THE SOLENT CLUSTER

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HOW TO...

UPSKILL STAFF FOR DECARBONISATION ACTIVITIES IN THE UK

Developing skilled staff for decarbonisation activities in the UK involves understanding the specific skill sets required, highlighting training needs, and being mindful of a fast-changing sector. A vast range of skills are needed, from digital skills and retrofit engineers to industrial chemistry and architecture, and many more besides.

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STEP BY STEP GUIDE

1. UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR DECARBONISATION

- Decarbonisation means reducing or eliminating carbon dioxide emissions. In industry, that might be through manufacturing processes, chemical processes or the production of energy, for example.
- Whilst there is likely to be some initial financial outlay, many changes result in long term financial savings, depending on the route you take.
- Plan how to achieve decarbonisation in your organisation – see the 'How to' guides for deciding on decarbonisation solutions and approaching process efficiencies.
- Learn lessons from others who have been there. Consider case studies of those who have been on the journey or are going through it, and learn from their successes and mistake.

2. CONSIDER YOUR SKILLS NEEDS FOR DECARBONISATION

- Make a plan for what you want to achieve and how to achieve it.
- List the skills you need in your organisation to put your plan into action. This might include transferable skills, technical skills and new areas you have not previously needed.
- Agree on an individual or small team from members across the organisation to lead the way. This approach is likely to feel more personal rather than a corporate directive.
- Consider skills needs highlighted in existing decarbonisation strategies such as the Solent Local Industrial Decarbonisation Plan 'Transitioning Pathways'.

3. ASSESS CURRNET SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Skill Assessment: Conduct a thorough assessment to understand the current skills and knowledge levels of your staff regarding decarbonisation. Be mindful that different teams may have different needs, eg, a construction team's decarbonisation skills would be very different to a finance team's.
- Identify Gaps: Compare the current skills base with the needs you have listed above. Pinpoint the specific areas where training is needed. This might require an assessment of changing regulations that apply to your industry, and the requirements they set.
- Engage staff early: Business in the Community (BITC) has published research showing that only one in four working age adults in the UK believe that their job will require new skills as a result of climate change.

3. DEVELOP A TRAINING PLAN

- Set Clear Objectives: Define what you aim to achieve with your training programme.
- Create a Timeline: Establish a timeline for the training activities, including deadlines and milestones.
- Select Training Methods: Choose the most effective training methods (e.g., workshops, online courses, seminars). Consider the learning styles of your team and involve them in shaping the programme.
- Utilise Accredited Courses: Enrol staff in accredited courses on decarbonisation and sustainability.
- Partner with Experts: Engage with Colleges, Universities and independent training providers to provide in-depth and bespoke training sessions. Industry experts or consultants can help here too. There are links below to some Solent based providers.
- Hands-On Projects: Implement projects that allow staff to apply their learning in real-world scenarios.
- Case Studies: Use case studies to explore successful decarbonisation strategies in similar industries.

5. GET THE DECISION-MAKERS ON BOARD

- Engage with the Board, the Finance Director and Human Resources director early on. They need to understand the importance of upskilling staff and the impact on the business.
- Set out the steps you have taken to consider the skills needs, assess the current skills and knowledge in the organisation, and the training plan you have developed.

6. ENCOURAGE CONTINUOUS LEARNING

- **Regular Updates:** Keep staff informed about the latest developments and trends in decarbonisation.
- **Learning Platforms:** Provide access to online learning platforms and resources for ongoing education.
- **Engagement Activities:** Organise activities an initiatives that promote sustainability and decarbonisation. Set up a team cutting across the organisation to take forward decarbonisation initiatives.
- **Recognition and Rewards:** Recognise and reward staff contributions to sustainability efforts.
- **Keep up to date:** Give staff time to take part in knowledge sharing networks. These might be at an industry or local area level, and can provide insight into new technologies, policies or support available.

7. MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS

- **Regular Assessments:** Continuously assess the progress of staff training and its impact on company goals.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement feedback mechanisms to gather staff input and improve training programmes.
- **Set targets:** Consider what success looks like and identify how to demonstrate that quantitatively. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) might be about the number of people trained in a subject, the level of training they reach, perhaps linking through to the supply chain as well. Qualitative monitoring might consider staff opinion surveys, or feedback from customers.

TIPS AND TRICKS

Promote Your Organisation's Commitment to Sustainability

To retain top talent, it's important that your organisation is seen as a leader in decarbonisation and sustainability. That includes offering ongoing professional development and training in, eg, new technologies as they arise. Consider the following:

- **Showcase Your Sustainability Initiatives**
  Share your company's decarbonisation goals, policies and projects to reduce emissions. Bring the team with you the journey to establish priorities and actions around decarbonisation.
- **Keep up to date with new developments and opportunities**
  Use local or industry networks to share knowledge and find common ground for shared training for staff.

LINKS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The Carbon Trust

The Solent Cluster

Innovate UK

Free courses and qualification for adults to boost their skills – The Education Hub

Find a Course | National Careers Service

Skills Bootcamps | Solent Growth Partnership

COLLEGES

Courses – Barton Peveril Sixth Form College

Brockenhurst College

HSDC Courses | South Downs, Havant & Alton College Courses

Courses – SHCG | South Hampshire College Group

FREE Carbon Literacy course - Sparsholt College Hampshire

UNIVERSITIES

Courses | University of Portsmouth

CourseFinder | University of Southampton

Courses at Solent University – Undergraduate | Postgraduate | Apprenticeship

INDEPENDENT LEARNING PROVIDERS

Courses and Apprenticeships at Fareport

Yuzu Training – Training for the future you