



What Not to Do... In Waste Management

Energy management professionals usually define themselves as 'wearing many hats', which makes the profession interesting and dynamic but also requires an all-round knowledge and experience in key subjects. Whilst there is a plethora of information available out there in each topic, there are only so many hours in the day that can be devoted to reading and research.



Have you ever wondered what is the one thing that you should avoid doing when looking for a new supplier, undertaking a waste audit or setting energy management goals? The EMA will be looking at key areas of energy management and asking those who focus on those areas at their organisations. In the last issue, we tackled what not to do in energy procurement and in this issue, we have focussed on waste management.

Paul Graham – Utilities, Waste and Sustainability Manager at Kingston Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

When mapping waste streams, you should never ever take people's word for what happens to each stream. It's much better to follow the waste through the process and observe the whole thing.

When undertaking waste audit, you should never ever let your

emotions about bad practice you see stop you from seeing the good practice. It's easy to get into a very negative mindset when auditing but to engage effectively with staff you should sandwich criticism between praise and encouragement. Don't shout at people (however much you may want to) - find a better outlet for your frustration away from the situation, we need to keep people positive about good practice.

When setting waste targets, you should never ever go too big or too small with your goals. Aim for something achievable but challenging. This way it will feel like an achievement if you get there (unlike an easy target) and won't be impossible.

When structuring a waste management strategy, you should never ever write it for you. I might find a long, complicated document satisfying to produce but it's easy to lose focus on how this document will serve my organisation. Keep it short, easy to read and useful to the people

you want to read it. Use relevant illustrations and charts to break up text, make your core messages clear and try to establish a flow of ideas across the whole document so people get your big idea or theme by the end and come away knowing what they can do to make it happen. Check in with the senior management team to see what they want to prioritise.

When measuring waste data, you should never ever think you can capture everything or that everything is worth capturing.

Only gather data that is actually useful and can be collected without excessive resourcing. Ask: 'Will the data you want to collect enable improvements to services or costs?'

When reporting waste data, you should never ever use over-optimistic assumptions, especially on recycling. Assuming that all the bulky waste in your skip is recycled or that 100% of the material in your mixed recycling scheme is recycled may come back to bite you. Most suppliers can

provide average proportions for their disposal facility, if not for your waste specifically. It's sometimes better to under-state than to have to write-down your recycling rates in the future because your assumptions were wrong.

When choosing a waste service provider, you should never ever not visit their disposal sites before sending them your first batch of waste.

In healthcare, we are always encouraged to check up on what happens to our waste. Regular visits can seem like a bit of a chore but it's one of the easiest ways to maintain compliance with the Duty of Care regulations. It can also be quite interesting to see how sites develop over time. We're seeing a lot of interest and innovation in waste at the moment and it helps keep you up to date with what your suppliers are doing.

When procuring for multiple sites or as a collaborative partnership with other organisations, you

should never ever assume all sites will receive the same price (unless you specify in the tender that prices should be averaged across them all).

Waste is more complicated than you think and it's important to specify up front what you want from the service. Is it just collection from a single point per site, do you need them to include moving waste around the site or collecting from multiple areas within a site, do you expect an onsite presence, training, monitoring/auditing, etc.

You may wish to do a more Competitive Dialogue procedure following the award where the best solution for each site/organisation is worked out in collaboration with the supplier. Otherwise, you should spend a lot of time and energy before the tender to define the exact service you want/need and what elements are a must have, should have or nice to have. There are many variables and you can either specify all of them up front or be ready for a lot of back and forth clarifications.

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Ethan O'Brien, Group Energy Manager at Klöckner Pentaplast

When mapping waste streams, you should never ever forget about the intangible waste streams in any organisation. The true cost of waste is not just the cost of taking it away. It's often buried in processes, practices and time that create waste in the first place. Use Lean Six Sigma tools and Value Stream Mapping to think about waste in its widest sense.

When structuring a waste management strategy, you should never ever think that anyone – at any level in an organisation – is too small or insignificant to make a difference.

Waste management is a particularly iconic, visible and tangible example of the impact businesses and people

have on the planet. Engaging your people can make all the difference. Individual change becomes a catalyst for discussion and promotes change in others. For the doubters that remain, ask them why they think improving productivity is a bad idea.

When implementing a waste management plan, you should never ever fail to connect two operations that are usually distinct – procurement of waste contracts and managing their ongoing delivery.

Typically, managers in the procurement part of the organisation focus on buying services at the lowest possible price; whereas sustainability managers elsewhere are working to reduce waste and improve efficiency. Coordinating both activities can save money, reduce risk and improve overall outcomes.

Anita Leite, Estates Energy and Waste Officer at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

When setting waste targets, you should never ever do it without having a way of calculating/showing your progress. In many hospitals (in my area of expertise) it is common that targets are set without having a way of checking the progress.

When structuring a waste management strategy, you should never ever make it too long and complicated.

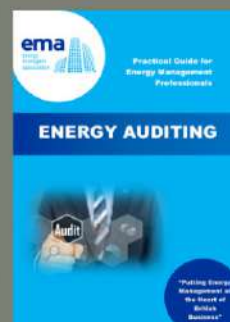
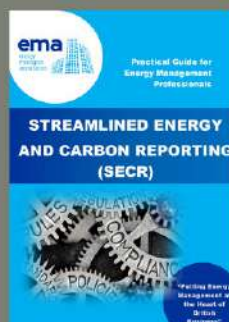
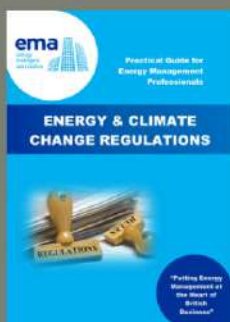
It is normal that the person writing it is the one with the best knowledge regarding that subject. This could turn the strategy very hard to understand for people that are not expert on that. The strategy should be simple and easy to understand by everyone, otherwise it will be harder to implement it.

When measuring waste data, you should never ever forget to introduce the assumptions that were made and the boundaries.

The strategy, the data collection, the waste policy must have a boundary and scope. You need to know where that data comes from and what is included.

When choosing a waste service provider, you should never ever forget to ask how they will share and collect the data you need.

As a waste manager it is important that you have data regarding how much waste is collected and where does it go. Some companies are very bad on sharing data the way that you need.



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