

Going Green in the Workplace Benefits Everyone!

Everyone is looking for ways to live that are more beneficial to the environment by reducing energy consumption. “Going green” is about being a responsible steward of resources and concerned for the impact of today’s decisions on future generations.

“Going green” also saves money in reduced energy bills and waste. The workplace presents many opportunities to make green choices that help the environment and cut costs.

Here are six easy suggestions to make your workplace a little greener and show your boss that you are environmentally and economically proactive.

1. *Work from home.* If telecommuting is an option for you, it is a very green one. It cuts down transportation and fuel costs, as well as office expenses. If you have the communications equipment that you need and your home is already lit and heated or cooled, you can be one less consumer of energy in the office.

2. *Use a laptop.* Most people are unaware of the fact that a laptop requires much less energy to run (about 50 watts) than a traditional desktop computer and monitor (about 270 watts). Thinking that screensavers are energy savers is a misconception. They actually use up money and energy. Instead, set laptops to switch to sleep mode after 15 minutes of inactivity. Make it an office rule to turn off all computer equipment when finished for the day. This can result in tremendous energy and cost savings.

3. *Recycle paper.* This is a simple way to conserve resources at work. Print on the front and back of all of your paper. Think how many trees could be saved if every office did this. Save already used paper or old letterhead for scrap paper to take messages or notes.

4. *Stock the office kitchen with reusable items.* Persuade employees to bring their own personal mugs to use at work instead of Styrofoam. Having some sets of flatware available to workers reduces the waste of plastic, which is non-biodegradable. It can be washed, put back and reused. Getting employees involved in being environmentally responsible together with co-workers can make them feel more a part of a team.

5. *Invoice by email.* If customers are agreeable to email invoicing, it saves everyone a significant amount of paper. If customers are given online payment options, they can make more green choices to save paper too. Everything that is done electronically that used to be done on paper is saving the planet resources and saves costs for the workplace.

6. *Videoconference.* Business travel is a great money and energy waster. Most business trips are taken on gas-guzzling airplanes or in comfortable, non-economical cars, putting a strain on the environment and office budgets. With an efficient high speed connection and quality web cam, video conferencing via the internet affords the ability to speak to anyone in the world just as if it were face to face. Video conferencing software is

available with a wide selection of options, all at a fraction of the price of traditional business travel costs.

These are six great tips for any office, large or small, to reduce energy use, save costs, and get employees involved with the common goals of being good stewards of the planet. Be a leader of green ideals in your workplace today.