

BSBSUS511

**DEVELOP
WORKPLACE
POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES
FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

BSBSUS511

Develop workplace policies and procedures for sustainability

Release 1

Learner Guide

Aspire Version 1.1



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Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBSUS511 Develop workplace policies and procedures for sustainability*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this Learner Guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice Tasks	Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Summaries	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning Checkpoints	There is a Learning Checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which Learning Checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table provides definitions for each foundation skill.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets and uses mathematical equations to calculate numerical information relating to time durations and costs
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information and seeks advice using language appropriate to audience Participates in discussions using listening and questioning to elicit the views of others and to clarify or confirm understanding
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies, analyses and evaluates complex textual information to determine legislative and regulatory requirements, trends and outcomes
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches, plans and prepares documentation using format and language appropriate to context, organisational requirements and audience
Initiative and enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops, monitors and modifies organisational policies and procedures according to legislative requirements and organisation goals
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects and uses appropriate conventions and protocols when communicating with internal and external stakeholders to seek or share information Plays a lead role in consulting and negotiating positive outcomes with a range of stakeholders
Planning and organising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, organises and implements work activities of self and others that ensure compliance with organisational policies and procedures, and legislative requirements Sequences and schedules complex activities, monitors implementation, and manages relevant communication Uses systematic, analytical processes in relatively complex, situations, setting goals, gathering relevant information, and identifying and evaluating options against agreed criteria Evaluates outcomes of decisions to identify opportunities for improvement

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Prepare workplace sustainability policies	1A Establish scope and objective of sustainability policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Gather and analyse information	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Develop sustainability policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1D Incorporate implementation and continuous improvement processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2: Implement sustainability policies	2A Present policies and implementation processes to stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Provide resources to support policy implementation	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2C Track continuous improvements in sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3: Review implementation of sustainability policies	3A Document outcomes and provide feedback to stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Identify trends and modify policies to promote improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident



Topic 1 | Prepare workplace sustainability policies

- 1A Establish scope and objective of sustainability policies
- 1B Gather and analyse information
- 1C Develop sustainability policies
- 1D Incorporate implementation and continuous improvement processes

1A Establish scope and objective of sustainability policies

Sustainability focuses on the concept of interdependence, meaning that life on earth exists due to a delicate balance of ecosystems.

Sustainability is often linked to the natural world, focusing on protecting the environment's natural resources to support ongoing human life. If part of the system is disrupted, all life on earth experiences repercussions. Sustainable business is about making sure the organisation stays informed about the demands and impacts of the market and remains profitable over time, with minimal negative impacts to the environment and its people.

Sustainability requires leaders to monitor and evaluate the performance of existing systems and develop policies and procedures that continue to meet and exceed the needs of its stakeholders.

Sustainability should consider the following three elements of business.

Social	A socially responsible business is one that aims to reduce its negative impact on society and increase its positive influence on people. Business ethics are especially important as failing to adhere to them can have a big impact on the viability of a business, including its reputation in the marketplace, customer satisfaction, staff retention and talent management.
Economic	An economically responsible business can help identify and avoid unnecessary costs associated with unsustainable practices, such as change processes, new systems, acquiring resources, and reducing expenses and losses.
Environmental	Being an environmentally responsible business involves taking actions and making decisions that help to protect the natural world through preserving natural resources and reducing environmental impact. This will improve the environmental sustainability of a business and with pressures on costs of non-renewable energy sources may give a competitive advantage over companies that focus on short-term profits.

Policy scope and objectives

Organisational policies must show management's commitment to improving performance.

A policy provides the framework for developing strategies, programs and actions for business sustainability. Such development usually happens at the planning and implementation stage.

For policies to be successful, the broad scope and objectives must be clearly defined at the start of the development process. These two elements set the foundation for the remaining components to be developed.

Policy scope	Policy objectives
<p>A defined range of topics, contexts, people and issues that the policy addresses</p> <p>This should be a clear succinct a summary of what is covered by the policy.</p>	<p>The specific goals or outcomes that the organisation hopes to achieve from implementing the policy</p>

Policy scope

The purpose of the policy scope is to give readers a clear understanding of what is (and is not) covered in the policy. When defining the scope, you should look at how you will approach sustainability with reference to key people, issues and contexts that need to be addressed.

Organisations that are just beginning to develop a policy usually start with small initiatives and gradually build towards bigger and more long-term programs.

Key questions defining the scope of a sustainability policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which part of the organisation will the policy apply to? Is it for the whole organisation, one site or one work area? ▪ Will it be an integrated approach including environmental, economic and social aspects, or a specific approach? ▪ What sustainability issues and contexts will the policy address? ▪ What laws and regulations need to be complied with? ▪ Who are the key stakeholders who have a responsibility and are affected by the policy's inclusions?

Example

Areas of policy scope

Green purchasing	Green purchasing means choosing to buy products that are less damaging to the environment. Green products may offer recycled content, energy efficiency, water-saving features, low contamination or toxicity, ease of recycling, minimum waste/ packaging, biodegradable materials, renewable sources and minimal habitat and land degradation. An organisation committed to reducing its environmental footprint will buy recycled paper; use recyclable toner cartridges; refuse excess packaging; and purchase equipment with a high 'energy star' rating.
Green office program	A green office program focuses on making the workplace environmentally friendly and efficient, and changing people's behaviour; for example, encouraging minimum use of paper; re-using paper; switching computers to stand-by when not in use; switching off lights when not in the room; reducing energy consumption by not turning the heating or air conditioning up higher than is needed; and reducing water consumption through actions such as installing dual-flush toilets.
Supply chain	Supply-chain management is about ensuring the supply chain is efficient and economical to gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. However, you can also use supply-chain management to ensure that all suppliers at all stages of production from the basic raw materials to the consumable product have sustainability policies in place. You can also include sustainability requirements in your supplier contracts.
Product stewardship	Product stewardship is the practice of taking steps to minimise environmental impact from the production, use and disposal of a product. You can choose to purchase from suppliers or importers who manage the 'life cycle' of their products responsibly. Your organisation can also become a product steward.
Ethical purchasing	Ethical purchasing includes choosing products and raw materials that are produced under fair conditions and sold at a fair price. This means that there was no child labour or forced labour involved in the production process, and that workers are paid a living wage and have safe working conditions. Because unfair labour conditions and environmental degradation tend to go hand-in-hand in countries that do not have a good governance framework, ethical purchasing is often considered part of green purchasing.

Financial (or economic) sustainability	Financial sustainability involves the fair distribution of wealth. Wealth is often needed to access essential services such as medical care and education, and ensure a good standard of living. The global economic crisis in late 2008 demonstrated how fragile our global economies can be.
Social responsibility	Social responsibility refers to the organisation meeting the needs of people and communities in the areas that are affected by its operations. This includes having fair trade agreements with local farmers and suppliers and operating in a way that maintains the way of life for surrounding communities.

Identify policy objectives

Once the scope is defined, the objectives can be written. The policy scope will dictate the extent of objectives but every policy must have at least one objective.

Objectives must be specific to the scope and relevant to the needs and issues of the organisation, including its internal and external operating environment.

Key questions when writing sustainability policy objectives

- What does the organisation need to achieve to maintain compliance with regulations, legislation, standards and codes?
- What does the organisation need to achieve to maintain stakeholder confidence?
- How can the scope be translated into clearly defined goals and outcomes that management and other employees can strive towards?

Example

Policy objectives

To be positioned as a leader in sustainability

- Follow environmental guidelines.
- Encourage ethical business practices.
- Ensure your actions preserve natural resources and biodiversity.
- Avoid buying products from companies or industries that exploit workers.
- Ensure financial transparency and openness in environmental practices.

To use sustainability initiatives as business opportunities

- Use business partners that can further your sustainability credentials.

To be part of the local community

- Support and empower local communities.
- Educate others on sustainability.

To reduce operating costs and ensure growth and profitability

- Refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle

To purchase green equipment and consumables

- Incorporate life-cycle analysis into decision-making processes.

To comply with relevant legislation

- Comply with environmental legislation, agreements and standards at local, national and international levels.

Example

How a company determined the scope for its new sustainability policy

Prestige Printing and Office Supplies (PPOS) is located in a regional town that has a university campus, a TAFE institute and several public and private schools.

In the educational institutions and local community there is an increasing awareness of environmental and sustainability issues. At the last PPOS directors meeting it was agreed that the company should have a well-defined stance on sustainability with appropriate policies and procedures. The board decided that PPOS needs to reduce its ecological footprint and demonstrate compliance with 'green' business practices.

Frank and Steph research the options and decide that the company should focus on:

- green purchasing
- a green office program
- waste management and recycling
- triple (and even quadruple) bottom line reporting.

The purpose of the triple bottom line reporting is to highlight successes and targets achieved in reducing the company's ecological footprint, which can then be publicised.

Compliance with laws and regulations

In developing policies and procedures, you must consider the organisation's compliance requirements.

Every organisation operates under a regulatory framework which sets out the rules and standards that it must adhere to. Sustainability policy must comply with environmental performance and sustainability requirements issued at the international, national, state/territory, industry and organisational level. These may include Commonwealth, state/territory and local government laws, by-laws, regulations and codes of practice.

Some of these requirements are mandatory, meaning organisations must comply with them or they will face legal sanctions such as fines, loss of operating licences or court action. Other requirements are voluntary but are conditions for membership of or certification by industry bodies. Companies may also decide to make voluntary commitments based on a covenant, community expectations or their mission statement.

Compliance levels are described in the following information.

Legislation or legal requirements
Compliance is required with international law, Commonwealth legislation (Acts and legislation passed by the federal government), state/territory legislation and local council/shire regulations. These requirements are enforced through mandatory reporting, audits and site inspections.
Industry standards and guidelines
Compliance is voluntary as it is not legislated for. Standards arise from international standards such as ISO 14001:2015 (updated from ISO 14001:2004), Australian and New Zealand standards (AS/NZS), national standards, industry-specific standards and guidance notes. Generally, these are termed best practice approaches and thus many organisations have a policy to comply with them. Requirements are met through reporting, submissions and assessments.
Voluntary commitments
Compliance with stakeholder, shareholder and community expectations is voluntary. Organisations may opt to sign up to an existing scheme or framework that matches their objectives, such as Ride2Work. They could also create a covenant in partnership with a local environmental group or government body, or develop commitments based on addressing local environmental and social issues.

Australian and international standards

Australian Standards are regarded as ‘living’ documents which reflect progress and best practice in industry.

They reflect international standards and are considered the highest level of performance that a business can strive for in a particular field or topic.

AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 Environmental Management Systems is a key international standard. It is designed to enable organisations to develop policies and systems that take into account legislative requirements and information about significant environmental impacts. It helps organisations achieve the intended outcomes of their environmental management system, in areas including environmental performance, compliance obligations and achievement of environmental objectives.

As environmental awareness and regulations increase, organisations are more concerned with how their business performs. The Environmental Management Systems standard provides best-practice benchmarks to help organisations identify, meet and maintain their legal and moral responsibilities to the environment.

Other key standards that relate to sustainability include:

- AS ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management – Guidelines
- ISO 26000 – Social Responsibility
- ISO 50001 – Energy Management Systems.

You can find more information about these standards on the International Organization for Standardization website: [aspirelr.link/iso](https://www.iso.org/)

Legislation – Commonwealth

Laws and regulations may force businesses to improve their performance and minimise impacts on people and the environment.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is the federal body that exists to partner and regulate to enhance Australia's agriculture, unique environment and heritage, and water resources. Various groups, agencies and statutory authorities report to the department/ministers and administer the various Acts and sustainability initiatives, including those listed here.

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth). This is the Australian Government's major environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places – defined in the Act as matters of national environmental significance. The Act enables the Australian Government to provide a national scheme of environment and heritage protection and biodiversity conservation.
- *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* (Cth)
- *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989* (Cth)
- *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989* (Cth)
- The *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) requires companies to report breaches of environmental laws and licences in their annual reports.

Legislation – state and territory

Each state and territory administers environment protection policies relating to noise control, pollution and construction planning.

In addition to Commonwealth laws, organisations must abide by their relevant state/territory-based Acts, regulations, policies and schemes. These laws focus on key issues and business reporting requirements including work health and safety and environmental sustainability.

For example, state/territory environmental legislation outlines the legal requirements for mandatory reporting, emissions trading, carbon taxes, environmental protection and standards on energy efficiency and resource use.

State and territory regulators issue relevant licences, act as regulatory authorities and can prosecute non-compliant offenders through the courts with fines and jail terms.

The following table summarises the environmental legislative framework for each state and territory. Relevant state and territory government departments are also listed. Note that names often change with governments, so check to ensure you have the current information.

Jurisdiction	Regulator	Principle Act
ACT	Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate	<i>Environment Protection Act 1997</i>
New South Wales	Environment, Energy and Science Group (Dept of Planning, Industry and Environment)	<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>
Northern Territory	Department of Environment and Natural Resources	<i>Environment Protection Act 2019</i>
Queensland	Department of Environment and Science	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i>
South Australia	Environment Protection Authority	<i>Environment Protection Act 1993</i>
Tasmania	Environment Protection Authority	<i>Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994</i>
Victoria	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	<i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>
Western Australia	Department of Water and Environment Regulation	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>

Codes of practice

Codes of practice are requirements that meet legislation, regulations and other government and industry policies.

Codes of practice address specific issues related to environmental and human health and safety risks in the workplace. They give detailed practical guidance on how to comply with requirements and obligations under Acts and regulations as well as ethical requirements.

Codes are not regarded as mandatory; however, they are the minimum standards that should be followed by employers and managers. While a breach of a code of practice is not punishable by law, an organisation or individual may still be deregistered for non-compliance. The guidelines in a code of practice should be followed unless a better standard can be implemented by the employer.

The following are examples of model codes of practice developed by Safe Work Australia:

- Model Code of Practice: Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Model Code of Practice: First aid in the workplace
- Model Code of Practice: Hazardous manual tasks
- Model Code of Practice: How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace
- Model Code of Practice: How to safely remove asbestos
- Model Code of Practice: Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Model Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities
- Environmental Code of Practice for Packaging (part of the Australian Packaging Covenant)
- Environmental Code of Practice for Agriculture (Qld)
- National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice
- Transport Noise Management Code of Practice (Qld)
- Code of Practice for Aquifer Storage and Recovery (SA)
- Code of Practice – Onsite Wastewater Management (Vic).

You can source online information about codes of practice from the following web page: aspirelr.link/model-codes-of-practice

Practice Task 1

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow.

Case study

You work for Kare 4 Kidz, a preschool. Your centre is part of a larger network of centres working with children from age three until they go to school. The staff consists of two educators, two assistants, the centre director and an administrative support person (which is your role).

The centre director has decided to develop a range of sustainability initiatives for the centre to manage its environmental, economic and social impact.

Question 1

Write a brief scope statement for the proposed sustainability policy.

Question 2

List four objectives and specific practices that would support the activities listed in question 1.



Question 3

Draw a line to match each of the following requirements to their correct description.

- | | |
|--|--|
| » Outlines the requirements for mandatory reporting, emissions trading, carbon taxes, environmental protection and standards on energy efficiency and resource use | » Codes of practice |
| » AS/NZS ISO 14001 outlines the requirements for an effective environmental management system | » Commonwealth legislation |
| » Detailed practical guidance on how to comply with requirements and obligations under Act and regulations | » Australian and international standards |
| » Provides a legal framework to protect and manage internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places | » State/territory legislation |

1B Gather and analyse information

Research and gathering information is an important stage in developing a sustainability policy.

Obtaining current information about organisational sustainability requirements is crucial if the policy is going to accurately represent the needs and goals of the organisation. This not only requires research and analysis, but also consultation with relevant personnel who are involved in the day-to-day operations and planning aspects of the business.

When planning to write a sustainability policy, managers should review existing documents, policies and plans to determine the current context, issues, key stakeholders and needs of the organisation.

You can access internal sources of information using the staff portal/intranet, network files and policy manuals. Access external information from reliable websites such as government department and university websites or library services.

Examples of internal and external sources of information are given below.

Internal information sources	External information sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational plans ▪ Annual business plans ▪ Strategic plans ▪ Existing policies and procedures, such as environmental sustainability, work health and safety and code of conduct ▪ Resource and acquisition plans ▪ Budgets ▪ Marketing documents, such as briefs and marketing strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National regulator websites, such as Safe Work Australia ▪ State/territory regulator websites, such as the Environmental Protection Authority ▪ University websites ▪ Codes and standards relating to business ethics, handling dangerous materials, disposing of hazardous wastes, water use, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation ▪ The website of SAI Global which sells Australian and international standards ▪ Local government websites ▪ Industry bodies, such as Business SA ▪ Non-profit and community groups, such as Clean Up Australia

Extra documentation

Check internal records for evidence of actual performance, as well as issues relating to sustainability.

It is important to gather a wide range of information to identify the organisation's needs and issues relevant to organisational sustainability. Such documents may exist as a requirement of legislation or reporting.

Seek out extra documentation relating to:

- relevant legislation and compliance requirements
- audits on current systems for compliance, including any breaches; for example, an incident report on a chemical spill
- current policies and procedures relating to purchasing, recycling, energy use reduction and storage of hazardous substances
- resource use; for example, monthly electricity bill
- the type of paper used and consumption rate; for example, supplier invoices
- meeting notes recording sustainability activities and the commitment of staff to sustainability
- materials safety data sheets, which include specific requirements for handling and storage for the organisation's resources.

Other information about environmental issues can be sought from websites, publications and other media.

Consult with relevant personnel

Every organisation has different types of stakeholders with varying roles depending on its structure, size and relationships.

Effective consultation processes will give your stakeholders an opportunity to provide their input for the decisions to be made, relating to the sustainability policy.

A stakeholder is any person or group who has a 'stake' in the organisation. A stake refers to a degree of influence on the company, or someone who is affected by the operations. Stakeholders can be internal or external and have a direct or indirect influence on the sustainability policy.

The following table describes a range of examples of stakeholders in business services.

<p>Employees at all levels</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Any change in policy and procedures will affect staff, usually by changing or adding to their duties or key performance indicators (KPIs). Sustainability will require changes in procedures for adherence and compliance. Obtaining staff commitment is a crucial aspect.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Staff meetings, intranet, surveys, toolbox meetings, memos, emails, informal discussions, formal group meetings, suggestion boxes, working groups</p>
<p>Key internal personnel</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Decision-makers and those responsible for guiding, implementing and managing sustainability may include directors, board members, finance managers, department managers, and work health and safety personnel.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Meetings, committees, seminars, planning sessions</p>
<p>Customers and clients</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Customers and clients purchase the products and services and are increasingly interested in the environment and sustainability.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Surveys, advertisements and requests for contributions, public presentations, social media, online feedback</p>
<p>Investors and shareholders</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Investors and shareholders have money invested and expect a return, and may want to maintain the status quo or increase investment return.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Shareholders' meetings (including the annual general meeting) or communications (electronic or in print), surveys</p>
<p>Local community</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Production has an impact on the immediate environment. The local community will be keen to see a reduced impact on the environment.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Community forums, focus groups, online feedback, social media, surveys</p>
<p>Suppliers</p>	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Suppliers have a genuine interest in being able to provide input, and will be keen to ensure that they know the standards to be met.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Exhibitions, seminars, industry events, questionnaires and surveys, formal meetings</p>

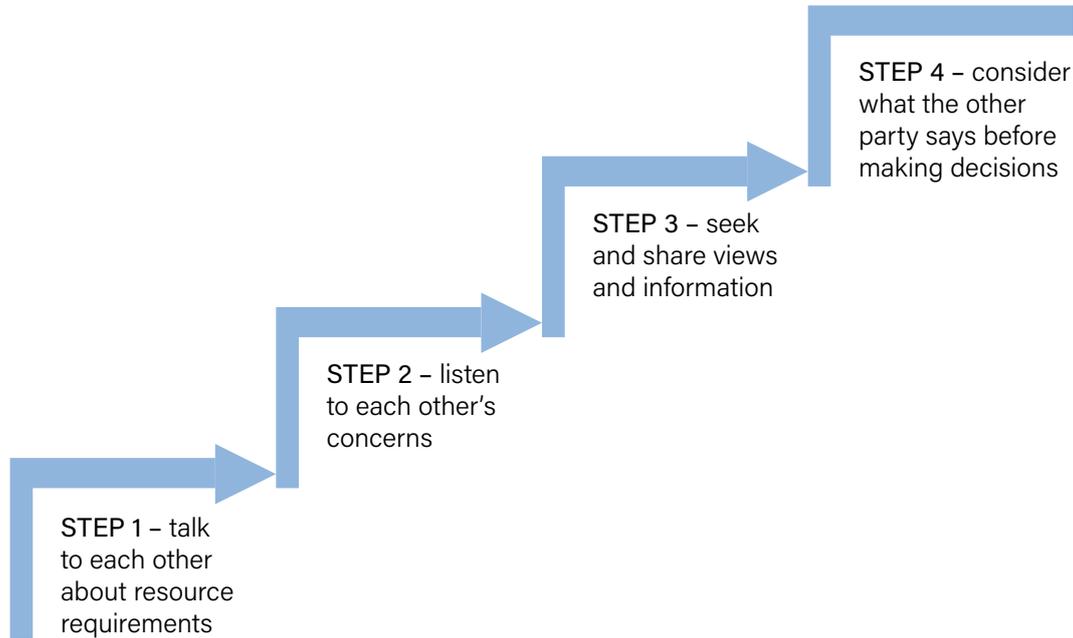
Unions	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Unions aim to protect the rights of employees but may also be interested in promoting sustainability and be willing to lend their support to achieving environmental goals.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Formal meetings, emails, memos or formal written requests</p>
Government agencies and regulators	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Government agencies and regulators provide permits and licences to operate, and regulate compliance with legislation. These entities can give substantial information and support for improved practices and reduced impact on the environment. Local government has an interest in sustainable practices and may be able to give advice and support.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Attend government-sponsored information events, and meet with agency experts to discuss sustainability options</p>
Industry associations	<p>Reason for consultation</p> <p>Industry associations wish the industry to grow and thrive, and may have research and development specialists. They are keen to have the industry reduce its ecological footprint while maintaining competitiveness.</p> <p>Consultation options</p> <p>Industry exhibitions; seminars; meetings with experts in the field; reports and research; and consultation with authors, investigators, and research and development personnel</p>

The consultation process

Consultation involves ensuring other opinions are considered in the planning and decision-making process.

Consultation is a two-way process involving the manager and the organisation's stakeholders. An effective consultation process should encourage stakeholders to participate in developing a sustainability policy that meet the needs and interests of the organisation and its key stakeholders.

The standard four-step framework for a consultation process is provided here.



In most cases a formal meeting involving management will be the appropriate method to facilitate a stakeholder consultation session. This may include brainstorming sessions, facilitator-led discussions or open forums.

If the key stakeholders work or live in different locations, a video conference may be more appropriate.

All stakeholder consultation sessions will need to be scheduled with each attendee to ensure each person is well-prepared and has the time available in their schedule to prepare and participate fully in the consultation process.

Types of consultation methods include the following:

- Meetings where staff feel free to voice concerns or raise issues, in either a formal or informal way, can be used.
- Interviews can be used regularly during operations or at the end of an activity to discuss specific issues one on one.
- Brainstorming sessions in a group to generate ideas, raise concerns and discuss issues in a direct yet informal setting can be used.
- Email/intranet communications can be used to ensure information is available to all employees when teams are not located at the same site or staff work different shifts.
- Newsletters are particularly useful in larger settings or in multisite operations.
- Other consultation processes can be also used, such as workshops, noticeboards, suggestion boxes, planning conferences or videoconferencing to link team members.

Analyse sustainability requirements

A sustainability policy is the proof that the organisation has made a commitment to managing its economic, environmental and social impact and that it is serious about compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Analysing the outcomes from research and consultation processes enables you to identify current and relevant information that is used for decision-making. This forms the foundation of an effective sustainability policy.

Analysing requires that you critically examine the data and information gathered to understand what it all means and how it can be applied to the task at hand. From this step, you will be able to identify the organisation's requirements and determine exactly what content needs to be documented in the sustainability policy.

Analyse sustainability requirements

- Read, review and interpret existing policies, organisational and operational plans, and documents to determine the potential sustainability requirements for the organisation.
- Identify the needs and interests of stakeholders and how stakeholder confidence can be achieved.
- Look for trends and issues for the organisation in the areas of economic, social and environmental performance, compliance and non-compliance.
- Consider legislative and regulatory requirements, standards and codes of practice that affect sustainable business practices.
- Seek feedback and further advice from stakeholders about the requirements to be included in the policy.

Example

Research and analyse information to inform environmental policy

Frank and Steph consider various issues and do research into what they may include in the workplace sustainability policy for PPOS. Given the scope that has been identified, they research:

- local council regulations, waste management and recycling
- requirements for triple bottom line reporting
- the definition and expectations for green purchasing
- requirements for a green office program
- Acts and regulations such as the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)
- information from websites on similar businesses and general websites such as Energy Rating
- sustainability policies from surrounding educational institutions.

Practice Task 2

Question 1

Make a list of the internal and external sources you will research and analyse when developing the sustainability policy for Kare 4 Kidz from Practice Task 1.



Question 2

Number each step from 1 to 5 in the order you would follow when consulting with stakeholders.

- Seek and share views and information
- Schedule a consultation meeting with key stakeholders
- Consider what the other party says before making decisions
- Listen to each other's concerns
- Talk to each other about sustainability requirements

1C Develop sustainability policies

A policy is a statement of intent. The scope, structure and inclusions of the policy must be relevant to the current needs of the business in relation to its internal and external sustainability requirements.

A sustainability policy is a formal business document that reflects the organisation's commitment to sustainability. Like all business policies, it does not need to be complicated. A simple one-page document is generally sufficient for most low-risk businesses.

You can find many variations of a sustainability policy document available online and in different organisations with different information requirements, structure and language style. Apply caution when researching online and focus predominately on government or educational institutions' websites where possible. Usually you'll need to contextualise any sample or template.

The following questions can help you to develop an effective policy and procedure. The questions are divided into five areas of consideration.

Commitment, integration and relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the policy express a commitment to effective management of the relevant business topic, such as health and safety, anti-discrimination, environmental protection, business ethics? Is the policy aligned to the business's mission statement, vision, values and beliefs; overall management system; and activities? Is the policy appropriate to the nature, products and services industry and size of the business operation and to the current or future issues, needs and risks in the workplace?
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the policy express a commitment to legislative/regulatory compliance? Are the relevant legislation and regulations referenced in the policy? Does the policy express a commitment to other non-legally binding criteria such as Australian Standards, approved codes of practice, guidance material as well as other industry or internal standards and government requirements?
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the policy address accountability in: Capacity to assign, delegate, deliver and review the required commitments? Assigning accountability, including roles and responsibilities to relevant people? Is the policy reviewed periodically so it remains relevant as the business, industry and laws change?

Consultation and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the policy and procedure promote the principles of consultation with workers, supervisors, managers, health and safety representatives, health and safety committee members and other relevant stakeholders? Is the policy communicated and made available to all relevant stakeholders?
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the policy and procedure adopt a preventative approach to business management?

A sustainability policy needs to be tailored to fit all aspects of an organisation's activities and encompass any operational approaches undertaken by employees performing their duties, including the three key areas of environmental, economic and social impacts.

Organisations that take sustainability seriously must have an up-to-date policy that communicates their commitment to continuous improvement and effective management of issues in the key areas.

Example

Common structure of a sustainability policy

Components of the sustainability policy	Example
Scope statement outlining the key personnel, issues and context	This policy applies to all BizOps employees, staff, contractors and consultants engaged in operational activities.
Purpose statement explaining the over-arching intent	The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework for expressing BizOps's commitment to the incorporation of sustainability principles and practices in its operations and initiatives.
Compliance with specific legal requirements such as Acts and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)</i> <i>Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)</i> <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (NSW)</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)</i>

Components of the sustainability policy	Example
<p>Voluntary or industry-required compliance with codes of practice and performance indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model Code of Practice: How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace ▪ Model Code of Practice: How to safely remove asbestos ▪ Model Code of Practice: Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace ▪ Model Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities
<p>Objectives that establish the agreed outcomes the organisation hopes to achieve as a result of implementation</p>	<p>The objectives of this policy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foster a culture of sustainability and reducing the organisation's ecological footprint ▪ Incorporate principles and understanding of sustainability into all aspects of business operations and initiatives ▪ Incorporate sustainability performance alongside other KPIs of the organisation.
<p>Performance indicators that explain the metrics that will be used to measure and review the sustainability performance of the business, including the basis for how the objectives will be evaluated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase direct energy consumption by primary energy sources per unit of output by 15 per cent ▪ Increase the proportion of products sold and their packaging materials that are reclaimed by category by 8 per cent ▪ Reduce our carbon footprint by 5 per cent
<p>Activities and strategies that will be implemented to achieve the objectives and the time frames and associated costs for implementing these activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement training and education programs to workers about recycling and responsible use of resources ▪ Implement expenditure control processes and authorisation procedures ▪ Integrate an environmental management system into operations

Components of the sustainability policy	Example
Key roles and responsibilities, including senior management, staff and other key stakeholders that are required to carry out key tasks and duties associated with the policy	<p>The CEO is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing and implementing sustainability strategies to achieve the objectives set out in the policy ▪ Ensuring compliance with all relevant laws and regulations ▪ Continuous improvement of the organisation's social, environmental and economic performance ▪ Promoting the principles of sustainability to the workforce.
Common sustainability issues that the organisation is managing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental waste management ▪ Human health and safety ▪ Economic performance and profitability, including the reduction of losses and expenses ▪ Social responsibility
Recordkeeping processes that explain how the policy will be stored and where it can be found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This policy will be stored on the company portal in the policies and procedures folder
Review and improvement processes that explain how the policy will be reviewed and improved over time and who is responsible for carrying out these tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The policy will be reviewed by management every three years and improvements made to ensure the policy remains current with changes in the internal and external operating environment, including the regulatory framework under which the organisation operates.

Consider the costs

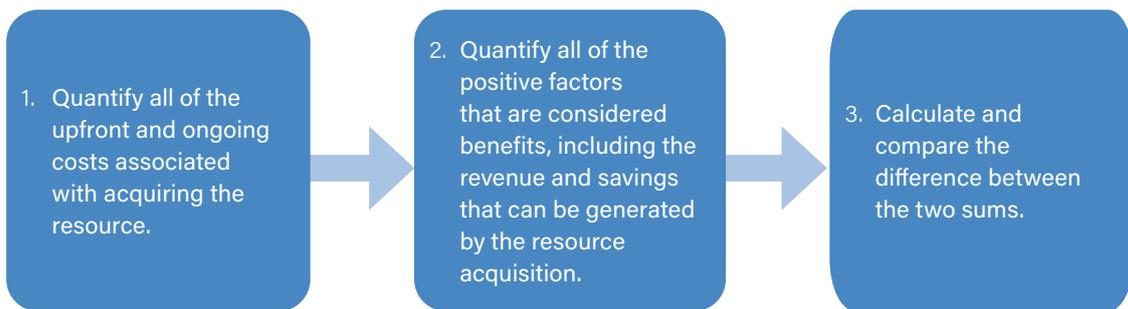
Sustainability policies and strategies involve purchasing or using resources which can cost organisations a lot of money and impact on its bottom line.

Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is a model that is commonly used in business to identify the viability of an investment. It is a simple means of quantifying the project costs and benefits to identify whether to go ahead with a project.

A CBA should be used to assess whether the sustainability strategies outlined in the policy are economically worthwhile. By translating the benefits and costs into current monetary values a judgment can be made in relation to the proposal.

For example, estimate the cost of purchasing an energy-efficient printer with the ability to print on both sides, versus the estimated reduction in energy and paper costs. Look for ways that some of the strategies could be ‘cost neutral’ (expenditure is balanced by the money saved or no expenditure is required).

A CBA requires you to complete three key steps.



The difference between the two will show whether the strategies are financially beneficial for the business. If the value of the benefits outweighs the value of the costs, the strategies and resource purchases will most likely be of value to the organisation.

Determine quantifiable costs and benefits

Quantification involves identifying the monetary value of costs and benefits to the organisation. This process is important as it will highlight the true value received in the short- and long-term for the organisation.

Here are some examples of cost and revenue areas to consider when doing a CBA.

Cost areas (Costs)	Revenue areas (Benefits)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and development costs Implementation costs Operating/maintenance costs (ongoing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct and indirect sales from existing products and services Immediate and long-term sales from existing products and services Opportunities to generate sales from the development of new products or services New business opportunities, such as partnering with other organisations or expanding into new market segments

In addition to the revenue that can be generated from implementing a strategy, sustainability is also about financial performance, including reducing waste, expenses and driving profits. It is therefore important to identify the cost savings, as these can often be of more value to the organisation's bottom line.

There are essentially three types of savings that can be made from a sustainability strategy.

Direct savings	Quantitative savings directly attributed to the strategy. For example, reduced administration or purchasing costs.
Costing avoidance	Spending that is no longer needed as a result of implementing the strategy. For example, the organisation no longer has to pay ongoing fees for an existing resource.
Intangible benefits	Qualitative benefits as a result of implementing the strategy. For example, less time manually processing administrative tasks and increased automation allows staff to concentrate on more meaningful tasks.

Consider the time lines

You must consider time lines for implementing strategies to ensure the operations of the business are not adversely affected.

Identify those initiatives that can be implemented quickly and those that are long term. For example, procedures to allow the organisation to switch to recycled paper and introduce non-disposable cups and cutlery can be put in place relatively easily, whereas sourcing green suppliers will take more time. Make sure time lines are realistic and not so long term that they are ineffective.

Document the policy

All content of a policy must be documented in a clear and professional format so that all readers can access, read and understand the requirements.

Many organisations use existing online versions and templates of policies and simply adapt the wording and make minor amendments to suit their workplace. This may be acceptable as a starting point; however, it does not mean that the policy will be relevant or compliant with the legislative and regulatory requirements specific to the small business.

Another common mistake made when writing a policy is using legal jargon and copying legislative provisions from the Act and regulations, word for word. Policies should be contextualised to represent the unique conditions and needs of the workplace and give enough information to workers and managers about the internal rules and standards that must be adhered to.

Key tips for documenting an effective policy:

- Write the policy in plain English and consider the language and literacy levels of your audience.
- Ensure objectives are clear so any reader can understand the intended outcomes that need to be achieved.
- Be straight to the point and use clear and concise language.
- Avoid legal jargon, complex language and long paragraphs.
- Aim to communicate as simply and effectively as possible, as appropriate for the intended audience.
- Do not try to cover every possible interpretation and issue, nor should you try to accommodate all exceptions, which can complicate its understanding.
- If an action is mandatory, use the word 'must'. If the action is recommended, use 'recommended'.
- Use the present tense and active voice where possible.
- Avoid gender-specific pronouns: for example, use 'they' instead of 'he or she'.
- Where acronyms are considered helpful, give the full term/title before using the acronym: for example, use environmental management system (EMS).

Practice Task 3

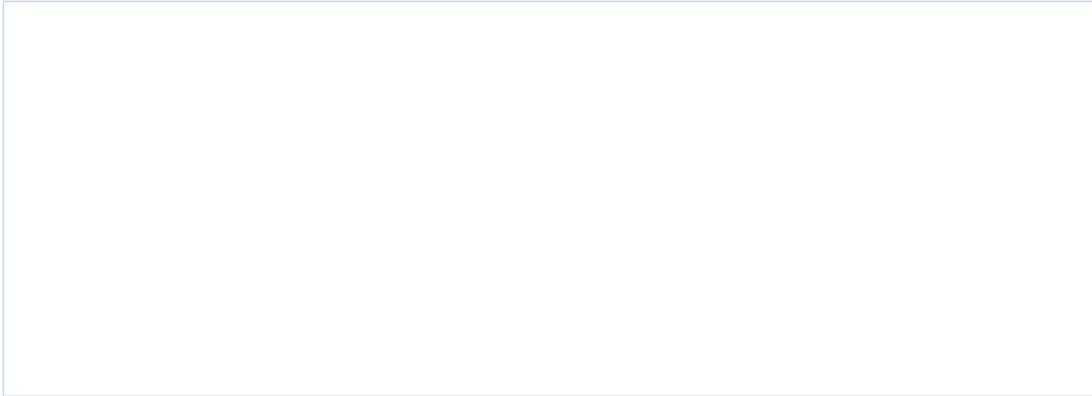
Question 1

Draw a line to match each term about sustainability policy inclusions to its definition.

- | | |
|--|---|
| » Activities, time frames and costs | » The agreed outcomes that the organisation hopes to achieve as a result of implementing the policy |
| » Record keeping, review and improvement processes | » The metrics used to measure and review the sustainability performance of the business, including the basis for how the objectives will be evaluated |
| » Objectives | » The strategies that will be implemented to achieve the objectives and the time frames and associated costs for implementing these activities |
| » Performance indicators | » Key personnel who are required to carry out tasks and take ownership of specific requirements of the policy |
| » Roles and responsibilities | » How the policy will be stored, reviewed and improved over time to ensure it remains current with the needs and environment of the organisation |

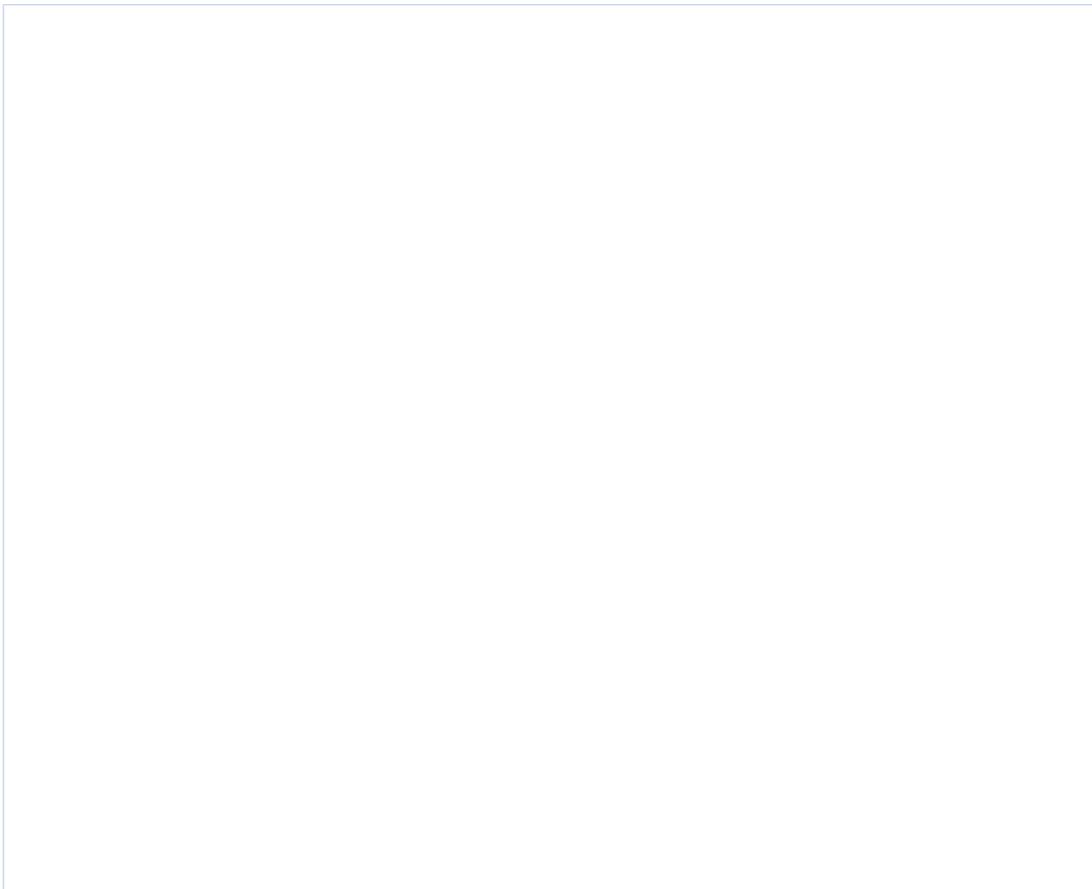
Question 2

List three possible issues that may need to be managed as a part of a sustainability policy.



Question 3

Explain five principles you need to follow when documenting the content of a policy.



1D Incorporate implementation and continuous improvement processes

A sustainability policy needs to be supported by clear plans for implementation.

A key step in the successful integration and performance of the policy is to document the details of the implementation process. An advantage of doing this is that each activity can be evaluated and, more importantly, compared with each other in their demands and expectations. There may well be areas of synergy that will allow you to save time, money or human resources. Areas of conflict could include time lines, or demands on personnel or business areas.

The information below outlines the key activities that form part of the implementation process.

Description of initiative	Give a clear description, including what the initiative should accomplish and how it integrates with the organisation's strategic planning.
Targets and time lines	<p>Set clear, understandable goals that are measurable and realistic so everyone is able to be committed and achieve the targets. Detail how these will be set and measured, including review time lines.</p> <p>Targets may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ dates for implementation and milestones ▪ deliverables, including progress reports ▪ standards and performance, including KPIs ▪ review dates. <p>Time lines include dates for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ project start ▪ implementation of communication strategy ▪ target dates for achievements ▪ training schedules.
Resources	<p>Determine resource requirements (physical, human and financial) and the type, style, quantity and time required. Securing agreement on resource requirements will lead to ownership and commitment for acquisition of the necessary resources.</p> <p>Document the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ quantity and specification of resources required ▪ staff/contractors needed: where and when ▪ funding options ▪ date resources are needed ▪ potential suppliers.

Implementation approach and impact	<p>Identify which areas will be affected and how this will be addressed. For example, downtime for equipment changeover could offer an opportunity for staff training.</p> <p>Give details on training that will be needed and which employees will need to attend.</p> <p>Identify the resource requirements for implementation.</p>
Promotion and communication	<p>Give an overview of how the initiative will be presented and promoted to stakeholder groups, including the workforce. You will need to get agreement early to allow planning and lead time to produce the required communications, follow up arrangements and secure commitment from departments; for example, human resources.</p> <p>Determine the options for communicating with external stakeholders and promoting the organisation. Agreement will enable public relations staff to plan communications, capitalise on opportunities and secure commitment to the policies.</p> <p>Here are the communication options that need to be determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What needs to be communicated when and to whom ▪ Methods of communication ▪ Timetable for communications and follow-up ▪ Procedure for handling inquiries ▪ How the organisation will measure effectiveness of communication, awareness and targets achieved.
Staff training	<p>Determine the knowledge and skills shortfalls and plan a training program to remedy these gaps. Agreeing on the training needs with an internal training specialist or external provider enables the commitment and lead time to develop materials and training schedules.</p> <p>You will need to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the number of people to be trained, on what tasks, and by when ▪ the method for delivering training ▪ who will carry out the training ▪ the materials/resources required ▪ a schedule of training dates.
Responsibility, monitoring and reporting	<p>Detail who will be responsible for reporting on the implementation of the different aspects of the initiative. Outline the monitoring process and the reports that will be generated.</p> <p>Secure written agreement on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who is responsible for what task over what time frame ▪ methods of reporting and time lines for reporting ▪ processes for dealing with issues.
Review and improvement	<p>Give a review time line and process for reviewing and making improvements to the policy. A general review period would range from two to five years. Management should be involved in all policy review processes.</p>

Continuous improvement

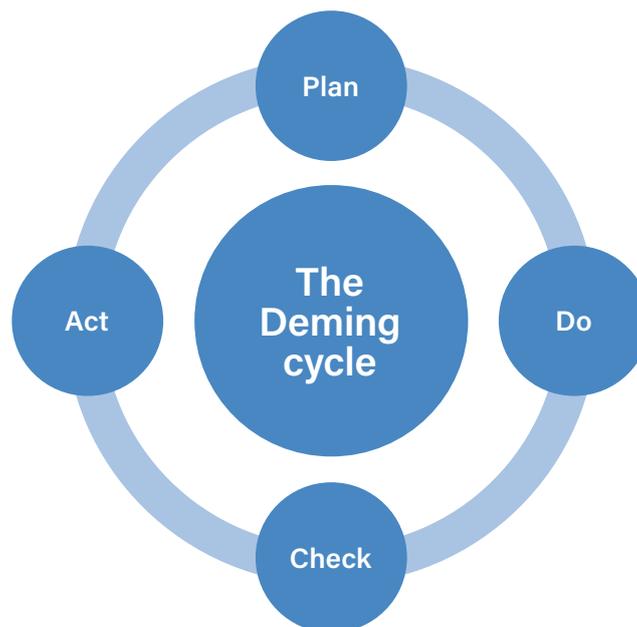
Continuous improvement (CI) literally means ‘change for the better’. CI should be included as part of the planning and development stage of the sustainability policy. A policy that is current today may be redundant in two years’ time due to changes in the regulatory environment and the internal context.

One of the most commonly used CI theories is Deming’s cycle, more commonly known as the ‘plan, do, check, act’ (PDCA) cycle. Deming created the cycle in the 1950s.

The cycle involves the following:

- Plan – Determine the organisation’s operating environment, needs and sustainability issues. Develop an effective policy that explains the scope, objectives and actions to improve and maintain sustainability performance.
- Do – Implement the policy, with the knowledge that you will not achieve 100-percent success and certain areas will need to be improved.
- Check – Collect verifiable data and assess the organisation’s sustainability performance. Compare what should be happening with what is happening.
- Act – Identify the key learnings from the evaluation process and decide how sustainability can be improved. Update the policy accordingly. Implement corrective actions to reverse a negative trend or remove a root cause that is stifling performance. Communicate the changes to stakeholders.

Begin the cycle again if the change did not work or there are factors in the organisation’s external or internal environments that affect the policy.



Example

Further policy initiatives

When the directors of PPOS agreed to develop a workplace sustainability policy they also agreed to develop a statement outlining their commitment to sustainability and supporting the environment. This formal statement is issued to the local media (newspapers, radio and television). It explains the initiatives that they will consider to promote sustainability in relation to their products and services.

The directors drafted a sustainability statement and policy that incorporates the following initiatives:

- a 'green discount account' for account clients who purchase environmentally friendly products and services
- a competition for local high school students to write an essay on a sustainability, with the winners to receive green products and discounts from PPOS
- a billboard displaying the company's monthly energy use designed by local Year 6 students.

Practice Task 4

Question 1

Which of the following elements need to be part of the implementation plan? Tick all that apply.

- Costs and benefits
- Consulting with stakeholders
- Implementation approach and impact
- Promotion, communication and staff training
- Responsibility, monitoring and reporting

Question 2

Draw a line to match each term about the PDCA CI cycle to its definition.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| » Act | » Develop an effective policy that explains the scope, objectives and actions to improve and maintain sustainability performance. |
| » Check | » Implement the policy, with the knowledge that you will not achieve 100-per-cent success and certain areas will need to be improved. |
| » Plan | » Collect verifiable data and assess the organisation's sustainability performance. Compare what should be happening with what is happening. |
| » Do | » Identify the key learnings from the evaluation process and decide how sustainability can be improved. Update the policy accordingly. |

Summary

- Sustainable business is about staying informed about the demands and impacts of the market and remaining profitable over time, with minimal negative impacts to the environment and its people.
- Organisational policies provide the framework for developing strategies, programs and actions for business sustainability.
- For policies to be successful, the broad scope and objectives must be clearly defined at the start of the development process.
- Obtaining current information about organisational sustainability requirements is crucial for the policy to accurately represent the organisation's needs and goals.
- Gathering information involves research and analysis.
- You must also consult with relevant personnel who are involved in the day-to-day operations and planning aspects of the business.
- There is no single structure or format for a sustainability policy. The document must accurately reflect the unique needs of the organisation.
- A sustainability policy needs to be supported by clear plans for implementing options that help the organisation achieve the overall goals in the policy statement.
- A policy that is current today may be redundant in two years' time due to changes in the regulatory environment and the internal context.

Learning Checkpoint 1

Prepare workplace sustainability policies

Part A

1. Draw a line to identify each of the following pieces of information for the development of a policy as either an internal or external source.

» Guidance materials published by the Environment Protection Authority

» Internal source of information

» Invoices and utility bills showing resource usage of the business

» Internal source of information

» Existing organisational strategies, policies and procedures

» Internal source of information

» Outcomes of a consultation process with the management team

» External source of information

» Research conducted by a peak industry body

» External source of information

» Australian Standards and codes of practice

» External source of information

2. Describe an appropriate consultation method and process that can be used to gather information about policy inclusions.

3. Give **three** examples of analysing insights from research and consultation for a sustainability policy.

4. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- a) Record keeping processes are an essential element of an effective sustainability policy. » Yes » No

- b) Time frames and costs of strategies should be considered when planning and developing a sustainability policy. » Yes » No

- c) CI and review processes must be included as part of writing and implementing a sustainability policy. » Yes » No

- d) A successful implementation process must include modifications to ensure the policy is current. » Yes » No

5. Describe at least **two** pieces of legislation, codes of practice and Australian or international standards that affect your current or chosen industry in relation to sustainability.

6. Identify **three** features of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

7. Explain the information you need and the benefit of a CBA when planning to implement a sustainability strategy.

Part B

Read the following case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Sustainability Policy – Bellissimo Cafés Pty Ltd

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for expressing our commitment to managing our environmental, ecological and social impacts, minimising financial losses and maintaining profitability and return for our shareholders.

We will do this by:

- ensuring sustainability is an integral part of our business plans
- complying with all relevant legislation and regulations
- encouraging a socially responsible culture
- applying sustainable solutions to all work practices
- purchasing recycled and green products and enacting the principles of minimising waste generation
- entering strategic partnerships with ethical businesses
- implementing fair trade agreements with all suppliers
- ensuring all staff are aware of, and trained in, sustainability practices
- continually reviewing and improving sustainability initiatives
- reporting on breaches and non-compliance with this policy.

Every manager, employee and supplier must comply with this policy.

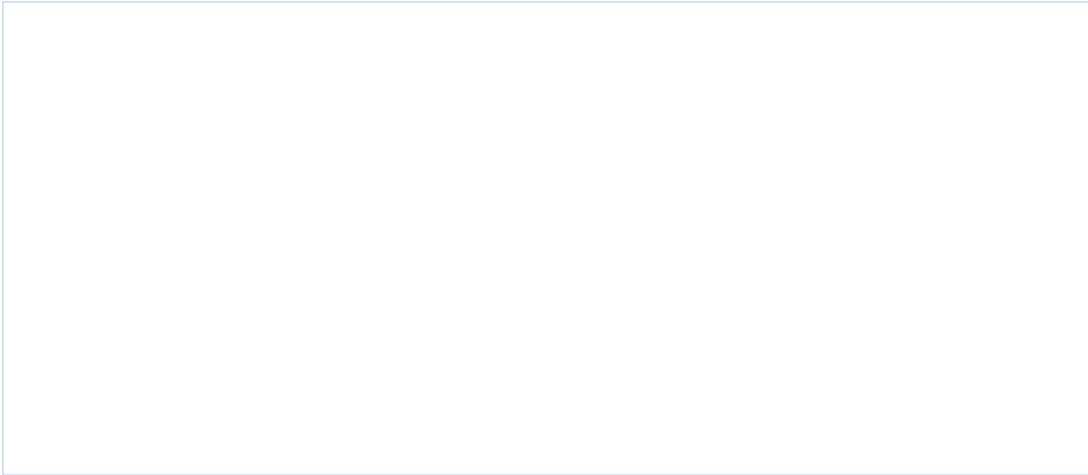
1. Write a brief scope statement, at least two objectives and at least two performance indicators for the sustainability policy.

2. Outline the **three** key sustainability issues that are addressed in the policy.

3. Briefly describe at least **three** activities that need to be implemented to support the objectives of the policy.

4. List **three** responsibilities of staff as part of the policy.

5. List **three** responsibilities of the management team.





Topic 2 | Implement sustainability policies

- 2A Present policies and implementation processes to stakeholders
- 2B Provide resources to support policy implementation
- 2C Track continuous improvements in sustainability

2A Present policies and implementation processes to stakeholders

Once the sustainability policy and implementation process has been developed, it is essential that key stakeholders are informed.

Although key stakeholders will have been involved at the draft stage, a prepared and considered communication approach will ensure that all those involved understand what the sustainability policy is trying to achieve and the specific actions the organisation is going to take.

Implementing a policy without first making sure it has full support will create problems such as those stemming from lack of commitment and confusion about what to do and why it has to be done.

Methods for presenting information

The first rule of communicating is to identify the audience and its needs.

Your audience could be your staff members, team leaders and supervisors. The most appropriate communication method and content can vary significantly between these groups.

The people you communicate with may have difficulties with the English language or not understand some of the technical terms and industry jargon often used in the organisation. In some cases, they may need assistive technology.

Here are some strategies to help you adapt your communication style to groups and individuals in your organisation and ensure that the message is communicated effectively.

Understand the audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does your audience already know? ▪ What is the demographic profile and how will this affect understanding? ▪ Will they understand jargon and technical terminology? ▪ Do they have any needs to be addressed, such as a hearing or visual impairment?
Plan methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it be spoken or written? ▪ Will be formal or informal? ▪ What are the main points? ▪ What media will you use? ▪ Will diagrams and visual aids help comprehension? ▪ Is the environment too noisy? ▪ Do you need a private area?

Communicate clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Repeat and restate in verbal communication. ▪ Use plain language in written communication. ▪ Make eye contact in verbal communication. ▪ Use sequence signal words such as first, second, then – when giving or writing instructions. ▪ Use appropriate tone, pitch and intonation. ▪ Consider your pace when speaking – not too fast or too slow. ▪ Be conscious of which words/parts of the communication you emphasise.
Check for understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask direct questions to ensure the audience understands the message you are communicating. ▪ Take into account language and literacy skills of the audience to ensure they understand the whole message. ▪ Listen actively. ▪ Consider body language – nonverbal communication accounts for up to 70 per cent of meaning in spoken interactions.

Identify appropriate communication methods

Formal and informal methods of communication are important for a leader to ensure policies, plans and objectives are achieved.

Here is a comparison between formal and informal communication techniques that can be used to communicate the details of the sustainability policies and implementation processes.

Formal methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formal business presentation ▪ Team meetings, agenda and minutes of meetings ▪ Email (can also be informal) with an attachment or link ▪ One-on-one scheduled meetings
Informal methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phone conversation ▪ Discussing the plan informally during a work day ▪ Email (can also be formal) with an attachment or link ▪ Information posted on noticeboards

Techniques for conveying communication

Communicating must involve more than simply speaking and writing.

It needs to include opportunities for two-way interaction, listening, exchanging ideas and consultation, as well as nonverbal communication. Multiple communication techniques may be necessary to present the information correctly and to allow for discussion and feedback.

There are advantages and disadvantages with some communication methods, as shown here.

Verbal - individual	
Examples: face-to-face contact; telephone conversation	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear message ▪ Direct and instant ▪ Provides opportunity for interaction 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistency of message across similar exchanges ▪ Message may be misunderstood if communication skills are poor ▪ Time-consuming
Verbal - group	
Examples: meeting; discussion group	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sends consistent message ▪ Provides opportunity for questioning and sharing ▪ Provides chance for agreed approach 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time-consuming ▪ Can be hard to organise ▪ Different personality types can dominate or withdraw
Written - electronic	
Examples: emails; intranet posting	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quick and efficient ▪ Sends consistent message ▪ Visually effective 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cannot be sure message is read ▪ Message may be misinterpreted
Written - open	
Examples: displaying the sustainability policy in a prominent place; posting a newsletter	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sends consistent message ▪ Provides a record ▪ Reaches a wide audience 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No opportunity for response ▪ Impersonal ▪ Cannot be sure message is read ▪ Production time and costs involved

Presentation – face to face	
Example: public address for a large group of staff members	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual as well as verbal • Captures interest 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-way communication only • Not always correctly interpreted • No clear record • Uncertain whether message is accepted by all
Presentation – online facilitated	
Example: webinar	
Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves costs on travel • Ability to record, save and disseminate • Anonymous participation is possible • No limit on number of participants • Visually effective • Can reach remote audience 	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical problems • Requires high-speed internet for sender and receiver • Requires technical know-how for sender and receiver • Interaction is limited • Time frame for live event is binding • Participants can be easily distracted

Effective verbal communication skills

Clear communication of the expectations of sustainability policies and implementation processes helps build team commitment.

Your role is to clearly explain what an organisation expects of their work teams, in terms of performance and outcomes to be achieved for sustainability.

A helpful strategy is to prepare some key points beforehand – particularly when addressing more than one person. Sort the information you want to present, divide it into logical sections and make it as clear and specific as you can. Be sure of your material and give examples where appropriate. Strive for confidence in your delivery.

Hints for effective verbal communication

- Relate your message to your audience members, their needs and their point of view.
- Customise your message to the listener's normal communication style, listening skills and familiarity with the subject.
- If you over-explain or talk down to your audience, they may resent your approach and feel disrespected.
- If you speak aggressively or in language people cannot understand, they may retreat, ignore you or feel confused.
- Your tone of voice is important. It needs to engage those around you and maintain their interest.
- Effective speakers learn to recognise their listeners' reactions and adjust their delivery accordingly.
- Always give your audience a chance to ask questions.

Identify 'relevant' stakeholders

Stakeholders are groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist.

One of the most important considerations leaders need to make is to accurately identify relevant team members and other personnel who need to know about the sustainability policies and implementation processes. These people are referred to as stakeholders, as they have an impact on the outcomes of the operational plan. All relevant stakeholders need to be involved in the presentation process.

Questions to ask to identify relevant stakeholders for sharing information:

- Who has an impact on the organisation's objectives?
- Who is affected by the organisation's objectives?
- Who needs to be kept 'in the loop'?
- What role does each stakeholder play regarding this information?
- What level of engagement do they represent?
 - High interest/high power → fully engage
 - High power/low interest → keep satisfied
 - Low power/high interest → keep informed
 - Low power/low interest → minimum effort

Example

Using appropriate methods and language

Paulina is the team leader of a diverse group of people working in a manufacturing organisation. She is especially mindful when communicating with team members, in particular those whose first language is not English.

She uses the following strategies when communicating the sustainability strategies, objectives and targets:

- Small team meetings to allow for lots of discussion and questions, followed up with an email that summarises the organisation's goals
- Simple/plain language
- Avoid jargon and overly technical language
- Chunk information and deliver small bits of information at a time
- Use pictures/diagram and other visuals
- Ensure messages are delivered in a space where she can be clearly heard.

Practice Task 5

Question 1

Which of the following are considered informal methods of communication? Tick all that apply.

- Phone conversation
- Chatting during breaks
- Team meeting agenda
- Email
- Social networking
- Written reports

Question 2

Which of the following strategies are things to consider when communicating with stakeholders? Tick all that apply.

- Always use technical terms and jargon
- Speak from the heart
- Know your audience
- Confirm understanding from audience
- Use plain language

Question 3

What questions can you ask yourself to help identify the key stakeholders?

2B Provide resources to support policy implementation

A range of resources will support achievement of the agreed objectives.

A resource is something that is of value to a person or organisation that helps in the achievement of goals.

Every business policy relies on the right types and quantities of resources to ensure team members can effectively implement strategies. As a leader, you will need to be instrumental in helping the business to achieve the agreed objectives. To do this, you must plan for the resources needed to complete the tasks that will fulfil your sustainability strategies.

Before you can accurately outline resource requirements, you must understand the agreed objectives and strategies, needs of clients/customers, budgets and time lines.

The four main types of resources needed to fulfil the day-to-day requirements of a sustainability strategy are described below.

Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subject matter experts (SMEs) ▪ Skilled workers and specialised staff ▪ Technicians ▪ Managers and supervisors ▪ Labourers and frontline workers ▪ Support staff ▪ Contractors and consultants
Physical resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tools and equipment ▪ Stock/products that will be on-sold to customers ▪ Stationery items ▪ Machinery ▪ Facilities and buildings ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Materials and consumables
Financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Money to purchase or acquire information, people, physical equipment or systems
Systems resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Software applications ▪ Management systems

Identify resource needs

Obtaining accurate information about internal resources is crucial. It not only requires research and analysis, but also consultation with relevant personnel. It is a key component in resource planning due to the impacts on organisational budgets, productivity and performance of the proposed policy.

When planning for resource needs, you should review existing business plans and additional organisational documents.

Examples of information sources for resource requirements:

- Operational plans
- Annual business plans
- Strategic plans
- Sustainability policies and procedures
- Resource and acquisition plans
- Supplier agreements
- Budgets
- Marketing documents, such as briefs and marketing strategies

Consult resource specialists

Decisions affecting budgets, resourcing, stocks and logistics will be more accurate when the right people are involved in the resource acquisition process. Most large companies, and many smaller ones, have specialist groups and/or divisions you may need to consult with. People in these areas can advise you on company policies, procedures, safety issues and legislative requirements. They can also help in planning your resources and may even offer some creative solutions if your budget is tight.

Relevant personnel you may need to consult about resource requirements can include:

- Technical experts/SMEs, such as IT staff
- Colleagues
- Specialist resource managers, such as HR managers
- Other managers and supervisors, such as purchasing department managers
- Colleagues or contacts with specialist responsibilities, such as those involved in workplace health and safety committees
- Other employees.

Analyse and document resource requirements

Successful implementation of sustainability policies and strategies must include all of the resources needed for the team or department to achieve the agreed objectives.

Analyse resource requirements	Review organisational and operational plans and objectives and consult with key stakeholders to determine the potential resource requirements for the team/department. Resource needs may include human, physical, systems or financial resources.
Document resource requirements	Collate all of the resources into a professional plan, such as a segment of the implementation strategy, or a specific resource plan. You will need to document the type of resource, quantities, time lines for when they are needed and costs.

Example

Resource plan template

Objectives			
Objective #1			
Objective #2			
Objective #3			
Acquisition strategy			
Resource	Acquisition method	Supplier details	Acquisition date
Time lines			
Resource	Order date	Estimated receipt date	Allocation date

Acquire physical resources and services

As a leader with responsibility for implementing policies and strategies, you need to ensure that staff and other supervisors and managers have access to the necessary resources so that planned outcomes can be achieved.

Resource acquisition for many organisations occurs in line with defined procurement and acquisition policies, practices and procedures, which may consider the aspects shown below.

Standard operating procedures
Standard operating procedures (SOPs) clearly define the process of acquiring resources, and employees are required to follow the procedures. The SOPs may vary depending on the specific size or value of the resources to be obtained. A distinct advantage of having SOPs is that all tasks are well-documented and readily available for managers to use. Following SOPs will generate standard records and thus make the acquisition of resources a consistent process with reliable outcomes.
Organisational culture
Organisational culture is defined as the attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values of an organisation that have developed over time and are shared by the people in it. Good organisational culture can benefit an organisation with cooperation and communication supporting the acquisition of resources – which can occur in an efficient and effective manner rather than one that is detailed and lengthy. For example, borrowing several reams of paper from another department, instead of formally obtaining paper through the supply department (which takes two days).
Organisational guidelines
Organisational guidelines for acquiring human and physical resources are generally well-documented and are part of the standard procedures that managers must follow. The level of delegated authority held by a manager may determine the level of commitment they can make in acquiring resources.

Confirm procurement policies, procedures and practices

The term 'procurement' means to plan for and acquire (or purchase) resources.

An organisation will generally establish policies and procedures to outline how physical resources and services are purchased. These documents aim to guide those in a position to acquire resources, to ensure procurements meet organisational requirements including in relation to quality, time, cost, quantity, selection and use of preferred suppliers, methods of payment and any associated risk.

Organisations will also implement a policy on the total number of vendors, as limiting this can deliver cost savings and enhance the vendor relationship by increasing business with fewer preferred vendors.

Managers must evaluate purchasing and acquisition practices against organisational requirements, and ensure policies and procedures for resource acquisition are being followed.

Refer to the organisation's purchasing policies and procedures:

- Does the organisation order in advance and store items, or is it more likely to do just-in-time ordering?
- Does the organisation buy in bulk?
- Does the organisation have a procedure for obtaining quotes?
- Can staff members order resources or must an order go through a frontline manager or a purchasing officer?
- Is purchasing done by a tender arrangement?
- Do you need to understand an inventory system to know if something is in stock?
- Are there policies about the type of item purchased, such as only buying recycled paper or Australian-made goods?
- Are there procedures for when the item arrives to ensure the required quantity has arrived and that it is in good order?
- Who is responsible for specific purchasing procedures?

Support implementation of sustainability processes

To successfully carry out their responsibilities, team members need support from leaders and managers.

The level of support that you can offer your team members will vary depending on their needs, preferences, performance and level of challenge.

A range of support strategies are outlined below.

Supervision	<p>Providing supervisory support is key to ensuring team members are working effectively and efficiently and supporting the initiatives of the organisation. It also enables managers to gain a personal understanding of the team members' outputs and skill gaps, through a process of direct observation.</p> <p>Supervision involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistently observing the performance of team members ▪ Measuring and testing outcomes during and after the completion of tasks ▪ Conducting physical site/job inspections and observing tasks completed or in progress ▪ Making yourself available at the ground level to provide input into activities and correct issues as they occur ▪ Monitoring the health and safety of workers and other people who come into contact with the job site ▪ Providing relevant instructions to team members about policies and strategies.
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<p>Coaching</p>	<p>Coaching can be used to support effective team performance in sustainable work practices. On-the-job coaching is cost-effective, uses in-house expertise and gives instant feedback on progress.</p> <p>This method is a two-way process that is aimed at bringing out the best in a person and is one of the most effective ways of developing the competencies of workers at all levels. It involves facilitating an individual’s technical competence – using instructions, observing their performance, giving them opportunities to reflect on and develop their skills and offering advice on how they can improve their skills. In this process, the coach is proactively involved day-to-day in the development of team members.</p>
<p>Training</p>	<p>Training is a key part of the continuous improvement cycle and team members should be given regular opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge to support sustainability policies and strategies.</p> <p>Training opportunities may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online training ▪ External study using professional courses and education ▪ One-to-one on-the-job training ▪ Tutorials ▪ Group discussions
<p>Mentoring</p>	<p>Mentoring is based on a relationship that is more extended and personalised than coaching. The term ‘mentor’ is defined as a trusted counsellor or guide who is usually older, more experienced, and who guides the mentee through their development. Mentoring involves encouraging self-development, problem-solving, leadership, innovation, listening and questioning, sharing experiences and enabling team members to work things out for themselves.</p> <p>In this process, the mentor meets periodically with the team member to discuss issues, shortfalls and opportunities for development.</p>

Address implementation barriers

Initial planning stages for the implementation of sustainability policies and strategies must identify and plan for barriers to change.

<p style="text-align: center;">Common barriers to change</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of understanding of why change is needed and how it will impact ▪ Lack of employee involvement in the change process ▪ Poor employee morale ▪ Failure to tailor communications to stakeholder groups ▪ Lack of resources ▪ Resistance to a change in culture ▪ Past experience of change leaving negative attitudes to change ▪ Limited management support for the process ▪ Past experience of failed change initiatives

Barriers to change are most commonly experienced in staff.

Employee counselling

Organisational change involving a redundancy can be very stressful – not only for those who have been made redundant but also for those who remain. Managers and employees should be offered personal counselling and affected staff members should be assisted to present their skills in a positive way in preparation for finding new employment. Some organisations choose to outsource this counselling to behavioural and occupational psychologists to ensure that the impact is minimised.

Recognition and rewards

Recognition provided through feedback, acknowledgments or rewards gives those directly involved and affected by change a sense of achievement and incentive to continue with the new behaviours, attitudes and practices, knowing that their efforts are valued. Formal and informal reward systems help to embed a change by encouraging the new behaviours and attitudes to become the norm.

Deal with conflict

Conflict can be positive and even actively encouraged to shake up the current state. However, if conflict is not managed, the change will not be successfully implemented.

Negotiate outcomes

Negotiation should aim to seek a win-win outcome. This can be promoted by:

- Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Focus on needs, not wants or positions.
- Identify and emphasise common ground.
- Explore creative options.
- Make agreements.

Key negotiation skills include appropriate assertiveness and active listening.

Management support

Managers need to be proactive in giving team members adequate support in the form of:

- Training and education
- Supervision
- Coaching and mentoring support
- Sufficient resources.

Practice Task 6

Question 1

Which of the following information sources will help determine organisational resource requirements? Select yes or no for each one.

- | | | |
|--|-------|------|
| a) Operational plans | » Yes | » No |
| b) Policies and procedures | » Yes | » No |
| c) Business legislation | » Yes | » No |
| d) Team budgets | » Yes | » No |
| e) Environmental management system (EMS) | » Yes | » No |

Question 2

List two things managers can do to ensure resources are purchased and acquired in line with workplace policies and procedures.

Question 3

List three strategies that could be used to support team members to address barriers to change.

Question 4

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- | | | |
|---|-------|------|
| a) Past experience can affect attitudes towards a change management process. | » Yes | » No |
| b) Staff surveys are a good way of exploring why a barrier to change has arisen. | » Yes | » No |
| c) Conflict can arise when implementing changes; however, it is always a negative. | » Yes | » No |
| d) Mitigation strategies need to be developed to address all of the potential barriers to change. | » Yes | » No |

2C Track continuous improvements in sustainability

Continuous improvement is not about fixing problems as they arise but creating an environment in which improvement is always encouraged; adopting this mindset can benefit all areas of the workplace.

In an environmental context, continuous improvement (CI) is defined in ISO 14001:2015 as ‘the process of enhancing the environmental management system to achieve improvements in overall environmental performance in line with the organisation’s environmental policy’.

An ongoing evaluation process makes it possible to determine whether the organisation is achieving the agreed sustainability objectives and targets. Organisational performance needs to be monitored and evaluated to determine if a tangible benefit has resulted.

To evaluate performance, leaders must consider the changes that have occurred as a result of implementing the policies and strategies. This could include review of the performance result from a previous evaluation, policies and procedures, consulting with those involved in sustainability initiatives to determine actual practice, and comparing actual practice to agreed objectives.

A thorough CI process will help identify the effectiveness and efficiency of the changes that have occurred as a result of implementing the sustainability policies and strategies. As with any CI of a system or process, the program should be cyclical – meaning that it is an ongoing commitment to making products, services and systems better.

The four steps commonly involved in a CI process are outlined below.

The CI process	
1. Prepare for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the participants. ▪ Identify criteria and set time lines. ▪ Access previous evaluation data, if applicable. ▪ Select the techniques and tools. ▪ Identify the information requirements, and how the data will be sourced. ▪ Specify actual tasks needed to perform the review. ▪ Assign employees to tasks and inform them of deadlines.

The CI process	
2. Gather and analyse data and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect the data through review of documentation and figures, interviews and questionnaires. ▪ Organise the data. ▪ Examine collected information. ▪ Brainstorm information with the team. ▪ Compare information with evaluation criteria. ▪ Identify root causes of issues through cause and effect analysis. ▪ Prioritise issues for improvement.
3. Develop recommendations and plan improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine what can be done to improve the policies, procedures and processes. ▪ Develop recommendations. ▪ Identify tasks to implement improvements and resources needed. ▪ Prepare an action plan for improvement. ▪ Assign responsibilities to tasks needed to implement improvements, such as new policies and procedures or software add-ons to improve reporting. ▪ Seek approval from senior management.
4. Implement and monitor improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement the approved action plan. ▪ Ensure relevant staff are aware of changes. ▪ Give any training needed in new procedures. ▪ Monitor performance according to identified time lines. ▪ Assess the effectiveness of improvements. ▪ If successful, inform stakeholders and adopt the improvements as the new standard practice. ▪ If not successful, then you should reassess and monitor the implementation of adjustments. ▪ Set up processes to continue to monitor the improvements. ▪ Determine the timing for the next holistic evaluation.

Timing of the reviews

For a CI process to be meaningful, it should provide for regular reviews such as the schedule detailed in the table below.

Review	Timing
1	3 months post-implementation
2	6 months post-implementation
3	12 months post-implementation
4	3 years post-implementation
5	5 years post-implementation

Record information and data

CI involves capturing data and information about sustainability performance.

Records act as important pieces of evidence that will show:

- compliance with legislation and adherence to voluntary codes of practice, industry standards, other standards (AS/NZS or ISO) and other voluntary initiatives such as the Global Reporting Initiative and triple bottom line reporting
- achievement of organisational goals and targets, including the overall reduction in the ecological footprint and how this was achieved (e.g. reduction in greenhouse gas emissions)
- achievement of targets or key performance indicators by departments, work groups and individuals.

Examples of data and information relating to sustainability performance may be:

- Utilities and services bills
- Supplier invoices
- Waste and error reports
- Budgets and other financial documents
- Complaints and feedback from local residents, customers and other stakeholders
- Feedback from workers using surveys and questionnaires
- Quality assurance audit reports and checklists.

Example

Types of environmental records

Examples of environmental records that need to be kept by some organisations are shown in the following information.

- Measures of environmental performance; e.g. kilowatt hours of energy consumed, expenditure on waste disposal, reams of paper purchased
- Details of environmental hazards; e.g. material safety data sheets on the storage of chemicals, incident reports, disposal of toxic waste
- Details of environmental policies and strategies
- Assessment of environmental policies and strategies
- Potential and existing environmental risk assessment and identification
- Comments and responses, including complaints, from internal and external sources

Use record systems

Record keeping relates to information management practices. Records and data about sustainability performance must be recorded using the correct information management system. The type information management system used will be governed by a set of organisational policies and procedures that must be followed. The types of records and reports will also be driven by the need to produce reports and data for external regulatory authorities and other entities when a commitment has been made. Therefore, recording systems need to meet external and internal requirements.

There are tracking systems and tools you can use to collect and analyse data. Make sure the information is collected using the organisation's prescribed procedures and templates and stored so it is easily accessible by those who need to use the information. If a set format has not been designated, it may be a good idea to develop appropriate templates and pro-formas to establish consistency and quality control.

Example

Implement a CI plan and identify potential efficiency gains

Although reports for each of the areas targeted by the sustainability policy will be provided over time, Frank and Steph arrange with each of their managers and staff with responsibility to achieve targets for an agenda item to be added to the monthly staff meetings. The agenda item is in two parts:

1. An analysis of any hard data that had been gathered during the period with a comparison against the previous month
2. An opportunity for staff to identify procedural issues or actions that could be modified to better achieve the targets.

Both parts of the agenda item are to be discussed openly, with suggestions for improvement to be considered. Follow-up action or further investigation is the responsibility of the manager of the area, and will involve people who have raised suggestions. Proposed changes to procedures, purchasing of more efficient equipment or other improvement options will be raised with Frank and Steph for approval, and then actioned and communicated via the manager to staff.

Frank and Steph support suggestions and input by offering a quarterly reward – dinner for two at a local restaurant – for the best suggestion from a staff member relating to resource efficiency and sustainability.

Practice Task 7

Question 1

Which of the following records would you need to retain when tracking sustainability performance? Tick all that apply.

- Product sales reports
- Supplier invoices and utility bills
- Complaints from local residents
- Waste and error reports
- Quality assurance audit reports

Question 2

Explain the CI approach to tracking sustainability performance of an organisation.

Summary

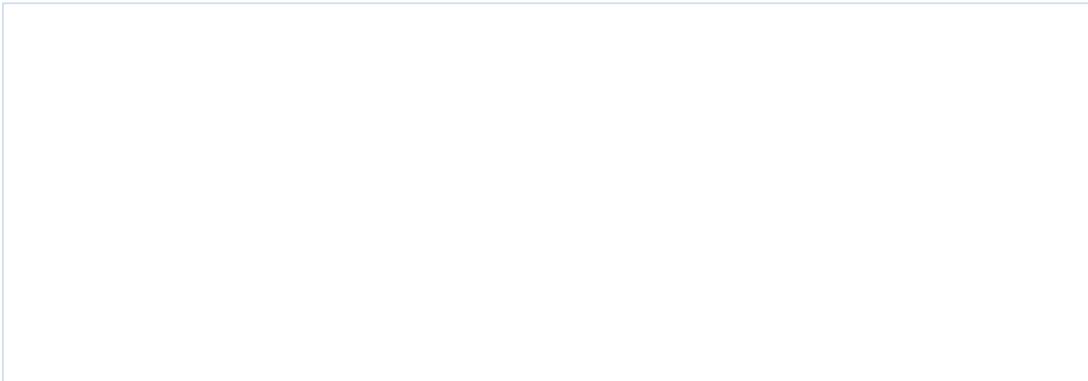
- Sustainability policies and implementation processes must be presented using a planned communication approach that targets your key stakeholders.
- Identify the audience and its needs when developing a communication plan. Consider what would be the most appropriate communication method and content.
- Keep key stakeholders informed of the outcomes of the implementation process.
- Every business policy relies on the right types and quantities of resources to ensure the strategies can be effectively implemented by team members.
- The four main types of resources needed to fulfil the requirements of day-to-day sustainability strategies are people, physical resources, finance and systems resources.
- Ensure that staff, other supervisors and managers have access to the necessary resources so that planned outcomes can be achieved.
- Resources acquisition often occurs in line with defined procurement and acquisition policies, practices and procedures.
- Throughout the implementation process, team members must be given sufficient levels of support to ensure they are working effectively and meeting the agreed objectives.
- An ongoing CI process makes it possible to determine whether the organisation is achieving the agreed sustainability objectives and targets.
- Four steps involved in a CI process are preparation, gathering and analysing data and information, developing recommendations and planning improvements, and implementing and monitoring improvements.

Learning Checkpoint 2

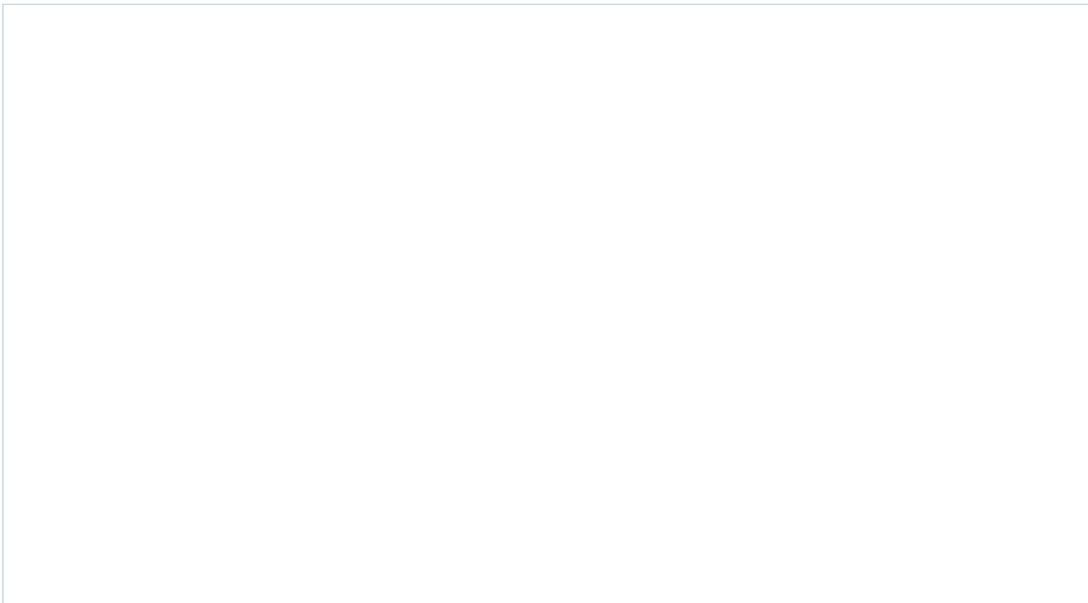
Implement sustainability policies

Part A

1. List five key personnel that might require information about sustainability policies and implementation processes.



2. List five communication techniques that can enhance the presentation of information to stakeholders.



3. Which of the following policies and procedures relate to acquiring physical resources? Tick all that apply.

- Preferred suppliers and vendors
- Resource allocation and implementation methods
- Quality and cost standards for purchasing resources
- Information privacy requirements
- Resource approval procedures and authorised officers

4. Which of the following information sources can be used to verify resource needs? Tick all that apply.

- Operational plans
- Annual business plans
- Sustainability policies and plans
- Resource and acquisition plans
- Quality assurance audit reports

5. List and describe three examples of internal recording systems or tools and explain how they can be used to measure sustainability progress.

Part B

Read the following case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

An organisation that cares for 10,000 sick and elderly people around Australia has included several initiatives in its recently drafted sustainability policy. The development group identified three key areas where a more environmentally friendly approach could be implemented.

These areas and initiatives are:

Water use

- Facility managers will investigate and report on water use reduction options applicable to their facility (given the differing state/territory and local regulations), such as rainwater tanks, greywater diversion or treatment, dual-flush toilets and water-efficient fittings. They will submit their reports by 1 May 2020. All facilities will implement a water use reduction program by 1 July 2020.
- Purchasing officers will choose dishwashers and washing machines purchased after 1 January 2020 for efficient water use.

Waste reduction

- We will reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by establishing systems to better dispose of recyclable and biodegradable (compostable) waste.
- We will improve staff attitudes about waste reduction by educating them about the benefits of reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.
- To show the total amount of waste being disposed of we will collect the material disposed of over one day and categorise the types of waste the organisation or department produces. We will repeat this process every two months to check progress.

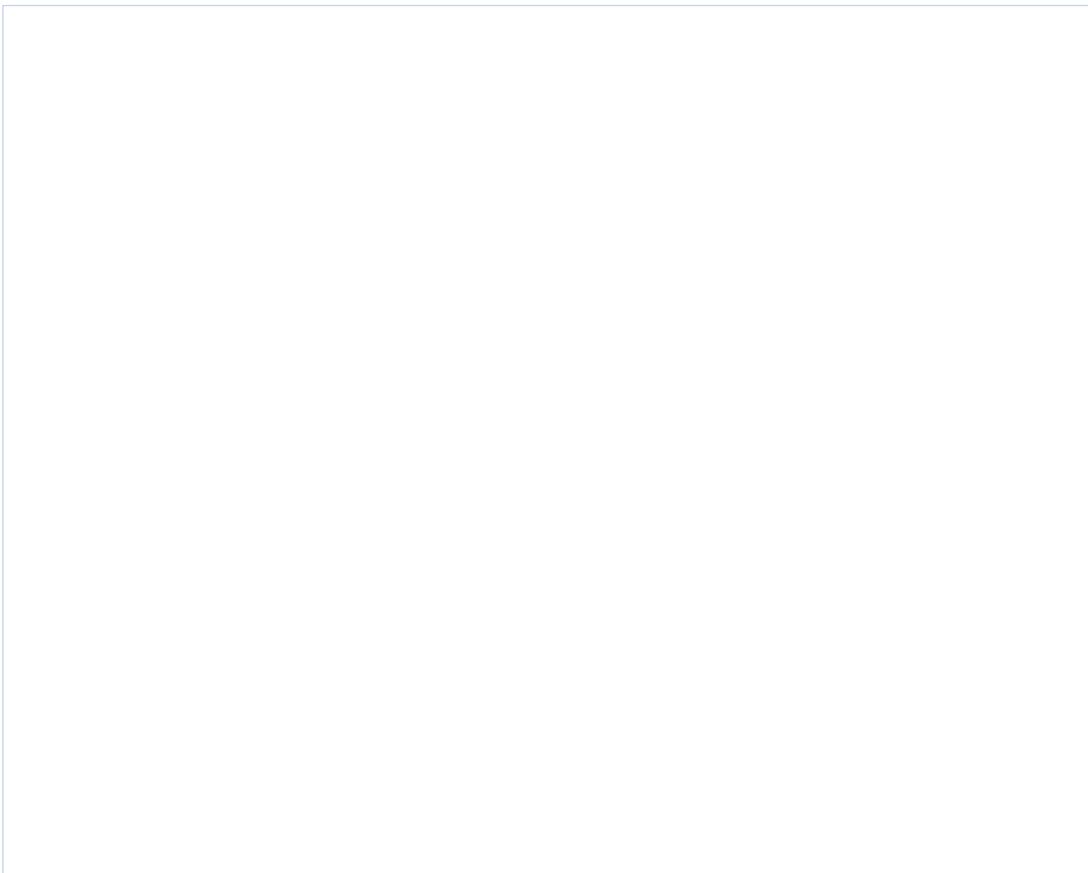
Green purchasing

- Suppliers used must comply with environmental guidelines.
 - Recycled paper must be purchased and used for the majority of tasks.
 - Recyclable toner cartridges must be purchased.
 - The organisation's fleet of cars will be converted to LPG vehicles.
 - Products purchased should be from an environmentally sustainable source when possible.
 - Packaging should be kept to a minimum.
 - Equipment purchased from now on must have the highest energy efficiency rating.
1. Management have identified a potential lack of confidence in staff that the new initiatives will deliver positive results for the business. Describe a method for overcoming this barrier.

2. Explain two strategies to support staff who need to follow the new sustainability initiatives.



3. Describe a strategy you would use to monitor the policies and procedures for tracking and recording performance in these areas to ensure the organisation regularly improves resource efficiency.





Topic 3 | Review implementation of sustainability policies

- 3A Document outcomes and provide feedback to stakeholders
- 3B Identify trends and modify policies to promote improvement

3A Document outcomes and provide feedback to stakeholders

Documenting the outcomes of sustainability initiatives is a crucial part of the continuous improvement cycle. Analysis of data collected will enable leaders to give quality feedback to key stakeholders about the sustainability performance of the organisation.

An effective review process will enable you to assess policy performance based on qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Outcomes can be documented using a formal sustainability business report, in financial reports, an annual report that includes triple bottom line reporting, a shareholders' report, or a report for an external body such as a regulatory authority. Common report types are outlined in the following information.

Formal compliance reports
Formal compliance reports are required by regulatory authorities and can be developed from internal compliance reviews and audits, or other internal recording systems that are set up to generate the information required. The data collected and the format of the report are prescribed by the external authority.
General compliance reports
Reports may be generated internally and targeted for specific areas of the organisation. These are generated from a range of internal records such as workplace inspections and audits, reviews and breach reports.
Regular target achievement reports
Reports may be generated from regular reviews and analyses conducted to assess progress towards targets and compliance. These reports are used to consider the overall progress and efficiency of the organisation as a whole, and for each of the relevant departments or operational areas.
Board reports
Reports may be provided by senior management to the board of directors. Such reports are created from a range of records and documentation generated throughout the organisation. These reports show legislative compliance, as well as financial savings or expenditure arising from the sustainability policy.
Annual reports
Annual reports are given to shareholders and other key stakeholders. They give an overview of a range of achievements, particularly financial performance. Organisations with a sustainability policy will also disclose their environmental performance in line with triple bottom line reporting requirements and expectations.

Report system compliance reports

Organisations may adopt a particular sustainability reporting practice such as the Global Reporting Initiative, or use international (ISO) or national (AS/NZS) reporting standards. Production of such reports and compliance with these standards is seen by stakeholders as a positive step, as it shows the organisation is meeting a widely recognised standard for reporting.

Reporting formats

A business report format will vary depending on the style guidelines, content, context and stakeholder needs. Graphical representations of information are often easier for readers to comprehend; for example, a graph showing energy consumption over six months, or a bar chart showing cost comparisons for green purchasing. Visual representations can effectively show progress made but make sure you use them to convey information rather than add visual clutter. Make sure graphs and charts are laid out logically and clearly, with legends and colour used to support the meaning.

You can gather a range of records to assist in the continuous improvement (CI) review process. Consider each type of record and report on its own, and with other reports and records. Remember that policies and procedures can have unintended consequences – outcomes that were not desired or predicted – and looking at the big picture will help you to identify these.

The following information outlines the types of records used in the CI review process.

Workplace inspections and audits of procedures

Audits generate checklists and can be used to identify areas where procedures are not being followed, as well as the frequency of non-compliance. Regular non-compliance needs to be identified and addressed.

Reviews and compliance assessments

Reviews generate checklists and records of compliance (or achievement of targets) over a period of time. Analysis over time can identify trends relating to compliance, achievement of targets and variations over time.

Non-compliance, breach and incident reports

Incident reports can identify areas where procedures are not being correctly followed or are in need of adjustment. These reports can also identify areas where employees are failing to meet expected work performance standards.

Employee records and performance appraisals

Employee records can help you to identify when training or coaching is needed. Employees may fail to meet key performance indicators because of:

- poorly documented procedures
- a lack of training
- poor communication
- ill-defined or unachievable targets
- a poor attitude
- a misunderstanding about expected performance targets.

Give feedback

Ongoing feedback is an important part of the stakeholder communication process. You can use regular updates to report on sustainability performance and maintain stakeholder momentum and commitment. Feedback can also give important information about targets that have not been met, trends and areas of weakness and risks; thus showing where improvements need to be made.

There are a number of ways you can give feedback to your key stakeholders, such as newsletters posted on the intranet or sent via email, information on the intranet, meetings, presentations and using other visual methods such as a huge thermometer on a wall for communicating long-term targets and showing progress.

Example

How to give feedback

Frank and Steph receive triple bottom line reports in relation to the operation of the business from each department each month. These formal reports are forwarded to the other directors for discussion at their quarterly meetings. Frank and Steph pass on comments and issues raised by the directors to the relevant managers, who in turn inform or consult with their staff as needed.

Staff provide comments back to each manager and the report and comments are placed on the agenda for the monthly staff meetings.

Frank and Steph give monthly briefings to the other two directors on how the company is progressing towards achieving the sustainability policy outcomes.

Practice Task 8

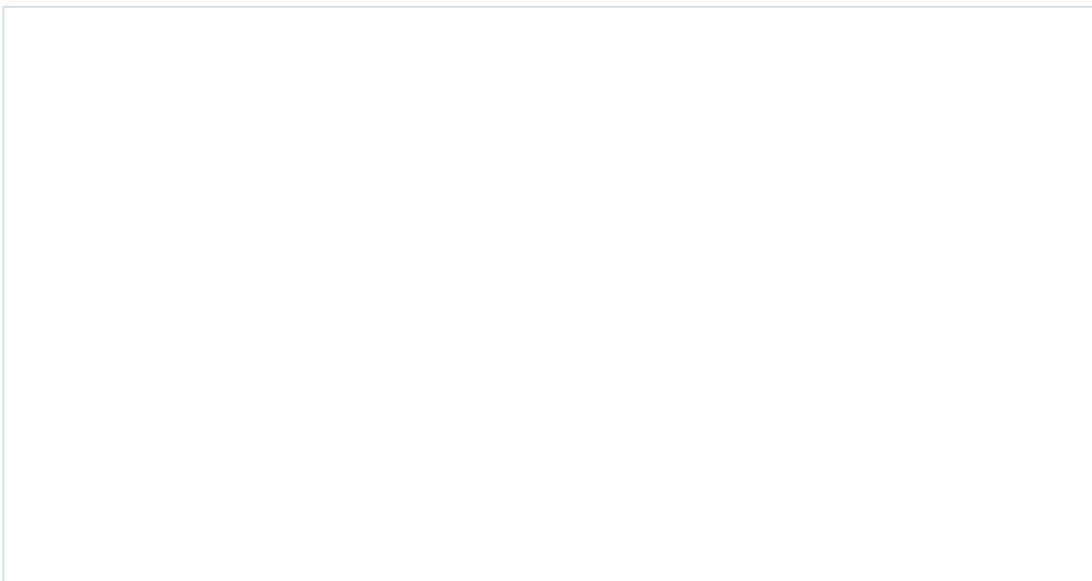
Question 1

Describe how a business report is an effective way to document sustainability performance and give feedback to key stakeholders.



Question 2

What other methods can be used to communicate information to staff?

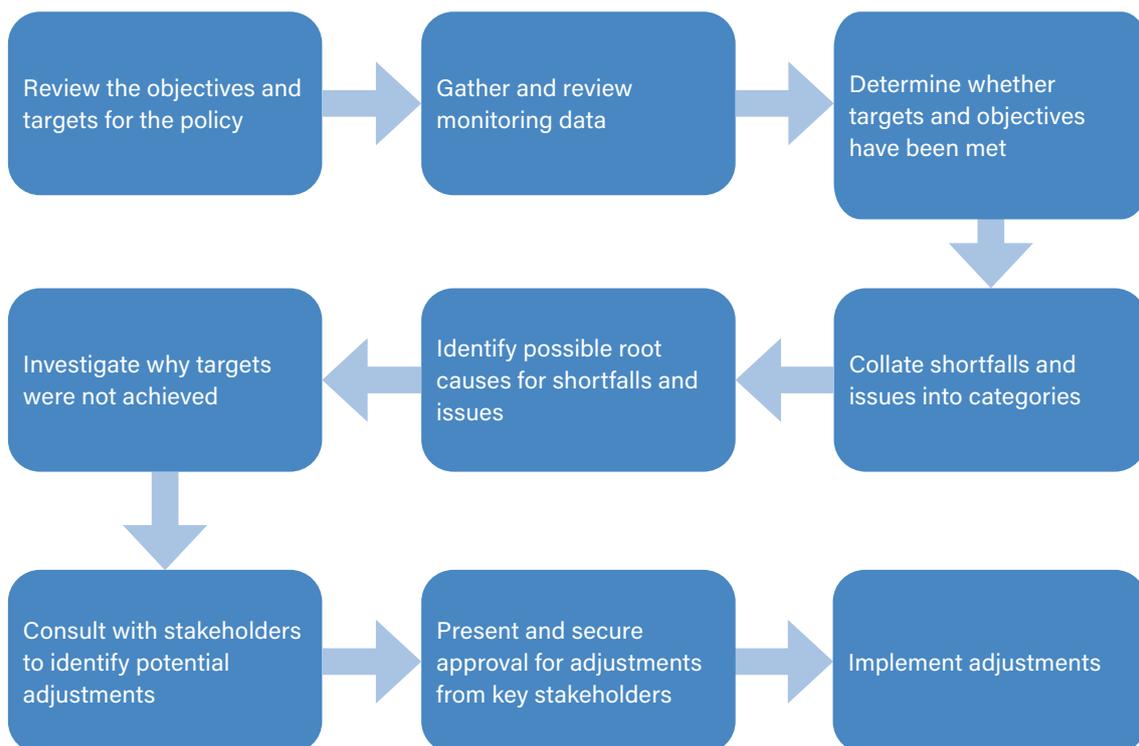


3B Identify trends and modify policies to promote improvement

A trend is a pattern or general direction that something is developing into.

In addition to measuring sustainability performance, you need to closely monitor records to see if any trends are emerging that need remedial action. Sustainability trends may be positive or negative and often occur due to unforeseen consequences. For example, you may find that although kitchen waste has been reduced because of the introduction of non-disposable cups, water use has increased because people need to wash the cups by hand or in the dishwasher. You may need to introduce a new policy that the dishwasher be switched on only when it is full.

To identify trends relating to sustainability issues and performance, conduct the steps shown in this flow chart.



Need for improvement

A key area where records may identify trends and the need for improvement is the commitment and motivation of your staff.

Implementation processes can be difficult to master due to a range of barriers in the workforce. After an initial level of enthusiasm when the policy is released, staff may now be resentful of any tasks they see as being additional to their regular activities.

When targets or benchmarks are not being achieved, you need to determine remedial or corrective actions and design and implement appropriate action plans as soon as possible. This may require modifications to the workplace policy and procedures, a renewed communication and promotional strategy, or innovative ways to get staff involved.

Example

The importance of monitoring and investigating discrepancies

The initial reports Frank and Steph receive from Gillian, manager of the printing area, are very encouraging in relation to the increase in recycling of materials. In fact, there was an increase of 14.5 per cent in the amount of recyclable materials collected and a commensurate reduction in the amount of solid waste generated.

However, as the months pass, a graphical analysis shows that the amount of recycled materials is reducing and solid waste is increasing.

An investigation into the situation finds that a new employee in the printing area is stockpiling waste and recyclable materials for disposal at the start of his next shift. On Friday evenings, the cleaners are removing all the material awaiting disposal and placing it in the solid waste bins. The employee had not realised that the cleaners were throwing away recyclable materials.

The issue is highlighted at a staff meeting. An adjustment is made to procedures directing employees to remove all waste and place it into the appropriate bins at the end of their shift. Also, the cleaners are advised not to remove any items from the printing area.

Modify policy and procedures with improvements

The need to modify the sustainability policy can arise when the current policy is failing to achieve the required outcomes. First, analyse all related policies for the workplace to see if there are conflicts between the policies; for example, a policy to achieve 80 per cent green purchasing may be in conflict with a policy to use a contracted supplier that is not green-compliant.

You may find that the policy:

- is too ambitious and consequently unrealistic – and in this case, you will need to amend it so that it more closely reflects the organisation’s capabilities and financial circumstances
- is not ambitious enough, in that targets have been easily met before deadlines – and in this case, you may wish to develop the organisation’s environmental credentials by extending targets for further improvements.

You may only need to make small changes to the policy to include extra information and procedures, such as ‘Install light sensors in rooms used less often’ or ‘All monitors must be switched to power save when not in use’.

You will need to:

- scope the new policy options and obtain relevant information
- consult with stakeholders and consider options
- analyse and evaluate options for the new policy and determine targets
- make recommendations on the new policy
- plan the implementation and develop appropriate procedures
- communicate the new policy and procedures to relevant entities
- implement the policy
- monitor, evaluate and review the performance of the organisation based on the new policy.

Procedure modification

Consult with staff about changes to be made.

Once new procedures have been implemented, the CI cycle begins again to monitor and review the improvement. Staff who follow procedures must be consulted about potential changes, as they are the people responsible for completing the work tasks and following them.

Procedure modification may be needed for a variety of reasons, as shown in the following table.

Changes in legislation or regulations	There may be changes in legislation that require changes in compliance; for example, a class of chemicals is to be phased out over a one-year period and then banned for use in Australia.
Changes in targets	A new or amended policy has changed targets; for example, cardboard packaging must be reduced by 60 per cent within 12 months.

Monitoring and evaluations	<p>Monitoring and evaluations have shown that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targets cannot be achieved with the current procedures so they must be adjusted; for example, introduce new procedures that ensure only recycled paper is used • the reporting system is inadequate; for example, introduce a system in which staff must record when paper is ordered by their department and the type of paper requested • there needs to be a new awareness campaign to motivate staff; for example, form a green team to specifically work towards supporting green initiatives • the system for tracking changes needs to be improved; for example, introduce procedures for staff to report on achievements at a monthly staff meeting.
New initiatives	<p>Internal proposals for improved efficiency and reduction of the ecological footprint have prompted new initiatives; for example, an incentive program for team successes.</p>

Example

Modification of sustainability policy to meet new requirements

Ahmed, the purchasing manager, is pleased to report to Frank, Steph and the other directors that he and his staff have achieved their target of 80 per cent green purchasing in a three-month period. However, he advises them that at the beginning of each quarter there is a standing order from a large supplier that is not a green supplier – this is preventing his department from achieving an even better result. The standing order was entered into before the green purchasing policy took effect.

At a review, the managers note that the price being charged for the goods is 22.5 per cent less than any competitor. They discuss the cost difference and their need to meet environmental obligations. They agree to source a green-compliant supplier and cancel the standing order as soon as possible. The purchasing policy is adjusted to reflect this. Each manager is asked to look at their expenditure and identify where savings can be made to offset the increased cost of using a green supplier.

Practice Task 9

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow.

Case study

A key sustainability initiative for Kare 4 Kidz is to ask families to bring in items to re-use for arts and crafts. Since the initiative was introduced, this has since created problems for the Kare 4 Kidz staff. Families have been bringing in glass jars, plastic milk bottles and plastic margarine containers, among other items, but the original intent of the initiative was to use biodegradable materials. The type of materials to be accepted was not made clear in the policy nor was it communicated clearly to families.

The staff at the centre have raised the issue of receiving unsuitable material. They are having to spend valuable time sifting through the donations to find the items they want to keep and disposing of the rest into the recycling or rubbish streams. There are also too many items to store.

Question 1

Why is it important to investigate the trends associated with successes or failures of the sustainability policy?

Question 2

What is the key trend identified in this case study?

Question 3

Prepare a list of the points that need to be addressed in the policy to resolve these problems.

Question 4

What are two amendments could you make to the policy to provide a solution to the issues raised?

Question 5

How will you communicate these improvements to the workforce?

Summary

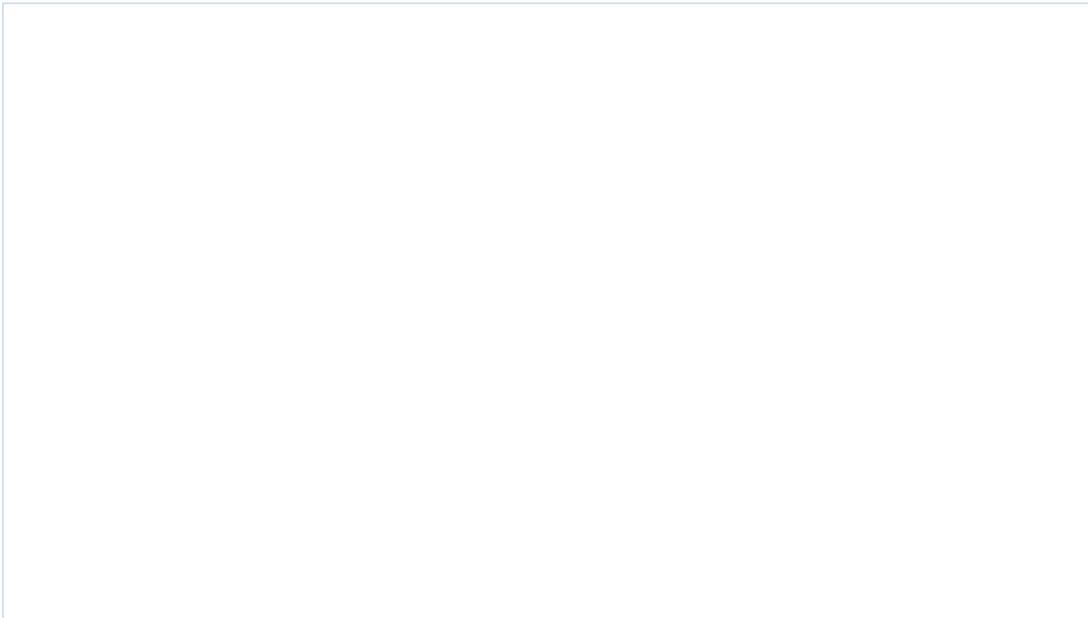
- Documenting the outcomes of sustainability initiatives is a crucial part of the continuous improvement cycle.
- Analysis of data collected will enable leaders to give quality feedback to key stakeholders about the sustainability performance of the organisation.
- Outcomes can be documented using a formal sustainability business report, in financial reports, an annual report that includes triple bottom line reporting, a shareholders' report, or a report for an external body such as a regulatory authority.
- The organisation's recording and reporting systems can help in identifying trends that require action and improvement.
- Regular updates can be used to report on sustainability performance and maintain stakeholder momentum and commitment.
- A trend is a pattern or general direction that something is developing into. Sustainability trends may be positive or negative and often occur due to unforeseen consequences.
- The need to modify the sustainability policy and its associated strategies can arise when the current policy is failing to achieve the required outcomes.
- Once new procedures have been implemented, the continuous improvement cycle begins again to monitor and review the improvement.

Learning Checkpoint 3

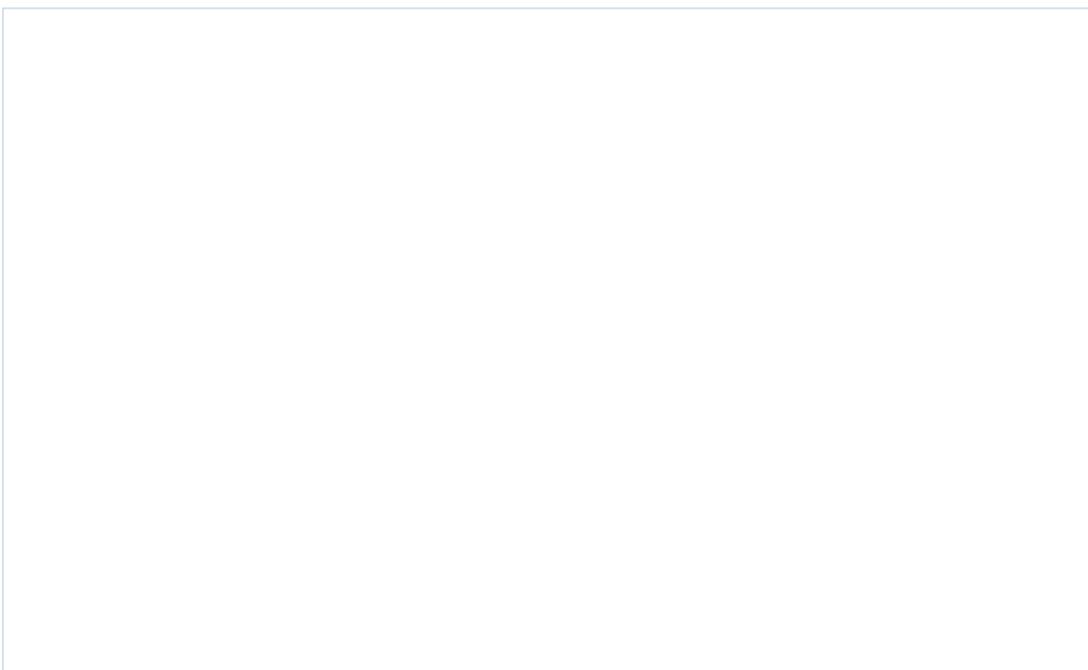
Review implementation of sustainability policies

Part A

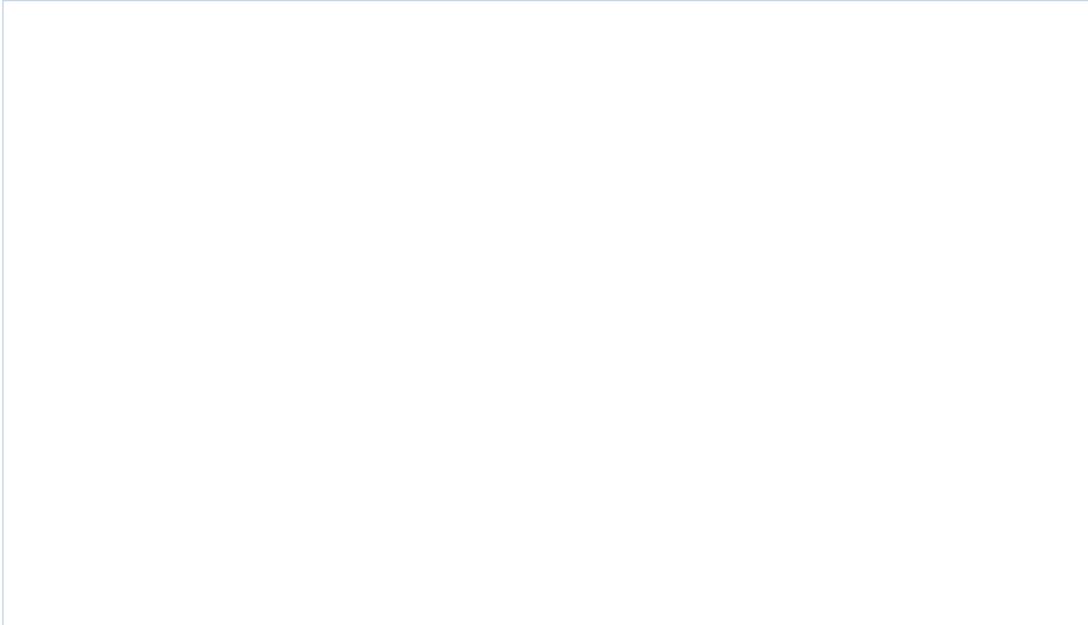
1. Why is it important to give stakeholders feedback about the results or outcomes following the implementation of sustainability policies and procedures?



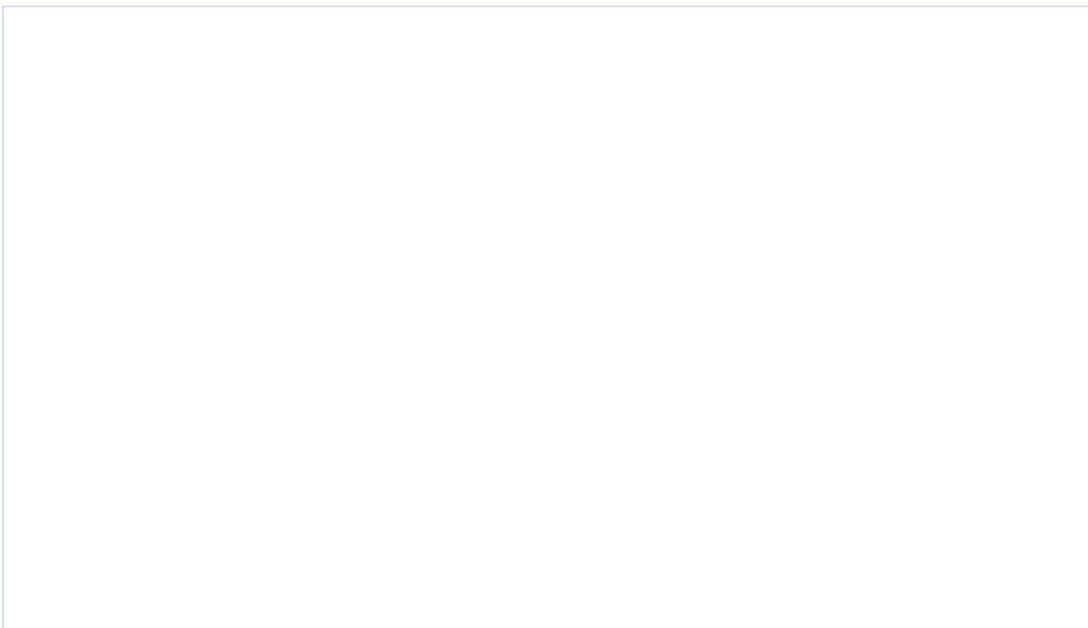
2. What are the possible consequences if people are not informed of the results or outcomes?



3. Describe the steps you would take to evaluate a policy to identify trends that may require improvements.



4. Imagine you are preparing a report for senior management to document the outcomes of a workplace sustainability policy initiative that has been in place for six months. Briefly describe the structure and nature of the report and explain how you would make sure it was suitable for the audience.



5. Outline how you would proceed if your outcomes report showed that the policy needed major modification.



6. You have been asked to analyse records and reports showing the outcomes of a sustainability policy. You notice that progress towards the waste reduction target has slowed to such an extent that the target for the end of the two-year period will not be reached. The targeted reduction initially was as follows.

Target date	Reduction amount
June 2023	8%
December 2023	16%
June 2024	24%
December 2024	32%

For 2020, the figures are as follows.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4%	7%	9%	10%	13%	15%	16%	16%	17%	18%	18%	19%

Graphing these figures and extrapolating the trend to December 2024 suggests that at best the reduction in waste will be 24 to 25 per cent – well short of the target of 32 per cent.

Describe the steps you would take to address this situation.

Part B

Read the following case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Kaja is in charge of introducing a new paper use policy for the debt recovery team. Before introducing the policy, she asks if the company keeps records on paper use. Kaja finds that the firm has records on how much paper was purchased in previous years, the cost and the brand. Although paper use is not broken down by team, Kaja is able to get an estimate of paper use per person by dividing annual paper purchased by the total number of staff.

- Annual paper consumption (reams): 5,000
- Number of staff: 625
- Average paper use per person per annum (reams): 8

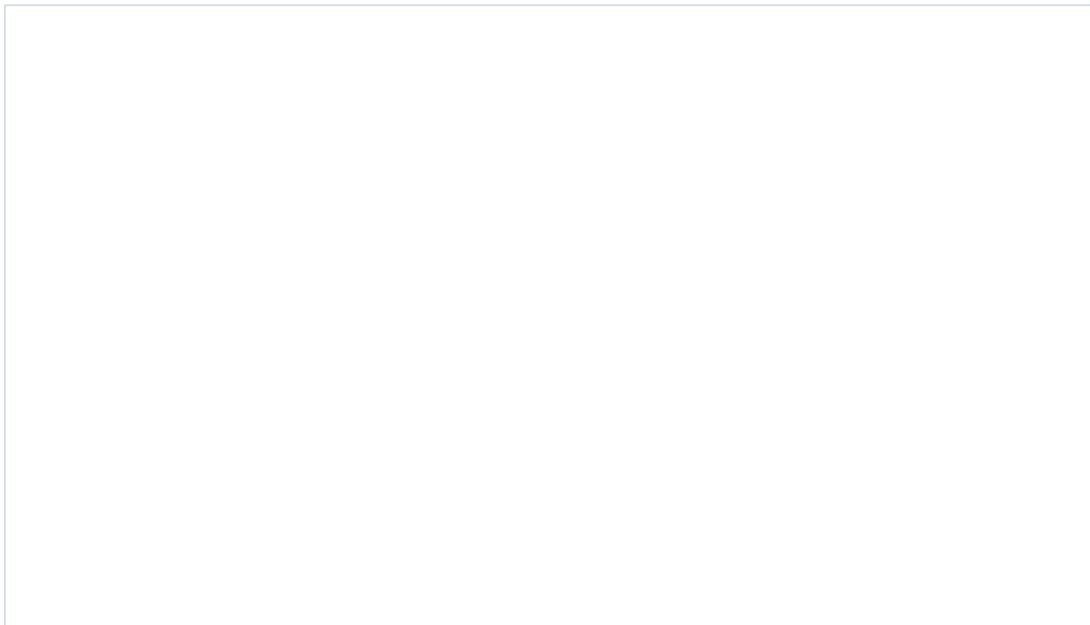
Kaja uses eight reams per person as her benchmark. To assess the success of the new policy, Kaja decides she needs to keep records on the amount of paper used by her team of 14 people. Based on the benchmark of eight reams per person, her team would be expected to use 112 reams of paper in a year.

Kaja is good at motivating and her team are enthusiastic. They use double-sided copying and printing whenever possible, and re-use paper to print draft copies. The team also increases its use of email and decreases its use of paper memos and internal reports.

At the end of six months, Kaja is pleased to announce that the team has only used 28 reams of paper, which is half the projected usage.

The CEO decides that the company should keep more-detailed records on paper purchasing and use. Using Kaja's model, the purchasing department adopts a team-based approach. In future, the purchasing officer will report on paper use each quarter. These detailed reports will be used to design strategies for particular areas.

1. Describe the process Kaja followed to document paper usage.



2. How could Kaja give feedback to her staff about the outcomes of the new paper use policy?



3. Develop a new procedure that will improve record-keeping on paper purchasing and use.

