By The Energy Managers Association

Take a Proactive Approach to Upskilling

No week goes by without a reminder of the UK's longstanding skills and productivity challenges. Employers across all sectors, including energy, are facing skills shortages, and some of the workforce feel they lack the skills they need. But – worst of all – they may not be supported by employers who encourage or invest in their professional skills' development.

Investment by employers in upskilling their energy managers is a mixed picture, according to the findings of one of our past surveys. Among our respondents, over 21% receive no professional development funding from their employers, and a further 26% receive less than £1,000 per year to upskill. Given the ever-evolving nature of energy management and the expanding role of energy managers, this is a significant flaw, one that requires a proactive approach and attention from corporate learning and development teams, those planning next year's budgets and individuals working in our industry.

Energy Management Skills

Pairing individuals with the right upskilling options can almost always unlock new opportunities and improved practices. However, more needs to be done to match training opportunities with the demand for the right energy management knowledge and skills. Good energy management practices cannot be learned overnight or even within six months. The learning journey certainly doesn't end with attending a handful of courses or achieving professional status or membership either.

The intricacies of energy management – from understanding what it is, what it means, and what it represents across organisations, to knowing what energy managers do, what technical and non-technical capabilities are required, and what knowledge and skills are essential to conduct energy audits and assessments, manage and implement reduction projects, grasp regulatory requirements, plan and deliver Net Zero strategies, and influence (and often inspire) stakeholders – are just a few of the considerations when seeking to deliver meaningful work and achieve energy and carbon reductions.

At the EMA, we aim to ensure that those attending our courses gain applicable, practical knowledge, skills and ideas. Learners are encouraged to bring up their own challenges and practices during training, ask questions relevant to their organisation's energy management setting, and truly find and learn about solutions that are right for them.

Our aspiration to increase knowledge, skills and expertise aligns with the goal of increasing pay grades and ensuring that skilled professionals are retained across organisations and can match the external expertise of energy management technology and service providers.

In this way, individuals' course attendance not only benefits their professional development but also enhances the organisation or clients they work for.

Energy Management Means Lifelong Learning

Learning and development isn't just for those entering energy management as novices – many roles, careers and practices change over time, and in the case of energy management, often within a very short period. Those involved need consistent upskilling.

Worryingly, we found that only 6% of our respondents are required to complete professional development driven by their employer's requirements. The picture improves somewhat when we look at other drivers of professional development activities, such as the need to maintain professional recognition or an individual's aspiration to stay up to date with the industry. Let's

remain optimistic – and some early signs and industry progress already suggest this – that many more employers will recognise the importance of investing in upskilling their workforce as crucial to boosting their energy management practices.

If you are an individual looking to understand what capabilities you need as an energy management professional, or how you, your colleagues, or your workforce measure up against the skills norms set by the energy management industry, we share the range of skills that would be expected of those in energy management. The EMA recommends embedding a range of core and ancillary energy and carbon management competencies within all organisations, and these are as follows:

Core competencies:

- **Technical and Operational** – By understanding all types of energy equipment and systems found on site, energy management professionals can identify techniques for energy and carbon savings. This competency represents approximately 40% of any energy and carbon management practices.

Upskilling options:
Fundamentals of Energy Management course
Energy Management in Building Services course
Lighting – Basic Understanding course
Essential HVAC Control and Optimisation course

- **Energy Auditing /Assessments** – By understanding and being able to conduct onsite audits (also incl. a plant room), energy management professionals can identify poorly performing or inefficient equipment that would benefit from optimisation, upgrade or replacement and results in energy efficiency and energy and carbon reduction.

Upskilling options:
Energy Auditing Techniques course

- **Energy Monitoring, Targeting and Validation** – By understanding and conducting data analysis (analysing utility bills, meter readings, energy management system reports, etc), interpreting and monitoring energy consumption data regularly, energy management professionals can identify patterns, trends, anomalies and areas of inefficiency in organisation and support development and implementation of energy conservation measures.

Upskilling options:
Energy Monitoring, Targeting and Validation course

- **Regulation, Compliance and Voluntary Schemes** – Energy regulations and their compliance and reporting requirements have an impact on organisation's operations. Some legislative demands can be sector specific but understanding the most significant ones such as SECR, MEES or ESOS helps energy management professionals to identify their applicability and boundaries to their operations and stay up-to-date with ever changing regulatory landscape.

Upskilling options:
SECR Compliance course
Become an ESOS Lead Assessor course

- **Carbon Management** – By understanding carbon emissions scopes, carbon footprinting, measuring and tracking carbon emissions accurately, professionals can set reduction targets aligned with international standards, and implement initiatives that reduce the footprint and mitigate environmental impact.

Upskilling options:
Net Zero Fundamentals and Strategies course
Calculating Carbon Footprint – Scopes 1, 2 and 3 workshop

- **Behavioural Change, Motivation and Communication** - Implementing and communicating energy management processes and their impact on operational practices can be significantly challenging. All stakeholders, regardless their position within the organisation could play a pivotal part in improving energy management practices. By understanding people's behaviours, actions and attitudes, energy professionals can ensure the success of any energy and carbon reduction initiative.

Upskilling options:
Understanding and Delivering Behavioural Change course

- **Energy Management Strategy and Plan** – By understanding typical energy and carbon management

strategies and plans, and what Net Zero can mean for an organisation and what routes to take to achieve it, energy management professionals can prepare plans and strategies that organisations can adopt and follow.

Upskilling options:

Reaching Net Zero course

- **Energy Procurement** - Energy procurement represents one of the most critical areas of organisational energy management, and understanding its risks, uncertainties and opportunities can lead to adopting correct procurement strategies and identifying savings.

Upskilling options:

Energy Procurement course

- **Onsite Electricity Generation** - By understanding the varying on-site generation technologies, their suitability for implementation, income streams, ongoing costs and grid connection requirements, which can be complex and are different for every site, energy professionals and their organisations can use on-site generation of electricity to reduce grid consumption and reliance on fossil fuel.

Upskilling options:

Onsite Electricity Generation course

- **Business Case Development** – By understanding business case development for energy and carbon reduction projects, energy management professionals can identify their requirements, feasible solutions, payback methods and typical periods, how to scope any project and estimate costs, identify benefits and alignment with wider organisations' strategies and any available funding streams and financing options.

Upskilling options:

Business Case Development in Energy Management course

- **Energy Project Design and Delivery** – Energy management projects have a clear commercial case which informs the design of any project. Energy manager's core role is a design of project and therefore they require to understand the relevant energy efficiency concept, required steps to bring it into reality in their organisation, tendering, commissioning and demonstration of project outcomes.

Upskilling options:

Energy Project Implementation and Management course

- **Energy Budget Management** – Sound budget management knowledge and skills allow for identifying energy deviations, aggregate financial and market data, monitor the ROI of investments and control of billing.

- **Leadership** – Leadership in energy management is connected to all stages of professional development. Leadership is demonstrated through motivating others, assessing performance of staff, acting as a mentor as well as influencing sustainable actions and resource efficiency within the organisation and wider sector.

Upskilling options:

Contribute to the EMA initiatives

Become a Mentor - email us

Ancillary Competencies:

- **Water Management** - Water use within buildings and processes is very often a grey area for those dealing with building operations but the focus on how water is metered and monitored and how to analyse consumption and carry out a basic water audit can lead to identifying likely areas of consumption and techniques that may allow reductions in water consumed.

Upskilling options:

Water Management course

- **Waste Management** - Essential knowledge of mapping waste streams, undertaking waste auditing, identifying improvement opportunities, and setting SMART waste targets and KPIs, as well as measurement, monitoring and reporting techniques relevant to waste data help organisations to develop more waste efficient practices.

Upskilling options:

Waste Management course

- **Energy Efficient Transport** – Fuel emissions can be significant contributors to organisation's carbon footprint and reviewing transport use and related operations, and

embedding fuel efficient practices, can significantly reduce emissions.

Upskilling options:

Reducing Fuel, Electricity and Carbon Emissions in Fleets workshop

Fleet Management guide

- **Information & Communications Technology** – IT assets and operations are often ignored in energy and carbon management strategies but for some organisations with research and data centre facilities, their energy consumption can represent a significant proportion of costs and emissions.

If you wish to discuss your energy management upskilling or your team's analysis of energy and carbon management skills or wish to recruit energy managers, please contact us with your requirements.

For detailed requirements of each of the mentioned competencies, read the Energy Manager Skills Mapping document.