April 2024

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SUSTAINABILITY

Our roadmap to empowering teams to drive the sustainable change

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INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of the ideal approach to engage employees in Sustainability within corporations is a common quest. Every company shares the aspiration not only to engage and motivate their workforce but also to sustain that engagement over the long term. However, achieving this objective is far from straightforward. It requires a nuanced understanding of each company's unique culture and the implementation of engagement strategies tailored to fit. After all, expecting every individual to be fully engaged and motivated in the company's sustainability goals and ambitions just because they're employed is unrealistic.

At its essence, employee engagement is a reciprocal process, with trust serving as the cornerstone. Trust relies heavily on awareness of the company's strategy and ambition, as well as the clarity and transparency with which the company communicates about them. It's only when trust is established that employees genuinely feel connected and committed to their roles.

In this e-book, we'll delve into engagement strategies crafted to effectively connect companies's sustainability ambition with their workforce, accompanied by practical examples for real-world application. Recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, we encourage companies to selectively adopt and adapt approaches that align with their unique context and values.

I - THE ROLE OF LEADERS

The sustainability journey that each employee is called to experience requires more than just a set of policies; it demands a culture shift that begins with leadership and permeates through every level of an organization. This cultural transformation can only be achieved through a concerted effort in creating awareness and fostering a sense of ownership among employees regarding the organization's sustainability goals.

Leading by example

The effectiveness of any sustainable development strategy significantly depends on its endorsement and actions by the organization's leaders. CEOs and top managers are pivotal in this regard, as their commitment to sustainability sets a tone that inspires the entire workforce. When leaders actively support and prioritize sustainability initiatives, it sends a clear message to employees that sustainability is a core value of the organization.

By leading by example, leaders not only make the organization's sustainability ambitions credible but also demonstrate the tangible actions and behaviors expected of every employee.
In this discussion, we'll explore how CEOs can lead by example and make a tangible impact on climate action by integrating different approaches into their strategies.

1. HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN LEADERSHIP

Human-Centered Design (HCD), stands as a leadership approach prioritizing people in problem-solving and decision-making processes, emphasizing empathy, co-creation, and iterative experimentation. Leaders, specifically CEOs, can employ HCD principles in addressing climate action by **engaging employees**, **customers**, and **stakeholders** in identifying and tackling sustainability challenges. By embracing diverse perspectives, leaders can collect valuable insights and collaborate to devise solutions that are pertinent, practical, and impactful.

Leaders can set an example in implementing HCD leadership by fostering an atmosphere of **innovation and experimentation** within their organizations. They can deploy platforms for employees to contribute ideas and perspectives on climate action, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Additionally, they can allocate resources and budget towards sustainability initiatives, offering essential support and investment for innovation and experimentation aimed at climate impact.

Moreover, leaders can exemplify sustainable behaviors, **serving as a role model** for their organization and stakeholders. By showcasing a dedication to sustainability in their actions and decision-making, they can inspire and encourage employees to do the same. Whether through reducing their carbon footprint, embracing sustainable business practices, or advocating for climate policy changes, leaders can demonstrate that sustainability is not merely a buzzword but a fundamental value guiding their leadership and choices.

2. SOCIAL NORMS

A crucial concept in behavioral science is the influence of social norms. People often mimic behaviors they observe in their social group. Leaders can harness this by fostering a culture of sustainability within their organizations and presenting **sustainable behaviors as the norm**. For instance, they can acknowledge and reward employees who engage in sustainability actions, such as conserving resources or using sustainable transportation. By spotlighting and reinforcing positive behaviors, leaders can inspire others to follow suit.

Another important concept is the **impact of defaults**. People tend to stick with the default option as it demands less effort. Top managers can establish sustainable practices as the default choice within their organizations, simplifying the adoption of sustainable behaviors for employees. For instance, they can implement automatic energy-saving settings on office equipment or eliminate paper bins to discourage printing . By making sustainable choices the default, leaders can facilitate the adoption of environmentally friendly practices.

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3. APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry offers a positive, strength-based approach to change, focusing on identifying and amplifying what works well within an organization.

Leaders can lead by example in applying appreciative inquiry by **actively acknowledging and appreciating employees who contribute to climate action initiatives**. This can be achieved through various channels such as employee recognition programs, internal communications, and public acknowledgments. By highlighting employees' sustainability efforts, CEOs can inspire others to join in, creating a positive ripple effect throughout the organization.

Furthermore, companies' leaders can encourage employees to share their best practices and success stories related to sustainability initiatives. This can be facilitated through regular team meetings, workshops, or other collaborative tools where employees can exchange experiences, insights, and lessons learned.

Not only. Leaders can create networks or platforms similar to 2030 Builders, facilitating collaborative sessions where employees can generate action ideas or submit challenges. This fosters a sense of community and shared purpose among the workforce.
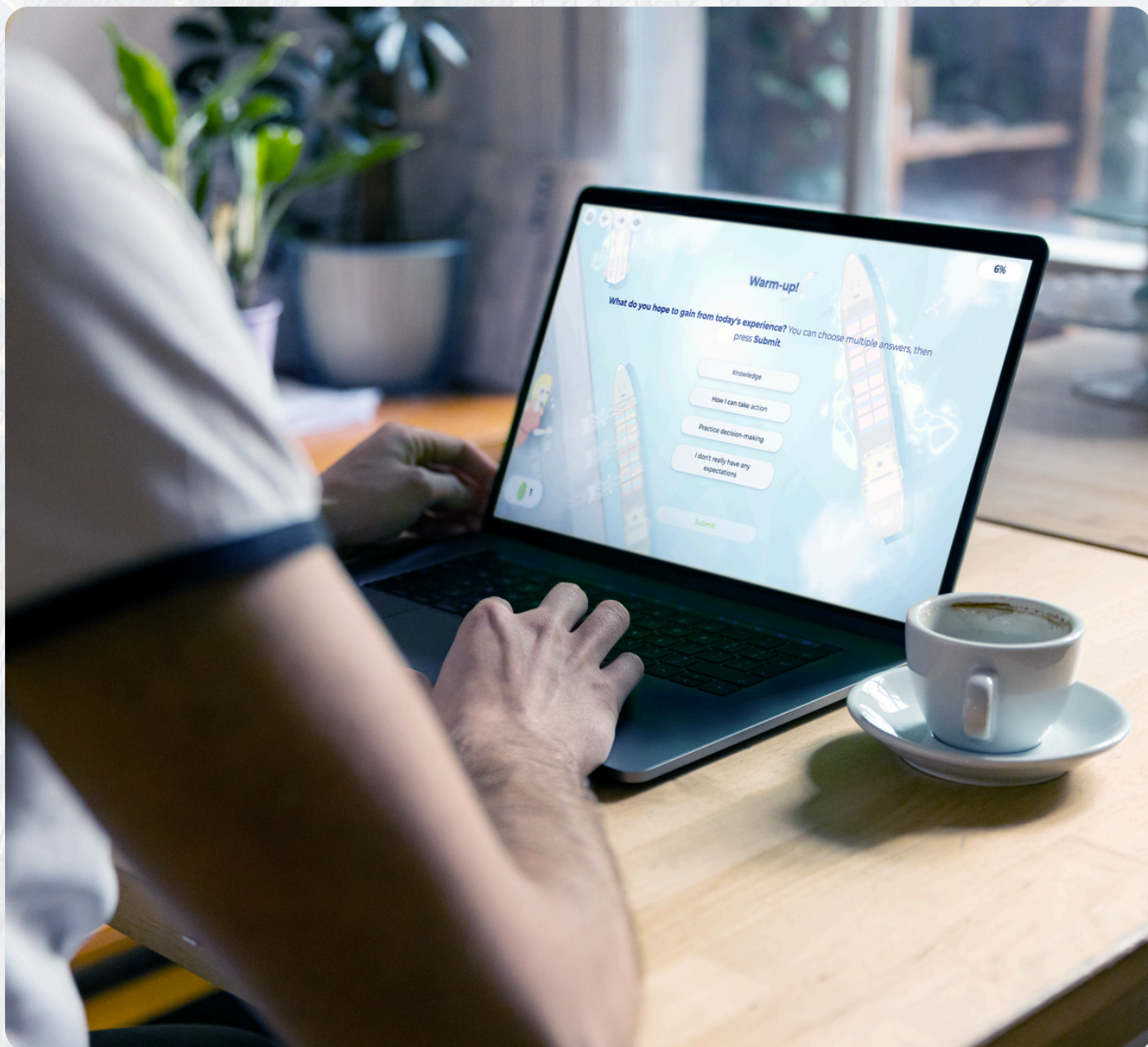
Clarifying the Sustainability objectives and strategies and connect these with Companies' values

Management needs to make sure that the strategy of the company and the sustainability efforts are aligned. Often we see divergence, which of course makes the sustainability efforts fragile, lacking real commitment and prioritization. A well-articulated sustainable development strategy, understood by all, is crucial in guiding the organization's efforts. This clarity provides employees with a clear direction and helps align their daily activities with the broader environmental goals. It's about breaking down the overarching vision into actionable and relatable objectives that resonate with every team member's role within the company.

A good example is a fast-moving consumer goods company's program called Planet Positive. It is designed to give more than the company takes from the planet through plans to protect and regenerate 1.5 million hectares of land, forests, and oceans by 2030. The company says that it has more land than it already uses to grow the renewable ingredients included in its beauty and personal care product range. By 2025, the company says any plastic used in its packaging will be recyclable, reusable, or compostable.

An organization's core values are the bedrock of its identity and operations. By aligning these values with sustainability ambitions, companies can ensure that their environmental efforts are not seen as separate or external initiatives but as intrinsic aspects of their operational ethos. This alignment is vital for fostering genuine engagement and ownership among employees, as it demonstrates how sustainability efforts are a reflection of the organization's fundamental beliefs.

A 2030 Builders Success Story

By ensuring that sustainability goals are clearly defined and connected to the company's values, **Airbus** has successfully cultivated an environment where every employee feels responsible for contributing to the organization's sustainability initiatives. The collaboration between Airbus and 2030 Builders to introduce our employee sustainability platform underscores the effectiveness of this **top-down communication.** At Airbus, town hall meetings were regularly convened for the launch of each topic included in the platform's learning session, during which the sustainability teams elucidated how each topic covered in the education path aligned with the company's ambitions and objectives. This model of engagement is a blueprint for other companies striving to integrate sustainability into their operational framework, demonstrating that when awareness is created and ownership is fostered, achieving sustainability goals becomes a shared and attainable mission.

Transparency as a pre-condition!

Transparency enables effective stakeholder engagement. When leaders openly share information about the sustainability strategy and its linkage to the company's goals and values, stakeholders feel included and informed. This fosters a sense of ownership and encourages active participation in driving sustainability efforts forward.

When leaders openly communicate the sustainability strategy and how they want to implement it, this demonstrates a commitment to honesty and integrity, laying the foundation for trust-based relationships. A transparent communication enhances the credibility of the company. By providing employees with clear and accurate information about sustainability initiatives, leaders reinforce the authenticity of their commitment to sustainability, which enhances the company's reputation.

Transparency also helps leaders to define roles. For sustainability efforts to be genuinely effective, employees must see a direct link between their roles and the company's sustainability ambitions. This connection encourages employees to integrate sustainable practices into their professional, contributing to the company's goals through tangible actions.

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II - INVOLVING ALL LEVELS OF THE COMPANY

While senior management sets the tone and direction, it's the middle managers or team leaders who serve as key players in propagating and embedding sustainability principles throughout the company. For sustainability to permeate every facet of an organization, it must become ingrained in its DNA, embraced by employees at all levels. This is where the crucial role of middle managers comes into play. Middle managers act as the vital conduits between top management and frontline employees. They possess the ability to translate high-level sustainability goals into tangible actions that resonate with teams on the ground.

Message Transmission and Knowledge Sharing:

Middle managers are responsible for disseminating the sustainability vision down the organizational hierarchy. **Regular update meetings, targeted communications, and training sessions are effective tools** for keeping teams informed and engaged. By providing clear direction and sharing relevant knowledge, middle managers ensure that sustainability goals are understood and embraced by all.

Creating Networks of Change Agents:

In addition to their managerial duties, middle managers can spearhead the formation of networks of change agents within the organization. These may include sustainability ambassadors or advocates—individuals who passionately believe in the cause and are eager to champion it within their respective teams. These change agents serve as catalysts for driving sustainable change, promoting awareness, and inspiring others through their actions and advocacy efforts.

Equipping Managers with Tools and KPIs:

To effectively cascade the sustainability message, middle managers and ambassadors must be equipped with the necessary tools and resources. This includes training programs, communication materials, and performance metrics tailored to sustainability goals. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to sustainability can help track progress, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate successes along the journey.

Motivation and Engagement:

Middle managers play a pivotal role in keeping employees motivated and invested in sustainability initiatives. By assigning meaningful tasks aligned with sustainability objectives and providing regular feedback, they instill a sense of ownership and accountability among team members. Recognition and rewards for sustainable practices further reinforce desired behaviors and attitudes.

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III - THE FUN FACTOR: THE POWER OF GAMIFICATION

Gamification refers to the use of game design elements, mechanics, and principles in non-game contexts, such as education or training. When applied to eLearning, which is the use of electronic technologies to facilitate learning, gamification can enhance engagement, motivation, and knowledge retention among learners.

By incorporating elements like points, badges, leaderboards, challenges, and rewards into learning courses, educators can make the learning experience more interactive, immersive, and enjoyable. Learners often respond positively to gamified content because it taps into their natural inclination for competition, achievement, and progression.

To foster lasting engagement and boost employee motivation, introducing gamification into work processes and specifically into professional training can be a truly effective strategy for companies. This approach integrates gaming elements into the work context and aims to transform everyday tasks into more engaging and immersive experiences. Gamification has once again proven to be an effective way of increasing a learner's motivation to participate in training. According to Taylor & Francis, 67% of students found gamified courses to be more motivating than traditional course delivery techniques.

TOVAH WILDE, Seasalt
Performance & Development Manager

"2030 Builders supported us in creating a bespoke game that spoke to our sustainability strategy. Participants really enjoyed sharing ideas and an opportunity to come together and discuss. The report has been very useful and will play a key role in shaping our sustainability education approach."

Probably no
11%

Probably yes
89%
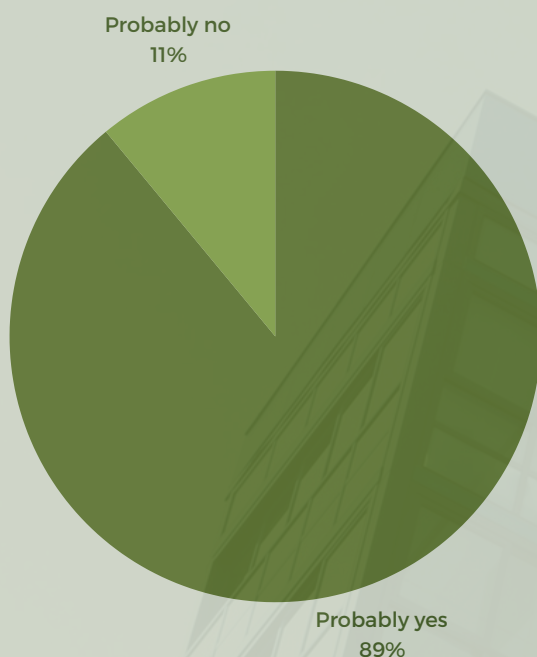
Employee's opinion on gamification increasing productivity at work in the United States as of 2019

Numbers can prove that gamification is good !

80% of US workers find game-based learning to be a more engaging form of education.

The implementation of this method has also been found to have a positive impact, with companies reporting that using games as part of their learning strategy increased **employee engagement by 60%** and **productivity by 50%**.

89% of employees said they would be more productive if their job was made more fun (be it learning or operational tasks)

Gamification appears to be a must-have for any staff education programme. This increased level of engagement is even more desirable in light of European CEO research, which showed that poor employee engagement **causes 50% of business transformation** programmes to fail.

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The 15 + 5 benefits of gamification

By infusing elements of game design into sustainability training programs, organizations are not only enhancing employee engagement and motivation but also driving meaningful behavior change towards more eco-friendly practices.

1   **Increased Engagement:** Gamified training captures learners' attention and keeps them actively involved in the learning process.

2   **Enhanced Motivation:** Game-like features such as rewards, badges, and leaderboards motivate employees to participate and excel in training activities.

3   **Improved Learning Retention:** The interactive nature of gamified training enhances information retention and recall among employees.

4   **Personalized Learning Paths:** Gamification allows for adaptive learning experiences tailored to individual employee needs and preferences.

5   **Cost-Effectiveness:** Gamified training can be more cost-effective than traditional training methods, reducing the need for expensive in-person workshops or materials.

6   **Scalability:** Gamified training can easily scale to accommodate a large number of employees across different locations and time zones.

7   **Real-Time Feedback:** Employees receive immediate feedback on their performance, allowing them to make adjustments and improvements in real-time.

8   **Competency Development:** Gamified training helps employees develop and strengthen specific skills and competencies required for their roles.

9   **Promotion of Teamwork:** Gamification fosters a spirit of competition and collaboration among employees, encouraging teamwork and knowledge sharing.

10   **Alignment with Business Objectives:** Gamified training can be designed to align with organizational goals and objectives, ensuring that employees develop the skills and knowledge necessary to drive business success.

11   **Data-Driven Insights:** Gamified training platforms generate valuable data on employee performance and engagement, allowing organizations to identify trends, measure ROI, and make data-driven decisions.

12   **Continuous Learning Culture:** Gamification promotes a culture of continuous learning and development within the organization, encouraging employees to actively seek out new knowledge and skills.

13   **Employee Satisfaction and Retention:** Employees are more likely to be satisfied and engaged with their work when they have access to engaging and rewarding training experiences, which can contribute to higher retention rates.

14   **Adaptation to Learning Styles:** Gamified training can accommodate different learning styles and preferences, catering to the diverse needs of employees.

15   **Brand Building:** Well-designed gamified training programs can enhance the organization's brand image by showcasing a commitment to innovation, employee development, and engagement

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In addition to these benefits, gamified sustainability training offers unique advantages that specifically target environmental consciousness and drive positive change within organizations. Let's delve into these five additional benefits:

5 benefits

16 **Behavior Change:** By incorporating game mechanics such as challenges, simulations, and rewards, gamified sustainability training encourages employees to adopt sustainable behaviors and habits, such as reducing energy consumption, minimizing waste, and promoting eco-friendly practices.

17 **Compliance and Regulations:** Gamified sustainability training ensures that employees are knowledgeable about relevant environmental regulations and compliance requirements, reducing the risk of non-compliance and associated penalties.

18 **Employee Empowerment:** Gamification empowers employees to take ownership of sustainability initiatives within the organization by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and motivation needed to implement and champion sustainable practices in their daily work routines.

19 **Measurable Impact:** Gamified sustainability training allows organizations to track and measure the impact of their sustainability initiatives more effectively. By collecting data on employee engagement, behavior change, and environmental outcomes, organizations can demonstrate the tangible benefits of their sustainability efforts and make data-driven decisions for continuous improvement.

20 **Community Building:** Gamification fosters a sense of community and collaboration among employees around sustainability goals. Through team-based challenges, leaderboards, and peer recognition, employees are encouraged to work together towards common sustainability objectives, strengthening relationships and promoting a culture of collective responsibility.

Why is gamification so effective?

Mission gamification is based on the psychology of play to make everyday tasks more interactive and fun, resulting in better performance and job satisfaction. When applied to the workplace, it satisfies important psychological needs such as independence, enjoyment, and social connectedness.

According to a survey conducted by TalentLMS, 83% of employees who have undergone gamified training feel motivated and satisfied with their organization, while only 61% of employees who have undergone traditional training feel tired and unproductive at work.

Did you know that?

Like board or video games, gamification releases feel-good hormones such as dopamine. This release of dopamine reinforces the behavior that led to the pleasurable experience, making us more likely to repeat it in the future.

89%
"Feel more productive"

How does gamification influence employees?

88%
"Feel happier at work"

Under the spotlight

To illustrate, let's take the example of a famous music platform. They launched a gamified training program for their developers. Each time a developer completes a training module, they are awarded a digital badge that represents a skill they have acquired. These badges can be accumulated by the developer to achieve different levels of certification, providing recognition within the team.

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IV - REWARD SYSTEM TO FUEL ENGAGEMENT

Who doesn't like to be rewarded when making an effort? It's a universal desire, deeply ingrained in human nature.

In organizations, the power of rewards extends far beyond mere gratification. It's a cornerstone of engagement, driving individuals to excel and organizations to thrive.

Whether tangible or intangible, rewards serve as catalysts, **encouraging desired behaviors and fostering a culture of excellence.** They signify that hard work and commitment are valued, fueling a cycle of continuous improvement and achievement.

Beyond mere recognition, rewards are a means of acknowledging individual contributions. Whether through financial incentives, promotions, or simple gestures of appreciation, organizations demonstrate their gratitude for employees' efforts. This recognition not only **boosts morale** but also cultivates a **sense of belonging and value**, forging stronger bonds between individuals and their organizations.

LAURA COLANTUONO, Kraft Heinz
Head of Internal Communications

"Our employees enjoyed the experience with green coins and we were happy to have used a different and more engaging way to make them learn about sustainability.

Importantly, rewards align individuals with organizational goals and values, driving collective progress. By incentivizing behaviors that support the company's vision, **rewards foster cohesion, cooperation, and a shared sense of purpose.** This synergy propels teams forward, driving innovation, productivity, and ultimately, organizational success.

Moreover, a robust reward system can yield **substantial returns for organizations.** A few studies conducted by Gallup, underscore the profound impact of recognition and reward practices on employee engagement and **retention**. Employees who feel valued and recognized are not only more engaged in their work but also more likely to envision growth opportunities within their organization. This sense of professional fulfillment translates into heightened productivity and a conducive environment for career advancement.

In essence, reward systems serve as catalysts for engagement, motivation, and organizational excellence. By embracing a culture of recognition and appreciation, organizations can unlock the full potential of their workforce, driving sustained success and growth.

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REWARDS SYSTEM IN 2030 BUILDERS PLATFORM

To foster employee engagement, 2030 Builders has implemented a reward system where employees can challenge each other, boosting motivation and fostering a sense of collaboration. By completing modules covering various sustainability topics like food waste, climate change, and energy, employees earn green coins as rewards. These coins are earned through correct answers in quizzes and contribute to a ranking system based on both platform activity and knowledge gained. This ranking system fosters healthy competition among team members, encouraging them to deepen their knowledge and skills.

This approach not only adds an element of fun but also enhances employees' dedication to the company's objectives.

Additionally, employees receive badges and certificates as they advance, marking significant milestones in their learning journey and motivating them to continue their progress.

Also managers play a role in the reward system. They benefit from access to comprehensive data on employee performance, including adoption and learning metrics. This information enables them to provide feedback on progress and areas for improvement, as well as to recognize and reward top performers. We advocate for companies to reward their top achievers as a recognition of their commitment to the company and sustainable development. Ideally, rewards should be aligned and consistent with the company's sustainability efforts. We have collaborated with companies where employees chose to donate their green coins to non-profit organizations or use them for tree-planting initiatives. Other companies have offered additional prizes to incentivize employee participation and achievement, such as tickets to Sustainability events or workshops with companies focusing on green innovation.
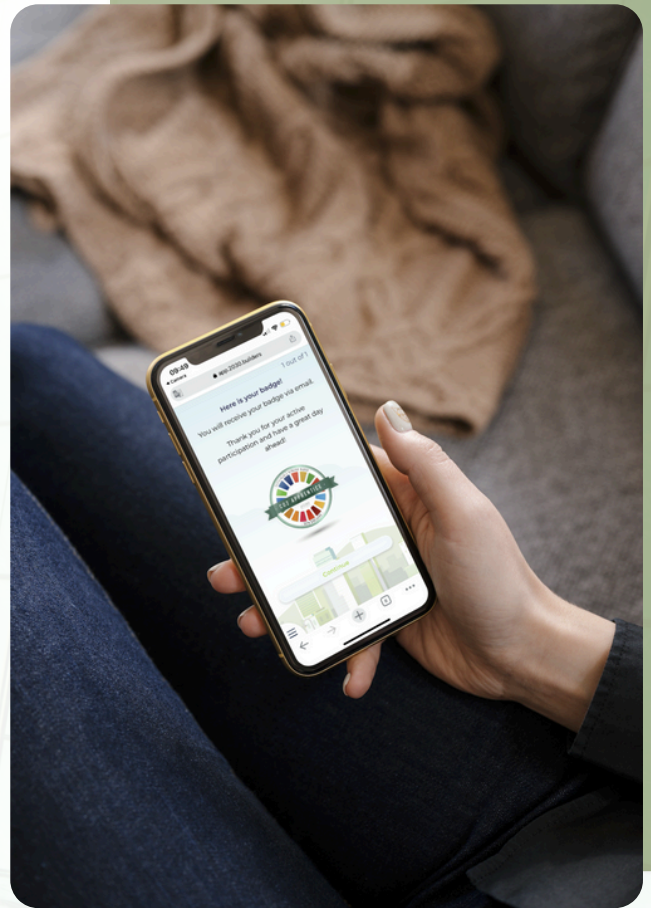
V - BUILDING ENGAGEMENT FROM KNOWLEDGE

In today's corporate landscape, the imperative for learning and training in sustainability has never been more pronounced. As companies navigate a rapidly evolving regulatory environment and strive to meet ambitious net zero targets by 2050, the need for employees well-versed in sustainability strategy and execution has become paramount. **Compliance with new regulations is not merely a legal requirement but a strategic imperative,** driving the demand for green upskilling and sustainability training initiatives.

The evolving workforce dynamics, as highlighted by PwC, underscore the urgency of this shift. The clean energy transition necessitates not only expanding the workforce but also equipping employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate this new terrain effectively. Furthermore, the transition must be equitable, ensuring that all stakeholders, including workers and communities impacted by industrial changes, are supported through the process.

Moreover, in today's competitive talent market, strong environmental, social, and governance (ESG) credentials are essential for attracting and retaining top talent. Companies that demonstrate a genuine commitment to sustainability not only enhance their brand reputation but also foster a culture of purpose-driven work, appealing to socially conscious employees.

The integration of sustainability learning into organizational frameworks is critical for building systemic resilience and driving operational excellence. By embedding learning programmes, companies can ensure that all members of the organization are aligned with their sustainability goals. This not only cultivates a culture of ethical conduct but also strengthens trust among employees and consumers alike.

In essence, investing in learning and training in sustainability is not just a regulatory necessity; it is a strategic imperative for future-proofing businesses, fostering innovation, and driving long-term success in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.
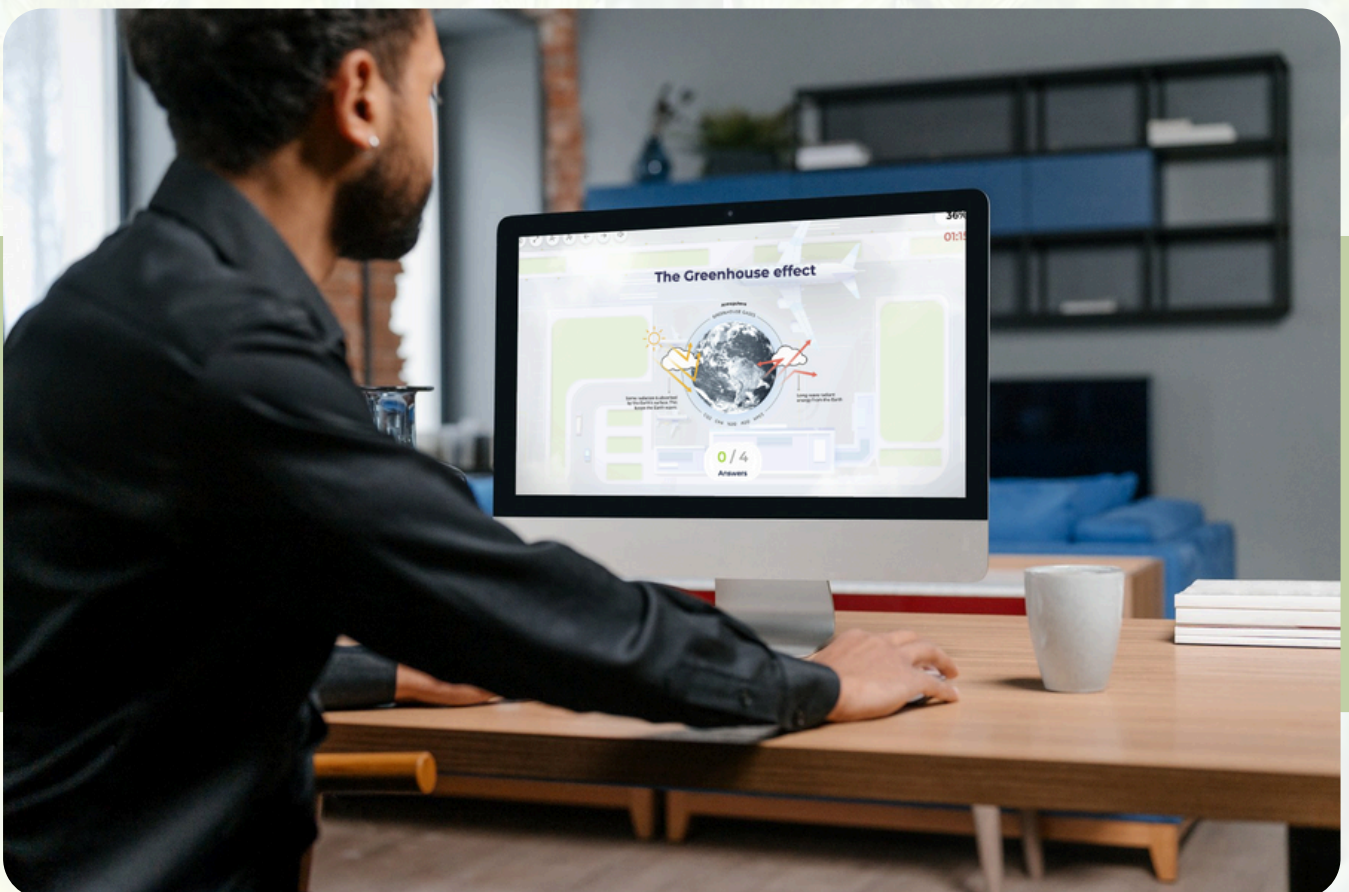
Automotive example

Insights from various studies underscore the benefits of integrating sustainability training into corporate strategies, showcasing a direct correlation with enhanced business outcomes.

A standout illustration of this approach is seen in a famous car manufacturer's commitment to sustainability. Recognizing the importance of aligning its workforce with the company's environmental ethos, it appointed an environmental officer dedicated to embedding sustainability principles across its operations.

389
million euro for employee training programs

75.000
employees, equipped with the knowledge and skills essential for contributing to BMW's sustainability objectives.

The benefits of sustainability learning programs:

Elevates Employee Efficiency
PWC found that 93% of CEOs notice increased productivity after implementing upskilling programs. By arming staff with essential skills, businesses streamline operations, boost efficiency, reduce errors, and free up time for higher-value tasks.

Compliance with Regulations
With stringent environmental regulations coming into effect globally, particularly within the EU, it is vital for companies to ensure compliance to avoid penalties and legal issues. Training programs can be specifically tailored to help businesses meet these regulatory requirements.

Enhances Retention Rates
Around 70% of workers would leave their job for an employer prioritizing their growth, Forbes notes. Today's workforce values ongoing development. Investing in employee growth fosters loyalty and peak performance, underlining the need for upskilling programs and career paths to retain talent.

Encourages a Culture of Ongoing Learning
Companies fostering a culture of continual learning retain and attract talent. By implementing strong upskilling strategies, they create an environment valuing ongoing education, fostering skill development, innovation, and readiness for future challenges.

Promotes Career Advancement for Employees
Upskilling empowers employees to reach their potential and explore new career paths within the company. Enhanced job skills enable them to meet and exceed management's expectations, often resulting in positive feedback that boosts confidence and motivates further achievements. Continuous skill development and feedback facilitate employee progression within the company, fostering successful career advancement.

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Sustainability Learning at 2030 Builders

At 2030 Builders, we recognize the critical importance of aligning corporate practices with stringent EU regulations. Our targeted training solutions are meticulously designed to ensure companies not only meet but exceed these standards, integrating them into daily operations seamlessly. We offer over 200 sustainability topics covering essential areas like ESG, CSRD, EU-Taxonomy, and CSDDD, providing a robust foundation for regulatory compliance and enhanced sustainability performance.

Customized Learning Journeys

Understanding that each organization has unique needs, we offer tailored content specifically designed to support your CSRD and CSDDD reporting requirements. Our approach allows us to customize the learning journey, making it highly relevant and directly applicable to your business context.

2030 Builders focuses intensely on delivering 100% bespoke content, which is specifically created around your sustainability strategy, incorporating industry and company data to ensure maximum relevance and impact. We work side by side with companies to develop the best tailored solutions that are not only informative but also transformative. This bespoke training is a cornerstone of our approach, enabling a deeply personalized learning experience that is directly aligned with your specific business goals and sustainability objectives.

Education Programs for All

2030 Builders prioritizes employee engagement in sustainability through a combination of individual and collaborative learning experiences. By focusing on education and active participation, they help employees understand and connect with their company's sustainability goals. This approach includes individual learning paths that encourage professional and personal growth, as well as collaborative training that empowers employees to take action and be involved in sustainability practices.

Strengthening the Supply Chain

Our Supplier Engagement Solution strengthens your supply chain by equipping suppliers with the essential skills and knowledge needed to meet your sustainability requirements. This strategic focus ensures that every link in your supply chain contributes positively to your sustainability goals, enhancing efficiency and compliance across all operations.

Elevating Customer Connections

With our Tailored Engagement Solution, we encourage your customers to become active participants in your sustainability initiatives. By engaging customers in efforts to reduce emissions and promote good human rights practices, we help you build stronger, more sustainable customer relationships that reflect your company's values and commitment to the environment.

ANDREAS ZWEIFEL, Ofi
Sustainability Manager

"We had positive feedback from the users. They specially liked that the sessions were interactive and positive. It was not the long, boring e-learning that you typically have to do. We got a participation rate of 94% overall. That is much more than expected.
From an admin perspective, I like the platform because I can follow the progress that is being made in real time. It's a good chance to learn alongside the users."

VI - AGENTS OF CHANGE: THE ROLE OF AMBASSADORS

Among the myriad approaches to embedding sustainability within organizational culture, one strategy stands out: the use of sustainability ambassador programs.

Across industries, companies are increasingly turning to ambassador programs as a cornerstone of their sustainability strategies. **At the heart of sustainability ambassador programs lies the recognition of their integral role in promoting and actualizing sustainability efforts both internally and externally**. These ambassadors serve as catalysts for change, instilling a sense of purpose and responsibility throughout the organization. Yet, while the potential impact of ambassador programs is vast, their effectiveness hinges on several critical factors.

Foremost among these is the need to provide sustainability ambassadors with a clear role and set of objectives. Ambiguity breeds inertia, and without clearly defined responsibilities, ambassadors may struggle to align their efforts with overarching sustainability goals. Equally important is the provision of adequate guidance and support. Sustainability ambassadors must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to effectively communicate and implement sustainability initiatives within their spheres of influence.

Moreover the development of a network of sustainability ambassadors is viewed as a strategic approach for firms to enhance awareness, engagement, and the successful execution of sustainability programs.

THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF SUSTAINABILITY AMBASSADORS

While sustainability ambassador programs can be a valuable tool for engaging employees and driving positive change, they must be implemented thoughtfully and with genuine commitment to sustainability goals in order to be effective.

What's Good:

1. **Internal Advocacy**: Ambassadors serve as champions within the organization, promoting sustainability initiatives and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.
2. **Peer Influence**: Employees are more likely to be receptive to messages about sustainability coming from their peers rather than from top-down management.
3. **Knowledge Sharing**: Ambassadors can provide valuable information and resources to their colleagues, helping to educate and raise awareness about sustainability issues.
4. **Behavioral Change:** By actively engaging with their peers, ambassadors can encourage behavior change and promote sustainable practices in the workplace.
5. **Community Building**: Ambassadors can help to build a sense of community among employees who share a common interest in sustainability, fostering collaboration and teamwork.

What's Wrong:

1. **Greenwashing**: Using ambassadors to feign sustainability can backfire, tarnishing a company's reputation if meaningful changes aren't made.
2. **Lack of Accountability**: Without clear goals and metrics, ambassador programs may not deliver impactful sustainability results.
3. **Limited Scope**: Ambassador programs may miss engaging the broader workforce, leaving some feeling excluded from sustainability efforts.
4. **Resistance to Change**: Some employees may resist sustainability efforts, posing challenges for ambassadors to engage peers effectively.
5. **Tokenism**: Ambassadors lacking empowerment or integration into decision-making risk being token representatives, not catalysts for real change.

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What the role of a sustainability ambassador should be

Sustainability ambassadors serve as versatile pillars within a company's sustainability framework. Typically, they are enthusiastic volunteers who willingly shoulder extra responsibilities beyond their usual duties to advocate for sustainability.
This is our perspective on the role they should embody:

- **Educating their peers** on the sustainability company's goals, fostering a culture of open dialogue on environmental and social issues. By disseminating the CSR strategy across different departments, sustainability ambassadors ensure that the mission penetrates every corner of the organization, promoting a unified approach to sustainable development. Their work should include initiating conversations that might not otherwise occur, thereby enhancing awareness and understanding throughout the company.

- **Inject ideas**. The role of sustainability ambassadors should be to create momentum and facilitate cross-team collaboration towards achieving the company's sustainability goals, acting as an additional layer of engagement and leadership in sustainable transformation alongside widespread efforts to empower all employees in sustainability practices.to

- **Gathering feedback** from various levels within the organization, they enable the sustainability department to tailor strategies that are both effective and pragmatic, ensuring goals are realistic and achievable. As connectors across different departments and levels of seniority, sustainability ambassadors are instrumental in overcoming barriers to communication and cooperation, making them key to embedding a genuine culture of sustainability within the company. Through their efforts, sustainability ambassadors help transform CSR from a conceptual strategy into actionable practice, driving the company toward meaningful progress in sustainability.

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2030 Builder's approch for 4Ps

Here we present the "Four Ps" framework—Purpose, Process, People, and Passion. This is an effective strategy for companies looking to enhance their sustainability efforts and promote these initiatives through sustainability ambassadors and advocates. Here's how each of the Four Ps supports the role of ambassadors in strengthening a company's commitment to sustainability:

PEOPLE

The focus on people emphasizes the importance of involving employees at all levels in sustainability efforts, turning them into advocates for the company's sustainability initiatives. This internal engagement is crucial as it fosters a sense of ownership and pride among employees. Ambassadors who are genuinely engaged are more likely to inspire others, both internally and externally, thereby enhancing the brand's image as a leader in sustainability.

PROCESS

A structured process equips ambassadors with the necessary tools and guidelines to carry out their roles effectively. It involves training sessions, clear guidelines on how to engage with stakeholders, and methods for measuring the impact of sustainability initiatives. This structured approach ensures consistency and professionalism in how ambassadors represent the company, which in turn strengthens the brand's credibility.

PURPOSE

For sustainability ambassadors, the clear definition of purpose provides a strong foundation for their advocacy. It ensures that their efforts align with the company's broader sustainability goals, making their work more strategic and impactful. By promoting a well-defined purpose, ambassadors can effectively communicate the company's sustainability commitments to external audiences, enhancing the brand's reputation.

PASSION

Cultivating passion among sustainability ambassadors energizes them to go beyond the minimum requirements and actively seek innovative ways to promote sustainability. Their enthusiasm can be contagious, spreading within and outside the organization, which helps to build a positive and dynamic brand image. Passionate ambassadors can transform a company's sustainability narrative into a compelling part of the brand story, attracting like-minded consumers, partners, and potential employees.

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These elements empower sustainability ambassadors to advocate effectively for their company's environmental and social initiatives, enhancing its brand image as a responsible and forward-thinking organization.

Sidel and 2030 Builders: A Model for Sustainability Ambassadors Program Implementation

Sidel is a global leader in providing equipment and services for packaging liquids. The company specializes in a broad range of packaging solutions for various industries. Creating a sustainability ambassadors program for Sidel, in partnership with 2030 Builders, is a strategic initiative that leverages internal engagement to drive broader environmental and social change.

2030 Builders supports the company at every step, providing comprehensive assistance from strategy formulation to communication material, ongoing support, and hands-on implementation. This ensures that the company has all the necessary resources and guidance to succeed in embedding sustainability deeply within its organizational culture.

Benefits for Sidel

- **Engagement Bottom Up**: Encouraging employee participation from all levels of the organization fosters a sense of ownership and personal investment in sustainability goals.

- **Active Involvement in Strategic Delivery**: Employees become integral to the execution of company strategies, promoting a more dynamic and responsive approach to sustainability challenges.

- Employer Branding & Sustainable Advocacy: Showcasing the company's commitment to sustainability enhances its reputation, making it an attractive place to work for ethically-minded professionals.

- **Embedding Sustainability in Organizational Culture**: The program ingrains sustainable practices into daily operations and decision-making processes at the company .

The Change Process: Step by Step

- **Allow Each Individual to Grow**: Foster personal development through increased awareness and responsibility.
- **From Awareness to Advocacy**: Transition employees from being aware of sustainability to becoming advocates for the cause within and outside the organization.
- **From Ideas to Innovation**: Encourage employees to transform their creative ideas into innovative practices that benefit the company and the environment.
- **From Knowing to Driving Excellence**: Equip employees with the knowledge and tools to excel in their roles while advocating for best practices in sustainability.
- **From Inspire to Empower**: Motivate and enable employees to lead initiatives and make impactful decisions regarding sustainability.

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Sidel Ambassadors program: Pillars and Activities

Purpose Pillar:

- Craft a company mission that aligns with strategic sustainability goals.
- Use acknowledgement cards on the platform to enhance communication about the company's purpose.
- Additional activities on the platform to maintain momentum.

People Pillar:

- Build employer branding around sustainability.
- Foster a culture of recognition, allowing employees to share their sustainability efforts internally and externally.
- Encourage the formation of supportive groups and opportunities for self-branding.

Passion Pillar:

- Facilitate collaborative experiences and role-playing simulations to discuss sustainability.
- Create challenges on the platform to foster innovation.
- Process Pillar:
- Integrate sustainability techniques into daily routines.
- Employ a recognition program to celebrate achievements in sustainability.

The Ripple Effect

Small Actions Create Big Changes:

- Highlight how minor sustainable actions can lead to significant societal and environmental impacts.

Storytelling:

- Document and promote the sustainability journey through various media, including webinars, podcasts, and social media, emphasizing the widespread impact of these initiatives.

This comprehensive program not only furthers Sidel's environmental and social objectives but also positions the company as a leader in corporate sustainability, enhancing its competitive edge in the industry.

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Sustainability Advocacy: Empowering Every Employee's Role in the Journey

Advocacy in the realm of sustainability should not be viewed merely as a specialized role for designated ambassadors; rather, it is an expectation that all engaged employees will embrace. As part of the 2030 Builders methodology, moving from engagement to advocacy signifies a pivotal evolution in a company's sustainability strategy. This transition underscores the importance of expanding the circle of influence beyond the core group of sustainability ambassadors to include every employee who is involved in the sustainability efforts.

The notion that advocacy should permeate through all levels of the company highlights a collective responsibility. **It means that each employee, regardless of their role or department, is encouraged to act as a vocal supporter and promoter of the company's sustainability initiatives**. By embedding this expectation into the company culture, employees understand that their active participation in advocacy is not just valued but essential.

VI - THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF FEEDBACK

How to value individual and collective contributions: using data and success to build engagement and motivation! Feedback reflects managers' commitment to their employees and demonstrates the importance they attach to their work. **It is an essential tool for understanding the state of teams, identifying areas for improvement and progress, and making the necessary adjustments to working methods.**

Feedback can go both ways: from manager to employee and vice versa. It gives employees a chance to be heard, while allowing managers to better understand their needs and ideas.. Employee feedback can provide ideas and suggestions that contribute to company's innovation. They can also develop best practices and inspire others to follow suit. Feedback is also essential for managers to adapt their strategies and make decisions because employees are the lifeblood of the organization and their motivation, commitment and involvement are critical to its success.

94.7%

of highly engaged employees believe their employer takes their feedback seriously (source: Bonusly).

The best approach is to provide constructive feedback, where managers guide and redirect their employees' work as needed. This applies to giving feedback to entire teams too. Regular communication is key to setting goals, highlighting progress, and celebrating achievements. However, when it comes to collective missions, managers must also understand each employee's role and contribution to the collaboration.

In sustainability efforts, employee feedback is crucial. Involving employees in the feedback process enhances their commitment to sustainability goals, fosters transparency and accountability, and cultivates a respectful organizational culture. Feedback helps monitor the progress of sustainability projects and ensures they meet their objectives.

Why data are so important in the feedback process? The 2030 Builders' experience

To encourage feedback and teamwork, 2030 Builders recommends that you make time for your employees. Communication plays a key role in effectively managing a team. Team leaders should regularly take time to sit down with their employees, either in physical meetings or online, to share data, discuss results, and encourage a constructive exchange of ideas. During these meetings, team members can voice their concerns, offer ideas for improvement, and strengthen their collaboration to achieve set goals.

In addition, higher-level feedback is essential to maintain consistency and alignment across the organization. For example, senior executives may step in once or twice a year to share accomplishments and future goals. This provides all employees with a clear vision of the company's strategy and the steps to be taken.

Using ambassadors within the team can also facilitate the collection of feedback and suggestions. These ambassadors can gather feedback from colleagues and report back to project managers, allowing for adjustments or changes in approach. This fosters a culture of transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement within the organization, contributing to its long-term success.

As mentioned earlier, the data provided by our platform allows managers to easily provide feedback on their employees' activities and encourage them to improve their environmental knowledge and skills.

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What data 2030 Builders provide

2030 Builders platform is specifically designed to offer a comprehensive array of data crucial for monitoring and enhancing employee engagement in sustainability endeavors.

This data collection mechanism furnishes both overarching and detailed insights into employee activities. By providing managers with access to data reports, the platform enables them to monitor both the individual and collective progress of their teams in sustainability initiatives. This facilitates informed decision-making and targeted strategy implementation across various domains.

Moreover, the data generated by the platform not only identifies areas for improvement but also enables managers to compare data across departments, brands, locations, and teams, thereby advancing progress. Armed with such insights, managers can fine-tune the learning sessions and activation strategies to maximize their team's impact on sustainability.

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CONCLUSION

While there's no one-size-fits-all recipe for engaging employees in sustainability, the elements discussed in this ebook can be customized and adapted to fit each company's unique context. We suggest exploring and experimenting with various approaches, combining and tailoring them to align with the organization's values and objectives. By leveraging a mix of strategies that resonate with employees and fit seamlessly into the company culture, organizations can effectively drive their sustainability ambitions

Let's summarize the main takeaways:

1. **Leadership Sets the Tone**: The success of sustainability initiatives hinges on leadership commitment and action. When CEOs and top managers lead by example, it signals to employees that sustainability is a core organizational value, inspiring dedication and action at all levels.

2. **Alignment with Company Values**: To ensure sustainability efforts are robust and enduring, it's imperative to align them closely with the company's overarching values and objectives. Transparency in communicating these strategies fosters stakeholder engagement and a sense of ownership among employees.

3. **Inclusive Engagement:** Sustainable development requires engagement from all levels of the organization. Middle managers play a crucial role in translating high-level sustainability goals into actionable steps that resonate with frontline employees, embedding sustainability into the organizational DNA.

4. **Gamification**: Incorporating gamification into sustainability training and work processes can enhance engagement, motivation, and knowledge retention among employees. By tapping into intrinsic motivators like enjoyment and social connectedness, gamification makes sustainability efforts more interactive and enjoyable.

5. **Rewards**: Reward systems are powerful drivers of engagement, recognizing and incentivizing desired behaviors that align with sustainability goals. When employees feel valued and recognized for their contributions, it fosters a culture of excellence and collective progress toward sustainability.

6. **Learning and training:** In today's landscape, sustainability training is essential for equipping employees with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate evolving regulatory landscapes and meet ambitious sustainability targets. It also enhances employer branding and attracts socially conscious talent.

7. **Role of Ambassadors**: Sustainability ambassador programs serve as catalysts for change, instilling a sense of purpose and responsibility throughout the organization. By educating peers, gathering feedback, and advocating for sustainability, ambassadors play a crucial role in driving meaningful progress.

8. **Feedback:** Feedback mechanisms are essential for fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in sustainability efforts. Involving employees in the feedback process strengthens their commitment and helps monitor progress towards sustainability goals.

9. **Data for Improvement**: Leveraging data insights from platforms like 2030 Builders enables managers to monitor and enhance employee engagement in sustainability endeavors. Data-driven decision-making facilitates targeted strategies and maximizes impact across various organizational domains.

2030 Builders is a pioneering EU-based company that emerged as a leader in green workforce transformation shortly after its founding in 2018. The company stands out as the fastest solution for implementing sustainability strategies and fostering cultural change within organizations.

At the core of **2030 Builders'** approach is the integration of knowledge, engagement, and practice, which effectively combines elements of behavioral change and gamification. This methodology not only makes sustainability relatable but also actionable, enabling employees across various industries to embrace and contribute to sustainability efforts.

If you need more information, visit our <u>website</u> or <u>book an into</u> with us

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