



6. Champions

Goal

To create a network of green champions that empowers employees across the organization to become conservation advocates and make a valuable contribution to saving energy.

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The Energy Wise Network Tier Assessment Tool is designed as an assessment tool that indicates areas of strength and areas where there are opportunities to improve your engagement program and energy conservation campaigns. Use the following table to help guide your “Champions” self-assessment using the Tier Assessment Tool.

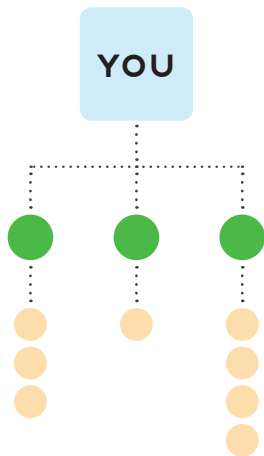
TIER 1 – Establish an internal champion network or green team that meets quarterly	No	You have not established an internal champion network or green team that meets quarterly.
	In Progress	You have organized some champion network or a green team meetings but it has not been formalized.
	Yes	You have an established internal champion network or green team that meets quarterly.
TIER 2 – Develop formal guidelines for staff champions	No	You have not developed formal guidelines for champions or green team members.
	In Progress	You are developing formal guidelines for champions or green team members.
	Yes	You have developed and adopted formal guidelines for champions or green team members.
TIER 3 – Develop policies that support people who want to lead campaigns and initiatives	No	Your organization does not have a policy that supports people in your organization spending staff time to lead campaigns and initiatives.
	In Progress	You are developing policies that support people in your organization spending staff time to lead campaigns and initiatives.
	Yes	Your organization has a policy that supports people in your organization spending staff time to lead campaigns and initiatives.
TIER 4 – Include conservation responsibilities in job descriptions in non-energy related positions	No	Conservation responsibilities are not included in in job descriptions in non-energy related positions.
	In Progress	Conservation responsibilities are included in few job descriptions in non-energy related positions.
	Yes	Conservation responsibilities are included in most job descriptions in non-energy related positions.

Overview

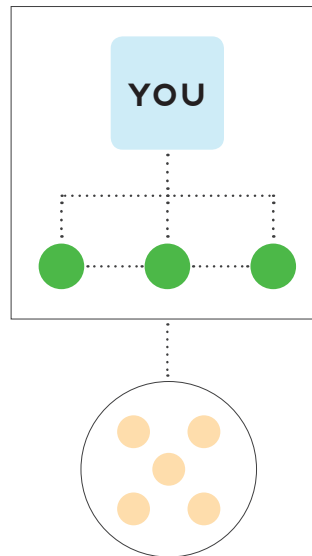
Developing a strong network of staff volunteers can help you create change in your organization and implement more effective energy conservation campaigns.

The diagrams below illustrate several different structures for engaging staff in your organization, including champion networks, green teams, and advisory committee models. Each model has a different function within an organization. In the “champion network” model, staff champions lead campaigns in their respective departments and are provided with resources for doing so. In the “green team” and “advisory committee” models, a group of staff come together to either make campaign decisions as a group or advise you on how best to go about doing so. It is not necessary to have all three models present within your organization, but more important to choose which is/are right for you.

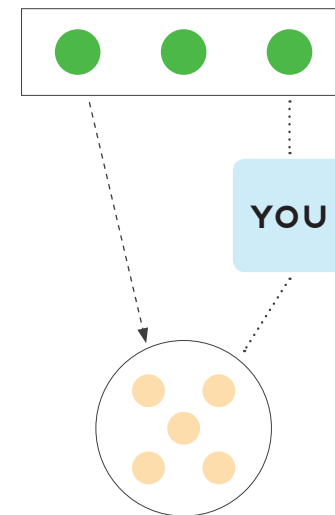
Champion network





Green team

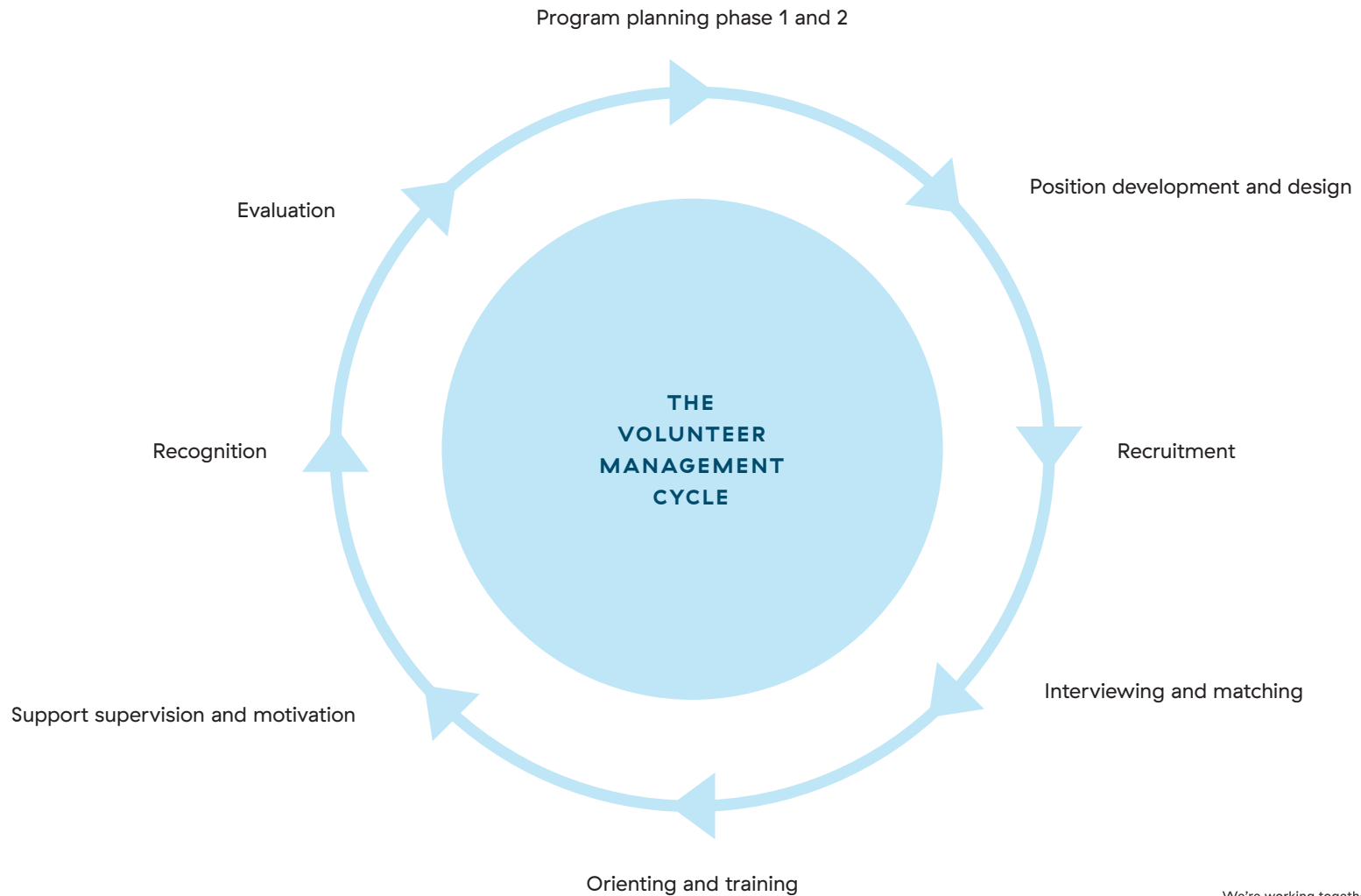


Advisory committee



-  Champions in their departments
-  Audience

Staff volunteers or “champions” typically volunteer to participate in your meetings and initiatives because your program and campaigns align with their values and they want to make a difference in the organization. It’s therefore important to the success of your program that they have a meaningful volunteer experience. Follow or adopt elements from the Volunteer Management Cycle (illustrated below) created by Brenda Sawada of Business Community Connections, to map out your volunteers’ experience in the program. Just like a typical job position, volunteers want to know what’s expected of them in the role, understand the skills required to perform tasks and be recognized for their work. As the program manager, you want to make sure that your volunteers are the right fit for the role, that you are providing support where needed and are taking the time to evaluate outcomes from participation.



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Purpose of engaging champions

Creating a green champion network or a green team or advisory committee can help you effectively achieve your energy conservation engagement goals by building staff and leadership capacity as well as creating a network of people in your organization to help you champion the new action or activity.



CHECK THE TOOLKIT

In her Energy Challenge campaign (see the Energy Challenge campaign toolkit, found on the Energy Wise Network SharePoint site), Naomi meets with the green teams at schools and they collectively discuss and decide the focus of the campaign and specific strategies.



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Tier 1: Champions

ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL CHAMPION NETWORK OR GREEN TEAM THAT MEETS QUARTERLY

Having regularly scheduled meetings for Champions or your Green Team will add structure and allow for coordination between efforts. Holding meetings on staff paid time is also a signal to staff volunteers that the project is valued by the organization, and worth dedicating work time towards.

Use the following meeting best practices to ensure that your network or team meetings are an effective use of everyone's time:

1. **Start on time.** A late start hurts your credibility and doesn't show respect for the time of your volunteers,
2. **Create a comprehensive agenda.** The agenda should be itemized with time allocation. Remember to list outcomes in addition to activities so everyone knows what they can expect from the meeting. Circulate the agenda at least a few days in advance of the meeting.
3. **Have clear objectives.** Meetings will be more productive when you start with an agenda that answers the questions: Why am I at this meeting? Who requires that I be here? When does this meeting end? How will we know if this meeting is successful?
4. **Be prepared.** Review the agenda and other background information ahead of time and know who will be attending the meeting.
5. **Be engaged.** Put away your cell phone. If you are leading the meeting, stand up rather than sit, it might help keep you more aware.
6. **Communicate visually.** Give and read visual cues. Use images to tell a story and anchor your communication.
7. **End on time.** If your meeting is going late, check in with the group to ensure that this is acceptable to everyone.

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Tier 2: Champions

DEVELOP FORMAL GUIDELINES STAFF CHAMPIONS

Volunteer management best practices suggest that building a formalized structure around the volunteer experience increases effectiveness and retention of volunteers. For this reason, it is beneficial to define the volunteer role with clear expectations and responsibilities. Guidelines or terms of reference documents help potential champions or green team members understand what kind of time commitment is expected, how they will be supported and how they can best apply their skills to the position. Refer to the steps in the Volunteer Management Cycle.

Some items you may want to include in your Champion or Team guidelines include:

- **Vision:** Create a vision statement for your green champion network or green team that clearly outlines objectives of the group.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** Consider creating different roles for members of your green team or champion network—such as green champion leaders, team members, strategic advisors, subject matter experts.
- **Training:** Provide training for green champions and green team members. This can be an in-person event, a webinar, or a guidebook. It should include how your volunteers can contribute to environmental and sustainability goals, how employee efforts fit into the overall strategic energy management plan, expectations of the role, the year's calendar of events and the team members' role in the events, and sample materials/templates.
- **Value proposition:** Define how the green champion and/or green team member experience aligns with human resources training and development of core competencies, and environmental priorities. Highlight the benefit and learning opportunity for the individual team member.

Tier 3: Champions

DEVELOP POLICIES THAT SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO WANT TO LEAD CAMPAIGNS AND INITIATIVES

Changing policies within an organization or developing a new policy can take time. Work with human resources to get a better understanding of existing policies around using staff time to implement conservation campaigns and participating in a green champion or green team program. The goal in Tier 3 is to obtain formal organization support and funding for green champions and the green team programs.

Follow these best practices for establishing organizational policies that allow employees to spend work time on green initiatives:

- Link green champion work with human resources efforts in developing core competencies, such as leadership skills, marketing and campaign development, team building and communications.
- Summarize the training and support provided to green champions that will develop the professional competencies of their core job.
- Demonstrate the total value of employee engagement, including contributing to the organization's environmental goals, reputation, and employee morale (attraction and retention).
- Integrate the key behaviours and time commitment needed to achieve deliverables with key stakeholders.

Tier 4: Champions

INCLUDE CONSERVATION RESPONSIBILITIES IN JOB DESCRIPTIONS IN NON-ENERGY RELATED POSITIONS

One way to demonstrate that energy conservation is deeply immersed in the culture of an organization is to include conservation responsibilities in non-energy related job descriptions. This signals that energy conservation is truly “what we do.”

The following is a series of steps to follow to incorporate conservation responsibilities in non-energy related job descriptions:

- While considering which positions may present opportunities to include conservation responsibilities, look to the energy conservation goals and the key stakeholders needed to be successful in achieving those goals.
- Develop an inventory of roles and deliverables needed to achieve the energy conservation goals.
- Prioritize the list of roles based on how integral each is to achieving energy conservation goals, which roles need formal rules to start the work, and which managers are most receptive to the idea.
- Create a vision statement based on the value to the stakeholders (savings to program budget, streamlining staff functioning, visible contribution to organizational goals and values, etc.)
- Identify the resources available to help managers provide the training and support necessary for staff to realize the deliverable (i.e. energy manager, human resources, sustainability office, etc.)
- Involve human resources in developing a strategy for integrating energy efficiency into job descriptions.
- Work with managers to determine how best to integrate the functions into the job descriptions.
- Ensure conservation initiatives are included in key performance indicators where the functions are contracted out such as janitorial staff, food services providers, security, IT services.

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