

Five Rules for Establishing a Successful **GREEN TEAM**



**MANITOBA
RACE TO
REDUCE**
THE SMART ENERGY BUILDING CHALLENGE

One of the most beneficial and possibly under-utilized strategies for improving sustainability in your business is the establishment of a Green Team.

Often referred to as a sustainability or an environmental committee, a Green Team is simply a group of individuals within an organization or building who are engaged in advancing sustainability efforts and promoting environmentally responsible decision making.

A Green Team generally has two primary focuses:

1. Increasing sustainability within the organization's operations
2. Educating and engaging employees on ways to increase sustainability within the organization.

If your organization does not currently have a Green Team, *Manitoba Race to Reduce* is the perfect opportunity to get started!

Five Rules for Establishing a Successful Green Team

Rule 1 – Find your champions.

Invite staff to attend an information session about forming a Green Team in the building. If attendees are not familiar with *Manitoba Race to Reduce*, this can serve as an opportunity to introduce them to the initiative.

Your information session should cover the following:

- What is a Green Team?
- Why do you need one?
- What are the sustainability goals you'd like the Green Team to achieve?
 - > A starting goal for your Green Team could be the creation of a Race Team or sub-committee responsible for educating and engaging your tenants in *Manitoba Race to Reduce* to help your building achieve its 10% energy reduction over the next four years.
- Do attendees have ideas to make the building/organization more environmentally friendly?
- How often should the team meet?

If your interest in starting a Green Team within your organization or building is initially because of your participation in *Manitoba Race to Reduce*, we are available to help. *Manitoba Race to Reduce* can host an information session on how to start a Race Team for you. We'll introduce participants to the Race and show staff how to access tons of sustainability resources to help your building and tenants achieve their energy efficiency goals.

Download the invitation template and distribute it throughout your building.

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Rule 2 – Get commitment.

Have a sign-up sheet ready and invite attendees to become members of the Green Team at the end of the information session.

It is always great to have members who:

- Represent both the landlord, tenants and building occupants
- Represent all levels within the organization/building – front line staff to management
- Represent major groups with various skills across the organization/building (e.g., finance, building operations, event planning, purchasing, communications, etc.)

Having a well-rounded team ensures you are getting the most out of your Green Team. It allows the best decision making for your sustainability strategies and helps with communicating these efforts throughout the building.

Rule 3 – Schedule regular meetings

Scheduling regular meetings helps to keep commitment and momentum going.

At your first meeting, decide how often you think the Team should meet. Once decided, create an annual calendar to give your group plenty of notice in their schedules.

Hosting year-end celebrations is a good way to set “green goals” and a great time to evaluate how you are doing.

Rule 4 – Delegate clear responsibilities

Initial meetings should focus on setting goals as well as any deadlines to help guide the team. Once goals are set, assign responsibilities within the team.

Possible responsibilities may be:

- Record keeping and note taking
- Communicating goals and tasks with approvals from management
- Proposal writing
- Surveying
- Creating marketing materials to distribute throughout a building such as a newsletter, blog or social media page

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Rule 5 – Maintain communication and monitor results

Once the Green Team has officially formed and your initial goals have been identified, it's important to announce action plans to all staff and stakeholders.

This can be accomplished with a strong communication strategy that includes:

- Identification of the Green Team lead and members to whom questions can be directed
- A commitment to the initiatives from upper management
- Benefits of the program
- An explanation that success requires engagement from everyone.

Keeping people engaged and aware requires ongoing communication. It's important for communication be consistent and open. Newsletters, blogs, fridge posters, and social media page updates are all effective ways to keep staff engaged and celebrating milestones. Demonstrating the environmental impact of activities through metrics gives people an understanding of their accomplishments.

It's also helpful to create a list of actions items for staff to keep at their workspaces as reminders.

*Note that *Manitoba Race to Reduce* has a number of [templates](#) to choose from to help communicate *Race* initiatives and actions to staff.

Consider surveying before and after implementation and share results with everyone. Soliciting suggestions from employees for new ideas keep staff engaged and empowered. It's important to evaluate strategies to understand how they are being received and adjust accordingly.

And don't forget to reward everyone for a job well done by celebrating milestones with prizes or incentives, giving awards for ideas and holding events to recognize accomplishments!