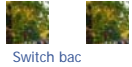




Subscribe | My Account | Login



Switch back to Jinae Szerentsits to use this social plugin.

Share

Email to a friend | Printable version | Article reprints

07/25/2011

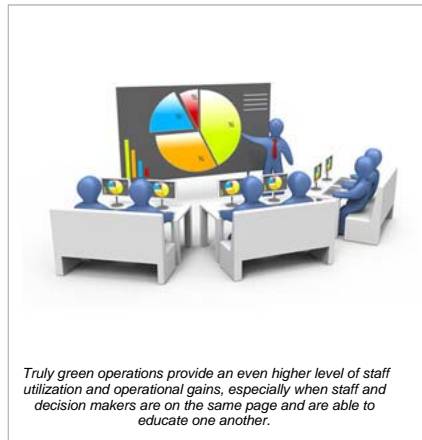
Bridging Green Goals and Implementation through Training

Without a comprehensive training program to support the larger concepts into moment-by-moment decisions in the trenches, a disconnect blocks the path to implementation

By Holly Brunk

The rewards of a [sustainable](#) facility are clear: [energy](#) and water conservation improve the bottom line; indoor environmental quality improves occupant health and productivity; and the market demand to locate in buildings with fewer environmental impacts is growing. It's no wonder that building owners and facility managers are creating initiatives for sustainable operations. Enthusiasm is a strong driver, but many great plans seem to remain exactly that – nothing more than plans. Without a comprehensive training program to support the larger concepts into moment-by-moment decisions in the trenches, a disconnect blocks the path to implementation.

Although the value of green operations is becoming clearer, the meaning of "green operations" remains elusive for many. It's more than disparate pieces of energy efficiency, water management, purchasing, materials' use, etc. Green operations deals with how these segments interact with one another throughout an organization and across a portfolio through systematic processes. In addition to systems efficiencies, truly green operations provide an even higher level of staff utilization and operational gains – especially when decision makers and staff are on the same page and able to educate one another. Without educating stakeholders about the who, what, why, and how of green operations, these benefits are unattainable. Training not only helps move organizational plans into action, but it can also help achieve operational and staff efficiencies.



Educating the Educated

Facility managers are the unsung heroes of green facilities. You're on the front line, initiating mandates with the expertise you've acquired and with intimate knowledge of your buildings and resources. Training is a partnership that should leverage your expertise and help you frame it in a new way toward green operations. Be willing to acknowledge what you don't know and reframe what you do know. For instance, you may have specific insights on your systems, policies, and procedures, but may not know how to translate that knowledge to a greener facility. Or you may be confident that you've improved operations but don't know how to measure or communicate it. An independent perspective can help with gap analysis and assessing opportunities along the way to achieve and substantiate operational savings.

Measurement Mess

One area that we've found training to have great affect is in helping managers and owners to understand better tracking and management of data to make well informed capital and operational investments. Many facility managers have various methods to measure data but grapple with how to make meaningful use of it. We've sat down with leading facility people from global corporations who present us with extensive data in the form of numerous Excel spreadsheets taped together. They've spent more than a year gathering information but don't really know what it means or what to do with it. No wonder they're struggling and haven't yet met their goals – they haven't identified any. Participating in training to develop meaningful goals and realistic action plans in order to meet them is essential in optimizing the use of your data.

Training must be framed in terms of your organization's and your specific department's strategic goals and what that means for you. As you drill down into measurement, you can ascertain if the data you're seeing will help reach your goals and answer important questions like: are you spending too much capital in a way that's not moving you fast enough towards your goals; and are your systems and equipment defaults working against your goals? If you aren't getting answers, you may need to re-evaluate if you are measuring the right set of data.

For instance, we worked recently with a facilities team responsible for a large portfolio. The team members had diligently measured energy costs associated with HVAC systems in several buildings and considered replacing some of them. They had not considered commissioning a few and measuring that test group against the others. Without comparative data, they couldn't assess their existing HVAC systems' optimal performance level and the potential value of commissioning their entire portfolio. They were trained on the process and saved several tens of thousands of dollars by foregoing equipment purchases, and commissioning all HVAC systems to significantly



Stay Connected



Related Articles

- A Method to the Madness
- Accelerate Your Facility Management Career
- 10th Annual ICE Challenge
- Shop Talk: 31 Expense-Slashing Solutions
- New Legislation Introduced for Training Federal Facilities Personnel

Upcoming Webinars

- **Case Studies in LEED-EB**
August 03, 2011
- **New Solutions to Daylighting**
September 07, 2011
- **Roofing Repair and Restoration**
September 13, 2011
- **Vegetated Roofs for Existing Buildings**
September 13, 2011
- **Capitalize on Roof Maintenance**
September 13, 2011
- **Integrate Solar Power into Your Roofing System**
September 13, 2011
- **Rating the Environmental Impacts and Energy Performance of Roofing Systems**
September 13, 2011

more



input from various players will help you to coordinate across vendors, staff, owners, operators, and occupants to ensure that goals are relevant and realistic. Ideally, you should have the opportunity to educate up to your managers and owners so that decision makers can design and mandate policies based on your knowledge from the field.

Every person that interacts with your organization – from owners, management, and facility staff to vendors and building occupants – is a stakeholder in greener operations. A comprehensive training program should be designed to ensure that everyone understands the overall process and where they fit within that process to get consistent results. For example, occupants might notice that cleaning crews service a floor every night that doesn't get daily use, which means they are throwing away half-empty trash can liners and using cleaning agents, water, and electricity that isn't necessary. If occupants know about your goals, they may suggest that a cleaning crew doesn't need to come in as often, which will generate savings.



Holly Brunk is the training manager at Green Building Services Inc. She coordinates and customizes green building and LEED training programs for clients across the globe. Holly can be reached at 866-743-4277 or

holly@greenbuildingservices.com.

The owners of one major event venue made it a priority to train each person in the organization about their initiatives. As a result, we found an employee in the stands informing event attendees about the compostable cup they were drinking out of, which bin to place it in for composting, and why that mattered. Training got the employee excited about the goals and gave her the ability to communicate them to others, which ensured adherence to the systems and helped her market the organization to others. When you are dealing with hundreds or thousands of people within your organization, creating excitement and engagement can be demanding. A comprehensive training program done throughout your organization can help get everyone on the same page, make each individual a system's thinker aligned with the overall system, and help people learn from one another to make [sustainability](#) goals a reality.



Switch back to Jinae Szerensits to use this social plugin.



Switch bac

Sponsored Links:

The only thing that precedes **Fluke's** highest standards of quality is our reputation for making the finest measurement tools in the world. See the new **Fluke P3 thermal imagers**.

The **Cushman 1600XD** 4x4 utility vehicle handles the toughest jobs with its 22-hp, 1,007cc three-cylinder OHV diesel engine. Visit www.cushman.com/1600XD for more details.

Lennox is the leading **HVAC supplier** to national businesses, helping organizations and their contractors simplify purchasing and get more out of their **HVAC investment**.

Waste Management provides environmental solutions that make your properties stand out. Custom-built solutions for every building. Every tenant.

BUILDINGSVIP: Join us for the **Smart Roofing Expo, LIVE** on Tuesday, September 13. It's **FREE, so register today** and join us on September 13!

Visit our Resource Center: **Download FREE Whitepapers, Case Studies and Catalogs**



- Home
- About
- Advertise
- Project Innovations Awards
- Product Innovations Awards
- BUILDINGS News Review
- Building Products
- Video
- Resource Center

Systems		
Access Control	Energy Management	Renewable Energy
Acoustics	Facades & Curtainwall	Renovation
Alternative Energy	Fire Protection	Roofing
Building Controls	Furniture	Security
Ceilings	Green Building Operations	Solar
Communications	HVAC	Sound Masking
Daylighting	Insulation	Steel
Digital Signage	Legislation & Codes	Vertical Transportation

- My Account
- RSS Feed
- Contact Us
- Subscribe
- Sitemap
- Privacy Statement
- Stamats Business Media
- Interiors & Sources

Disaster Preparation & Recovery	Life/Fire Safety Lighting	Walls Windows & Accessories
Doors	Lighting Controls	Wiring
Electrical	Pest Control	

©Copyright 2011 Stamats Business Media Inc. All rights reserved / BUILDINGS