

# Employee Conservation Programs that Deliver Results

Using “Community-Based Social Marketing” to enact  
Personal Environmental Responsibility



**December 4, 2008**

**SESHA**

# About A Nurtured World & Culture Technologies





## **A Nurtured World**

- Educational and research non-profit founded in 1997 in Austin, Texas
- Help individuals reduce their environmental impact, save money, and enhance satisfaction
- Build effectiveness of organizations and businesses in reducing environmental impacts

## **Culture Technologies**

- Management consulting firm founded in 2002
- Help organizations develop programs that deliver environmental performance and shift organizational culture
- Training, coaching and conflict resolution on environmental issues

# Our Programs



## A Nurtured World

- Consumer Environmental Education
- Curricula Development for Secondary School Teachers
- Rays of Hope
  - Providing home energy and water efficiency upgrades and solar installations for low income families
- Training and capacity building to implement effective consumer and business environmental programs

## Culture Technologies

- Executive, organizational and personnel coaching
- Coached EMS implementation
- Design and management of sustainability, employee conservation, and performance programs
- NEPT/ISO/EHS /Resource (energy, water, etc.) auditing
- EMS/EHS Training (Virtual/Face-to-face)

# Goals for Today



- Understand the value of well-designed Employee Conservation Programs
- Recognize the general barriers to participation
- Cover the 7 steps to implementing Employee Conservation Programs
- Discuss “Tools for Change”
- View two case studies

# Why have Employee Conservation Programs?



- Recruit and retain employees
- Bridge the divide between home and work
- Reduce operational costs
- Further your public image as an environmental steward

*“That which is not good for the beehive cannot be good for the bees.”* Marcus Aurelius

# Participation... What's the Secret?



Does knowledge change behavior?

Knowledge



Behavior Change

Does attitude determine behavior?

Attitude



Behavior

**Why?**

# 4 Reasons Why an Employee Would NOT Participate



1. Unaware of the program / activity
2. Know about the activity but the barriers are too great
3. No significant barriers to the new behavior but the existing behavior is too convenient
4. Their underlying views prevent participation

# Important Premises



- People gravitate to actions with few barriers and high benefits<sup>1</sup>
- Perceived barriers and benefits vary dramatically between individuals<sup>1</sup>
- One behavior always competes with another behavior<sup>1</sup>
- If underlying views/attitudes/organizational culture are not distinguished and commitments obtained, people will take action based on their hidden views and not their knowledge or attitude

# 7 Steps to Implementing an Employee Conservation Program



1. Choose a Program
2. Distinguish *internal* views/culture driving behaviors
3. Uncover the *external* barriers and benefits for each behavior
4. Develop a strategy to lower barriers and add benefits
5. Utilize commitments to get people to adopt different behaviors
6. Pilot the strategy
7. Implement the Program

# 1. Choose a Program



- Consider primary environmental impacts from typical employee behaviors
- Identify which are associated with...
  - Key organizational values
  - Significant operational costs
  - Regular employee inconveniences

# Examples of Employee Programs



**Energy  
Conservation**



**Alternative  
Transportation**



**Solid Waste  
Reduction**



**Water  
Conservation**



**Identifying opportunities for conservation!!**

# Programs are Composed of Several Behaviors



- Turning off lights
- Using programmable thermostats



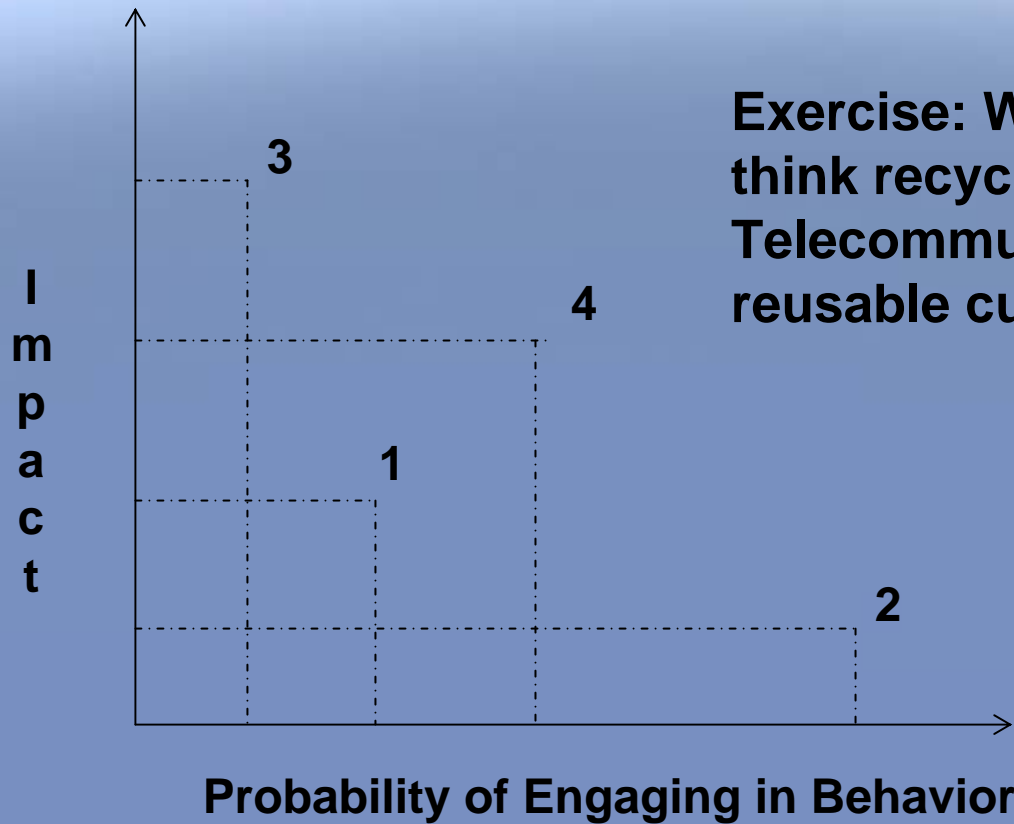
- Carpool - Vanpool
- Transit - Cycle
- Telecommute

- Recycling
- Bringing reusable cups
- Printing double-sided



- Bathroom use
- Break room use
- Reporting leaks

# Consider Impact & Probability of Behaviors



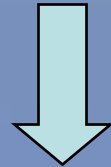
**Exercise: Where do you think recycling is?  
Telecommuting? Bringing reusable cups?**

## 2. Distinguish Internal Views and Culture Driving Behaviors

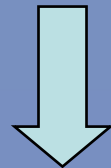


- Which *views* are leading to desirable behaviors and which are leading to undesirable behaviors?

**Views / Culture**



**Action**



**Results**

# 3. Uncover External Barriers & Benefits



- Do your homework
- Interview
  - Individuals doing the desired behavior and not doing it
- Hold focus groups (8-12 people per group)
  - Use a skilled Facilitator
  - Separate by those doing and not doing the behavior
  - Consider separating by male and female
- Survey
  - Ask targeted questions using a Likert scale
  - Provide incentives for completing the survey

# Don't Make Assumptions!



- Exercise: In order, list the top 3 Barriers and Motivators people cited to keeping their tires properly inflated

**WINNER GETS COPY OF “FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR”**

## **Barriers**

1. Can't remember
2. Don't have a gauge
3. Didn't know to even check

## **Benefits**

1. Safety
2. Longer lasting tires
3. Cost savings / fuel efficiency

# 4. Develop a Strategy for each Behavior



	Barriers	Benefits
Desired Behavior	↓	↑
Competing Behavior	↑	↓

# 4. Develop a Strategy for each Behavior - EXAMPLE



	Barriers	Benefits
Carpooling	Provide ride-matching ↓	Award \$1/day or enter into regular drawings ↑
Driving Alone	Designate best parking spaces for carpoolers ↑	Require payment for parking ↓

## 5. Utilize commitments to get different behaviors



- Commitments can help people shift their current view of themselves
- We want to be seen as honoring our word
- Remember...
  - Commitment is a key element of driving behavior change
  - Try to get it in writing and/or in a public setting
  - Do not coerce but rather encourage

## 6. Pilot the Program



- Choose a test group (i.e., employees in a specific building, floor, or department)
- If possible, get a baseline for current behavior
- Launch the program within the pilot group
- Get feedback on the launch and the Program
- Evaluate success
- Make adjustments before launching, or repeat Pilot if necessary

## 7. Launch the Program



- Market the Program and promote the launch event
- Hold the “kick-off”
  - Invite Partners if appropriate (Austin Energy, Solid Waste Department, CapMetro)
- Create short-term wins
- Measure, evaluate and promote results!

# TOOLS FOR CHANGE:

Data Gathering  
Incentives

Motivation  
Commitments

Norms  
Prompts



# Tools for Change



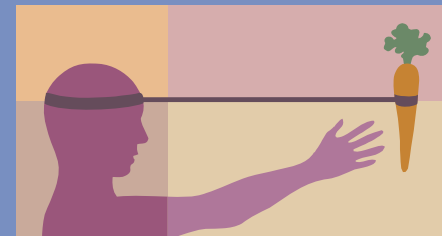
## 1. Data Gathering

- Literature review
- Observations
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus Groups



## 2. Incentives (& Disincentives)

- Financial rewards
  - Subsidies, gift cards
- Recognition
  - Awards, featured employees
- Discounts to Partnering organizations
  - Gift certificates, coupons
- Convenience benefits
  - preferred parking, work breaks

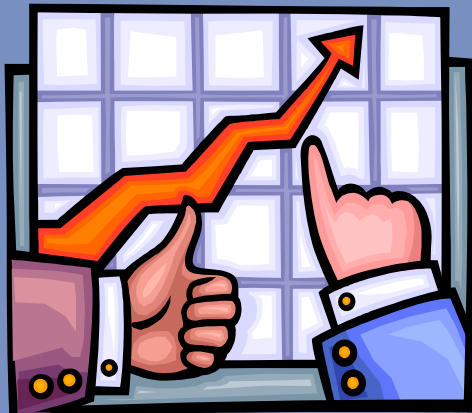


# Tools for Change (cont...)



## 3. Build Motivation

- Set goals / targets
- Create short-term wins
- Foster community
- Inspire continued success



## 4. Commitments

- Explain the power of commitment
- Request commitments
- [Ideally] Follow-up and measure results



# Tools for Change (cont...)



## 5. Norms

- Make invisible behaviors visible
  - Place buttons / stickers on cubes of employee who use alternative transportation
- Announce participation
- Integrate corporate values



## 6. Prompts

- Incorporate into Program name/slogan
- Provide regular reminders
- Hold occasional events
- Be noticeable
- Use positive language



# Case Studies



# AMD's Commuter Benefits Program



- Former Program – “Commuter Solutions”
  - 75 - 85 Austin participants per month
  - Avoided ~10,000 miles of driving per month
- New Program – “Go Green”
  - 140 -150 Austin participants per month
  - Avoids ~44,000 miles of driving per month
- Difference
  - 46% increase in the number of Austin participants
  - 77% increase in Austin miles avoided, employee savings, emission reductions, and fuel conservation

# Tools Used at AMD



- **Surveyed employees**
  - provided incentive for completing survey
  - 39% response rate
- **Overcoming Specific Barriers**
  - Ex: Ride-matching, route-finding, ease of use
- **Providing Financial Incentives**
  - Weekly and quarterly cash drawings
- **Building Motivation Over Time**
- **Establishing Norms**
- **Obtaining Commitments**
- **Sending Weekly Prompts / Personalized Communication**
  - Alternative transportation tips, jokes and articles

# Red Robin Restaurants – Energy Conservation Project



- Used change tools
  - Interviews, barrier elimination, incentives, prompts and norms
- Management “walked-the-walk” with employees
- Trained employees on how to...
  - Use programmable thermostats
  - Reduce outside and inside light use
  - Turn off unused equipment when applicable
  - Identify new ways to reduce utility usage

**Result... 12% 1<sup>st</sup> year reduction in energy use**

# What You Learned Today...



- Employee conservation programs can add great value when designed effectively
- Employees with desired knowledge and attitude does not mean they will do the desired behavior
- Lack of participation is due to 1) the program not being known, 2) a barrier to participation exists or 3) a competing behavior is prevailing
- A structure and set of tools for implementing an employee conservation program
- Proof of results from applying these methods

# Questions?

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