

A Green Workplace is very Smart Business

By Bill Parker Symmetry Mentor



There are some very good reasons for making your workplace an energy-efficient, environmentally friendly place. Energy efficiency and good waste management can reduce costs considerably. A green workplace can make your staff more motivated and productive. You will impress your customers and may even draw new business with a green clean approach. Today, I'm going to talk about waste, an often obscure cost for business.

What's in the bin?

Looked in the bins at work lately? Without looking myself, I can tell you what's in there – a waste of money. Workplace bins are notorious eco-offenders. At home, most people practice judicious waste separation. Glass, plastics, paper and cans are expertly managed for great eco-outcomes. Solvents, batteries and other special waste are sensibly and carefully disposed of. Many people compost food scraps. At work it's a different world. A recent study showed that a general waste bin at an average office contains up to 80% of materials that can be recycled, with 70% being paper, some of which could be reused. Instead, business pays to take it away.

A Load of Rubbish.

Would you like to pay for something you don't want, and then pay for someone to take it away? Sound like a load of rubbish? It is. Many in small business do not consider managing waste. Often it is not even our own rubbish. It's generated by staff and suppliers. Did you know business pays more for than householders for waste management? In NSW, each year the Section 88 Levy allows waste contractors to implement a price increase of at least 21% for waste removal services to business. Business waste is more expensive to handle because of active and passive co-mingling of landfill waste, with recyclables, solvents and other junk mixed in. In the Macarthur area, many contractors increased their costs by over 30% last July to meet rising transport and insurance costs to get their loads to Eastern Creek. The Jacks Gully facility in Camden will not take business waste. It makes sense to try to reduce waste generation on any scale to reduce costs in your business. A sensible procurement policy, insisting on better packaging from suppliers, educating your staff and customers, and looking for ways to reuse and extend the life cycle of any material used at work are just a few simple methods to reduce waste and save money. Employing double sided printing, using PC's for memos, faxes in and out, changing to paperless file management and storage, and reusing single sided printouts for internal use, can easily reduce expenditure on paper by over 50% alone.

Waste Not.

You have probably heard the saying a failure to plan is a plan for failure. Have you ever thought about a waste reduction plan for

your business? It is easy to create and implement and works for businesses large and small, sole traders and those with staff. Apart from the eco-outcomes, you save money. Better environment and a better bottom line.