



## Organizing Your Sustainability Team

To guide the company's sustainability practices a cross-functional team should be formed to focus on overall organizational sustainability. The role of this team is critical to direct and ensure implementation of identified priorities within both formal and informal systems to support sustainability best practices – environmental, health and safety, and corporate stewardship/community engagement.

The ideal is to have a senior manager invite members to participate in the committee. There is no magic number on participation, but the team should be representative of the scope of operations. The best functioning teams have a senior manager (i.e., Owner, General Manager, President, etc.) actively participate in the meetings. Expand membership to ensure the following functions at a minimum are represented:

- a. Operations - representative from all primary operational areas (i.e., production, sales clerks, food & beverage/service, culinary, housekeeping, front office)
- b. Site managers from other locations (i.e., property management or multi-location operations (ideally one representative from each stand alone location)
- c. Technicians/Engineering
- d. Human Resources
- e. Sales & Marketing
- f. IT
- g. Finance/Accounting

The team should be responsible to support the following:

1. Develop and support the intent of the Sustainability Policy Statement
2. Complete build out of the organization's sustainability strategy and action plans
3. Support organization cultural integration of sustainability values
4. Identify priority action plans and engage employees in executing this work
5. Ensure that sustainability actions (goals) are monitored, measured and communicated to all appropriate internal and external stakeholders
6. To influence the development of policies and procedures that would improve the organization's environmental/sustainability marketing strategy
7. Track meeting minutes and make available to all employees
8. Form Action Teams (or subcommittees) as needed to address specific topics and needs to support the sustainability initiatives
9. Conduct periodic review of documentation and metrics

## Tips on Convening the Sustainability Team

- Meet ideally monthly (minimum quarterly)
- Take meeting notes
- Share updates on your management system and certifications
- Set an agenda – include environmental, health & safety, and community engagement. Ask for suggestions from team members
- Consider picking a topic for each month for environment and health and safety. For example:
  - Energy conservation
  - Water conservation
  - Recycling and waste reduction
  - Safely using and storing chemicals
  - Safe lifting
  - Ladder safety
  - Vehicle safety
  - Employee volunteerism
  - Engaging customers
- Bring in outside experts to share best practices
- Rotate “chairing” the meeting
- Build in department tours, field trips or a volunteer project periodically
- Consider incentives for engagement
- Share information with all employees

Remember this is just guidance. Leverage existing meetings and standing committees to maximize efficiency and engagement. Be creative and make your sustainability team reflective of your business or organizational culture.