



11. Fresh ideas

Goal

Solicit new ideas from your own employees, other organizations involved in employee engagement, those in your sector implementing conservation initiatives and sector best practices to identify opportunities to advance conservation efforts within your organization.

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 “Fresh Ideas” self-assessment using the Tier Assessment Tool.

TIER 1 – Attend workshops and training sessions	No	You have not yet attended any workshops or training sessions on employee engagement and energy conservation
	In Progress	You have made plans to attend workshop and/or training session on employee engagement and energy conservation.
	Yes	You regularly attend workshops and/or training session on employee engagement and energy conservation.
TIER 2 – Solicit conservation ideas and best practice ideas from people	No	You have not solicited conservation ideas and best practice ideas from people within your organization.
	In Progress	You have solicited conservation ideas and best practice ideas from people within your organization, but you don't have a formalized process.
	Yes	You have a formalized process for soliciting conservation ideas and best practice ideas from people within your organization.
TIER 3 – Establish resources to evaluate, prioritize, and implement employee and best practice ideas	No	You have no system in place to evaluate, prioritize and implement employee ideas.
	In Progress	You may have a system in place evaluate, prioritize and implement employee ideas, but it is not well used.
	Yes	You regularly evaluate, prioritize and implement employee ideas
TIER 4 – Present case studies of energy savings from campaigns to external groups	No	Energy savings data from campaigns or the engagement program is not publicly available.
	In Progress	Some efforts have been made to make share energy savings data publicly.
	Yes	Energy savings data from campaigns or the engagement program for your organization is publicly available.

Overview

Repetition and consistency aren't necessarily bad for your energy engagement program as there are often new staff that are hearing about it for the first time and returning staff who enjoyed participating in previous years and like to know what to expect. However, it's important to keep assessing the situation and ask questions like: "Is this still relevant?", "Is this campaign still having an impact?", "Are we losing or gaining champions with this initiative?"

It's not suggested that you overhaul every aspect of your energy engagement program each year, but fresh ideas can help you sustain your energy engagement program over time. Look to both employees and external sources to keep your program dynamic and engaging for participants and champions alike.

Purpose of fresh ideas

The purpose of having fresh ideas is to continuously improve your program. Look for opportunities to test out small changes and ask for feedback from participants and champions when you do.

You can demonstrate leadership within your sector by seeking out new and innovative ideas and piloting them at your site. Even if you don't think your organization is quite ready to try something new, it's good practice to keep track of potential ideas and interview and investigate to learn when it might be the right time to incorporate that new idea into your program.

Tier 1: Fresh ideas

ATTEND WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING SESSIONS

The Energy Wise Network provides several in-person training and networking opportunities throughout the year. Don't miss out on hearing fresh ideas from colleagues and fellow Energy Wise Network participants at the Energy Wise Network Summits. Additionally, there are a number of sector-specific events and initiatives that you can get involved in to learn from those who are working in similar areas.

Sector	Sector initiative
Advanced Education	Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)
Property Management/Office buildings	BOMA EMP Challenge
Municipalities	Federation for Canadian Municipalities Partners for Climate Protection Program
Schools	SEEDS Connections Green Schools Programs
Health Care	Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care
Hotels	Hotel Association of Canada's Green Key Rating System Audubon International's Green Lodging Program

Tier 2: Fresh ideas

SOLICIT CONSERVATION IDEAS AND BEST PRACTICE IDEAS FROM PEOPLE

Employees in your organization are an excellent resource for you as you develop conservation campaigns as they are typically the experts on what's happening in their work space. See below for some best practices when asking for ideas from staff:

- Have a clearly defined time period for collecting ideas to avoid confusion and people losing interest
- Include a green team or advisory group in the vetting process
- Communicate as best as possible why ideas are being solicited, where ideas are going, and how they might be evaluated for implementation
- Thank those who submitted ideas and if an idea is implemented, be sure to credit the staff member (if appropriate) or just let folks know that this idea came about through a process of employee engagement
- Refer to the Energy Wise Network Ideas Campaign Toolkit (found on the Energy Wise Network SharePoint site)



CHECK THE TOOLKIT

In Roy's Ideas campaign, (see the Ideas Campaign Toolkit found on the Energy Wise Network SharePoint site), he creates a contest for those submitting ideas to compete with one another to potentially have their idea implemented. He is clear in his campaign communications that the ideas will be judged on the following three criteria:

1. Is the idea reasonable and actionable?
2. Does the idea have an energy impact?
3. How creative is the idea?

Tier 3: Fresh ideas

ESTABLISH RESOURCES TO EVALUATE, PRIORITIZE, AND IMPLEMENT EMPLOYEE AND BEST PRACTICE IDEAS

In Tier 3, you will not just be collecting ideas from staff and putting them into some kind of evaluation process, but you'll have set aside appropriate resources to do so. This may mean having an additional green team meeting, or recruiting champions to give input on submitting ideas. The intention is that submitted ideas are evaluated in a comprehensive way and considered seriously for implementation.

See below for some best practices when asking for ideas from staff:

- Have a clearly defined time period for collecting ideas to avoid confusion and people losing interest
- Include a green team or advisory group in vetting process
- Communicate as best as possible why ideas are being solicited, where ideas are going, and how they might be evaluated for implementation
- Thank those who submitted ideas and if an idea is implemented, be sure to credit the staff member (if appropriate) or just let folks know that this idea came about through a process of employee engagement
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Tier 4: Fresh ideas

PRESENT CASE STUDIES OF ENERGY SAVINGS FROM CAMPAIGNS TO EXTERNAL GROUPS

In Tier 4, you are now a leader in your sector in soliciting and implementing fresh ideas. You present case studies of energy savings from campaigns to external groups, including your fellow participants in the Energy Wise Network, and are often a resource of fresh ideas for your colleagues