

FACTSHEET

FIVE STEPS TO GREATER RESOURCE PRODUCTIVITY AND RESPONSIBLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

This factsheet outlines the practical steps to begin your journey to eliminating avoidable waste and turning ‘waste’ into ‘wealth’.

1. Get internal buy in

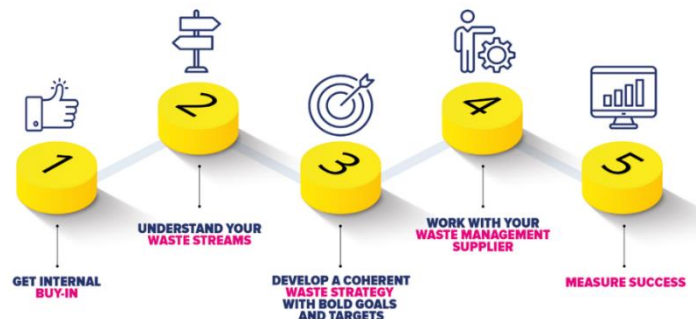
Support at all levels, including senior managers, is essential to enable you to achieve your goals, and new recycling and waste programmes are often part of wider sustainability or business improvement programmes and policies.

It may help to link into existing wider initiatives, such as building standards like BREEAM or local recycling or environmental business networks. This can help you and your business feel part of a wider movement, build a clear business case (including social, environmental and business productivity benefits) and draw from the experience of others. Make sure you’ve identified the right people internally, such as your facilities managers, operations supervisors, caterers, etc. to ensure practical and lasting improvements.

Setting up a part of the business as a test environment, where you can assess employee reactions to changes (such as new waste hub configurations) and analysing impact and benefits before roll-out, will help in introducing new initiatives at scale. It also allows you to establish measurement mechanisms and estimate volumes of each new waste stream, which will help in discussions with new providers as you set up reuse and recycling arrangements.

BITC MEMBERS REFERENCED IN THIS FACTSHEET

- Danske Bank
- PwC
- ReCon



2. Understand your waste streams

Alongside getting buy-in, begin to undertake a waste audit. This will give you a detailed understanding of your waste streams, including where waste is being generated, how often and where it ends up. Measuring both the volume and weight of each material (paper, plastic, metals, etc.) provides a window into the composition of your waste and will help you to identify where you can have the greatest impact.

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From there, you can work with your procurement teams and waste management company to identify where those waste streams are coming from and going to. You'll need to look 'upstream' to identify whether you can reduce the quantity of the original product (in quantity and size), or potentially switch to a different more durable product; and downstream to ensure that your 'waste' is being kept at its maximum value.

PWC BEGAN WITH A ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL TARGET FOR 2012 BEFORE SETTING A TARGET OF 100% REUSE AND RECYCLING FOR 2017 AND MOST RECENTLY SOURCING CIRCULAR SOLUTIONS BY 2022.

3. Develop a coherent waste strategy with bold goals and targets

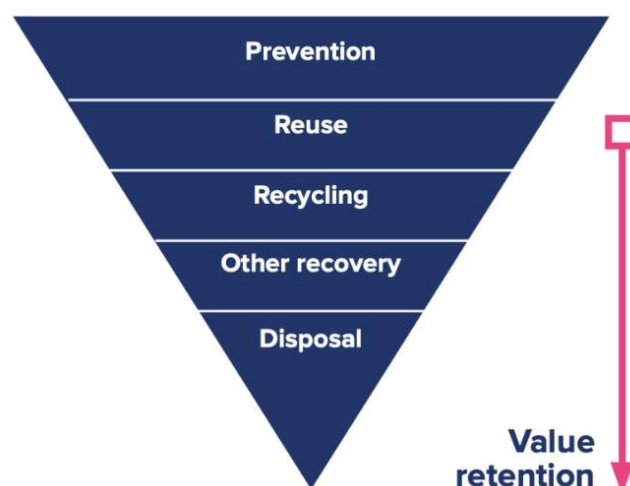
You then need to develop a coherent waste strategy to tackle the most significant waste streams and maximise your early results. Try and ensure that your strategy reflects the waste hierarchy, prioritising reduction then reuse and recycling.

Set yourself targets to help focus your organisation and colleagues on action and empower individuals to find solutions. You may find it helpful to set modest goals for the short term, whilst you test what's possible, and then increase the level of ambition.

DANSKE BANK HAS NOW MADE A PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO REDUCE ITS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY 50% BY 2030, SIGNIFICANTLY STEPPING UP ITS COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY. DANSKE HAS CREATED A DEDICATED HEAD OF CLIMATE RISK AND SUSTAINABILITY ROLE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THIS STRATEGY IN COLLABORATION WITH COLLEAGUES ACROSS THE BUSINESS.

Sky is aiming to achieve zero waste to landfill at their main offices by 2020 by, for example, reducing the amount of paper used at their sites by increasing the use of multifunctional devices and paperless transactions and using 100% recycled office paper, recycling 100% of food waste at their main offices by composting and anaerobic digestion methods and being best-in-class with the efficient use of natural resources across their operations.ⁱⁱ

The waste hierarchy



4. Work with your waste management supplier

A good recycling and waste management company will work with you and advise on what can be achieved with your business. Like any good supplier, they should be open and transparent when it comes to costs, available services, standards of service and end destinations of waste streams. Importantly, they should share your ambition.

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Asking the right questions can help to challenge your business and your supplier to begin to progress from waste to wealth.

1. How can I reduce the amount of waste my business creates?
2. Can you work with us on a waste audit to identify best opportunities to reduce, reuse and recycle?
3. Can we monitor/track what waste we are creating and where it is going for recycling or treatment?
4. How can you work with us to increase our recycling rates? Do you offer incentives to maximise recycling?
5. How many types of waste do you currently recycle?
6. Do your services include staff education, training and communications support?
7. Can our staff visit your Material Recycling or Recovery Facilities?
8. What accreditations do you hold?
9. What are you doing to minimise and reduce carbon emissions, and can you provide us with a carbon footprint of our waste management options?
10. Can you help me to work with my landlord/other tenants?



5. Collaboration is key

Once you have identified what needs to be done within your business, the next step is to identify the people that can help you push forward change and best practice.

Working with colleagues

Moving to a reduction and recycling-led system for your business waste will require support and engagement from people in specific roles, such as facilities or estates management, procurement, finance and cleaning teams. But there are also opportunities for wider employee engagement across the business. For example, engaging the right employees internally on waste, recycling, or material-specific (i.e. single-use plastics) audits and involving employees in the subsequent design, communication and implementation of waste management strategies, can improve broader employee engagement and maximise the chances of successful change.

Increasing staff awareness or nominating 'recycling champions' as part of your wider sustainability programmes can have a huge, positive impact on changing waste culture by getting staff involved in designing waste management in the workplace.

IN 2020, RECON WASTE MANAGEMENT LTD ACHIEVED THE TOP PERFORMING SMALL BUSINESS AWARD IN THE 2020 NI ENVIRONMENTAL BENCHMARKING SURVEY. ITS FOCUS IS WORKING TO SUPPORT LOCAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS WHERE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND LOCAL NEEDS HAVE BECOME INTERTWINED.

Recon's Legacy Garden project turned waste ground into a community play area for children in the local Derrymacash housing estate. The project got residents outdoors, working together and positively impacted the mental health and stress levels of both children and adults during a challenging period. local company, producing products from recycled materials, can give back to the community in ways which are beneficial for the growth and sustainability of that community.

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Working with suppliers

As part of your responsible supply chain activities, engaging with suppliers to enable and encourage better waste prevention, reuse and recycling should be an important part of your waste to wealth plans.

As part of its Going Circularⁱⁱⁱ programme, PwC has collaborated with suppliers to buy items that are designed for disassembly and suppliers to remanufacture them.

For example, in 2018, it teamed up with KI Europe to convert 2,200 old filing cabinets^{iv} into new day storage lockers, reusing around 50% of the original materials, retaining 71 tonnes of steel and saving around 40% of the cost of buying new ones. Similarly, it has procured task chairs from OrangeBox for many years, enabling this staple of the office to be easily refurbished at the end of its first ten years, restoring it to excellent condition and re-guaranteeing it for a further ten years at a fraction of the cost of buying new ones.

PWC HAS BEEN WORKING WITH TIER ONE ASSET MANAGEMENT FOR OVER A DECADE, WHO SECURELY DATA CLEANSE AND REFURBISH THEIR OLD LAPTOPS ONCE THEY ARE NO LONGER SUITABLE FOR THE FIRM'S PURPOSES, AND RESELL THEM IN THE MARKET, PROVIDING PWC WITH A REVENUE OF UP TO £500,000 PER YEAR.

Working with communities

Getting involved in community recycling initiatives may help gain traction and engagement for your in-house recycling and waste management programmes. For example, linking up with local charity shops or enterprises may enable your employees to bring in pre-loved goods (such as toys, clothes, small electronics, or bric-a-brac) for reuse or resale (check that your scheme doesn't compete with local authority household recycling collections). Alternatively, there may be local business networks focusing on specific materials, such as office furniture refurbishment.

REFERENCES

ⁱ This factsheet has been created using content developed by Business in the Community UK
ⁱⁱ [environment-targets-to-2020.pdf \(skyassets.com\)](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ www.pwc.co.uk/goingcircular
^{iv} www.pwc.co.uk/lockstockbarrel