sustainability champions programme

- Cost savings associated with energy, waste, water and travel.
- Achieving reductions in carbon emissions and contributing towards achieving and retaining Planet Mark Certification.
- Changing behaviour and attitudes towards sustainability by involving staff and/or students.
- Team building – bringing people together from different departments to work with each other.
- Opportunity for employees to develop skills and get involved in other parts of the organisation.
- Fully informed and engaged staff feel valued, improving morale, creating a better working environment and increasing productivity. [The Right Culture: Not Just About Employee Satisfaction]





Make dedicated time. Addressing our carbon emissions can feel a daunting task when we're faced with daily or weekly pressures. However, action now is essential to prevent the worst impact of the climate crisis.

Amelie Trolle
Head of Engagement, Planet Mark

About Planet Mark

Planet Mark is a sustainability certification for every type of organisation and for real estate. Our certification recognises continuous improvement, encourages action and builds an empowered community of like-minded individuals who make a world of difference.

We believe we must all work together to embrace sustainability. We work passionately with organisations to empower their people to halt the climate crisis and improve society in everything they do. And by working this way we will build a sustainable brighter future for us and our planet

Through our certification, we can help your business to strengthen your Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy and contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

We enable organisations and their people to positively transform society, the environment and the economy through measurement of their carbon and social data, using our unique three-step process: Measure, Engage and Communicate.

As a result of rigorous measurement, a commitment to improvement and engaging their stakeholders in the process, our members can communicate their progress with confidence, transparency and enthusiasm. Our advisory services can also help your business to go beyond carbon measurement and reduction by supporting you to achieve net zero and Carbon Neutral status.

On average, Planet Mark certified businesses make a 12% cut in absolute carbon emissions per year, and a 16% carbon saving per employee per year through reductions in energy, waste, water, travel and procurement.

1. Measure



We measure your carbon and social data with rigour so you can report your progress with confidence and authenticity.

2. Engage



Employees are the key to achieving your sustainability goals. We help you engage your staff to unlock their passion and drive change.

3. Communicate



We give you the tools to communicate your progress and offer reciprocal promotion through our own channels.



CEO Statement

Steve Malkin
Founder and CEO
Planet Mark

Action on the climate crisis and sustainability generally have never been more critical. Organisations can lead the way to a brighter future; one that balances our economic, environmental, and social impacts. Businesses that do this increase their resilience, improve agility and enable our transition to zero carbon and a regenerative economy. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

By working with Planet Mark, you will be taking direct action and delivering positive impacts to address the most pressing global challenges of our time. You will also be unlocking immediate and far-reaching business benefits by increasing profitability and brand value.

Our certification generates outstanding results. It has helped over 800 businesses across the world to measure their impact, engage their stakeholders and communicate their results. We hope you will join our movement for change in this crucial Decade of Action.

Latest member results.

12%

Average annual carbon reduction.

16%

Average annual carbon reduction per employee.

99%

Success rate for members achieving renewal.

Your first steps to *CHANGE*

Join our movement for change in this crucial Decade of Action

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