The Bar Council

30 Quick Wins for Sustainability

Recycling & Waste

1. Provide glasses and mugs rather than disposable cups.
2. Limit use of non-recyclable or reusable disposable goods (e.g. pens) in favour of reusable ones (e.g. pencils).
3. Make it as easy as possible for staff to recycle as much as possible - paper, card, glass, plastic, aluminium, CDs, batteries, old phones – provide the facility for collection, clear instructions plus labels for use, assign responsibility for ensuring items for recycling taken to/collected by appropriate organisation.
4. Take away individual waste bins from desks and replace with recycling bins.
5. Lengthen the life of toner cartridges by adjusting printer settings in draft quality and black and white rather than colour wherever possible and recycle used cartridges.
6. Recycle old computer equipment by giving it to local charities or community groups.
7. Give an active preference to products with minimal packaging and that are locally sourced.
8. Use local suppliers/caterers where possible.
9. Start composting food waste.

Paper

10. Save paper costs by buying 100% recycled paper and reusing discarded paper for notes – recycle all double-sided 'scrap' and use single sided to make notepads. Re-use bubble wrap, boxes, and padded envelopes where possible.
11. Default printer settings to print double-sided.
12. Send internal memos electronically & external documents electronically as far as possible.
13. Use 'track changes' to review documents rather than printing.
14. Collect and re-use name badges.

Water

15. Fix dripping taps.

16. Fit simple water saving devices in toilet cisterns and urinals (e.g "Hippo" cistern bags, waterless or low-flush urinal retro-fit kits).
17. Provide drinking water in jugs/large glass bottles rather than plastic bottles.
18. Provide staff with individual refillable drinking water bottles.
19. Ensure dishwashers are as fully loaded as possible before use.

Energy
20. Minimise energy costs by ensuring that all equipment and lights are turned off (i.e. not left on standby) when not in use.
21. Encourage staff to switch off light switches by labelling light switches to indicate which area of the office they light – ask security to check all lights are switched off once the building is empty.
22. Encourage staff to switch off monitors when away from their desks for more than 5–10 minutes and to shut computers down when they leave the office. (Turning off a single computer when not in use instead of on standby can save as much as £5 every year and turning one off that would have been on screen saver mode can save up to £45 a year).
23. Reduce energy bills by turning down the heating when it is not needed and always ensure that this is done before opening a window – check that heating is not timed to come on overnight or at weekends. Turning the heating down by one degree - can save around 8% of the energy bill a year; the Environment Agency recommends 19 degrees Celsius is comfortable for most staff in the winter and 23 degrees Celsius in the summer.
24. Ensure all light bulbs are energy efficient – LEDs are more efficient than halogen.
25. Ensure air conditioning vents or heating are not blocked by office furniture/boxes.

Transport
26. Save time, inconvenience, and pollution by using conference calls rather than travelling to meetings where possible.
27. Provide interest-free season ticket loans.
28. Use cycle couriers where possible.
29. Use LPG, hybrid and/or carbon neutral taxi companies and encourage use of public transport whenever possible by making this easier to book through a central system.
30. Introduce travel policies that reward more sustainable modes of travel (e.g., train not car, hybrid/electric taxi not diesel, etc)

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This resource was originally developed for the Bar Sustainability Network. The Network is managed by Achill Legal. Further guides and information for the Bar is available on Achill's website