

TEAM's Energy Management Series: How To Ensure Successful Project Implementation

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Congratulations on getting the green light on your energy project! So, what is next?

In TEAM's latest blog in the Energy management series, they will look at how the process of implementation will vary depending on the type of project and how a broad range of stakeholders are key to the project's overall success.

Develop a detailed project implementation plan

For whatever type of project, once you have achieved sign off for your business case, the next step is to create a detailed plan for implementation. Depending on the scale and complexity of the project, the plan will vary in form, but it should include an implementation schedule which identifies and sets milestones for your project and an overview of key tasks to be completed.

No and low cost projects

If your project plan includes them, rolling out no-cost and low-cost solutions first would help to achieve "quick wins" that return immediate savings and stimulate interest for further energy savings. However, even with minimal capital outlay for such projects, a careful and structured approach will maximise the success of the project. For example, if you are updating control systems, implementation may be technically challenging. "Good housekeeping" approaches are often straightforward and can make a big impact, for example, eliminating drafts and sources of heat loss and replacing broken or faulty lightbulbs.

Energy efficiency training

Recognised as a valuable way to reduce an organisation's energy use and costs, another popular type of no-cost and low-cost project is energy efficiency training, also known as behaviour change.

Successful behaviour change requires careful consideration about how you approach it, how it aligns with company culture, and how it considers participants' values; after all everyone's behaviours and motivations are different.

So, whilst this method requires minimal financial investment, it does require patience, commitment, and planning. When it comes to behaviour change and energy awareness training programmes, what success looks like in one organisation may look different in another.

What about more complex energy saving projects?

Projects that involve installing new or upgraded equipment or technology will have to go through several steps for implementation, including choosing appropriate equipment, suppliers, and installers, and securing finance and installation work. Some of which may have already been detailed when you built the business case.

Engaging with stakeholders

Successful implementation of any project of any scale will depend on support from a range of stakeholders across the business. Included in your plan should be an overview of who in the business you will need to work with for each project milestone, making sure to engage with them early on to understand their availability and concerns. Your stakeholders hold valuable knowledge, they will help you understand potential sources for slippage of project timelines and predict any bumps in the road.

So, who might your stakeholders include?

Senior team

You will have been engaging with this group of stakeholders to get the project signed off, you have their support from your business case. It is a good idea to continue engagement with at least one senior lead for your project. They can continue to support your cause in the most fundamental elements – strategic overview and funding. To help establish this engagement, recognise what matters to this individual or group and focus on how the energy saving project will contribute to the business success, be it financial savings, green reputational impact, or efficiency drivers for example.

Energy team, compliance managers, or people responsible for your net zero strategy

You may be in one of these teams, but some organisations have multiple teams managing different areas that are related to energy. Some have none, leaving energy management and compliance to other departments.

Either way, where relevant to your organisation, these departments should be kept close to your plans around project management. Tracking the success of your project will depend on measurement and a dedicated energy team will be able to provide historical data and support around benchmarking. A sustainability team, or those who are building a net zero (<https://www.teamenergy.com/net-zero/>) strategy for your business, will help ensure that any energy efficiency projects are in line with the long term plan and are also represented.

Additionally, you may find that initiating a green team or a group of energy champions can help you spread word of your project and offer further support.

Estates, facilities, or office management

Energy is often primarily consumed in the buildings operated and occupied by a business. Therefore, those who manage and maintain these facilities are a key group of people to engage with every step of the way. This group of stakeholders is the powerhouse and will help to sustain the strategy.

Stakeholders such as facilities management, equipment operators, and production managers will help you plan for the exact specifications so it is important to capture their experience of existing systems; their feedback will ensure all opportunities for improvement have been identified. They will also be able to guide you on whether your project can be completed in-house or if external support is needed, and help you identify and plan for any potential disruptions to current operations.

Procurement department

Work with the procurement department to agree an appropriate approach. This will be determined by the complexity and scale of the project, as well as the business's procurement processes.

Your procurement team will help you secure suppliers for smaller and simpler projects and for larger projects, you must allow time to develop a detailed specification or tender document in line with your organisation's procurement procedures. Either way, engaging with the procurement department will ensure that you are following the required organisational protocols to get your project up and running.

Finance department

Aside from setting up your budget in line with the company accounts and finance cycles, you may need to work very closely with the finance department to manage expectations around accessing budget. The level of engagement here will depend on the project's complexity and its cost. The project may need its own budget code, as well as a plan for raising and paying invoices.

HR

By engaging with your HR department, you will find help needed when it comes to resourcing your project and ensuring successful implementation. Once the project is up and running, there may be staff training requirements to help achieve the predicted benefits that your HR team could help facilitate and track.

Other stakeholders dependent on your business

Store managers in retail, site managers in manufacturing, for example, will need a specification, installation, and operational plan as well as a timeline to ensure that project implementation is uniform. If the project is rolled out in different geographical locations, what varying external factors might affect consistent success? These people will need to know of any operational constraints to be considered during installation, for example will the shop need to close, or production need to be interrupted?

Equipment operators will need full training and health and safety guidance, clear manuals, troubleshooting procedures in place, and maintenance requirements.

Keep communication channels open

Engagement with your stakeholders must be a two way and ongoing conversation to ensure that buy in and support for your project remains stable. Open lines of communication will maximise the project's success, rather than enthusiasm for it dwindling before it has even got off the ground.

Discover TEAM's other blogs in our energy management series

(<https://www.teamenergy.com/discover/tag/energy-management-blog-series/>) for more advice and information.

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Notes to Editors

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About TEAM

TEAM is the UK's leading supplier of carbon and energy management solutions committed to driving the efficiency and sustainability of energy consumption and environmental awareness.

Its expert team works in partnership with organisations to design and deliver tailored management strategies supporting the provision of efficient and effective energy conservation.

The organisation's 35-year history of collaborating with energy and sustainability professionals has led to the development of proven, scalable cloud-based solutions and service innovations for optimised reporting, cost recovery and compliance.