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The Low Carbon Agenda

No.5 / June 2008

Welcome again

This edition of the Low Carbon Agenda is about all the simple in-house things you can do to start cutting bills and emissions, without making any change to your business processes. But don't get carried away - this is simply fixing things that shouldn't have been broken in the first place. In future editions we'll look at the more innovative, risky and, yes, sexier options.



I started the last edition with the words "With oil prices soaring, there has never been a better time to start cutting your carbon footprint." Well, if you thought energy prices were high then, they're even higher now! So what's stopping you?

And, please don't forget to forward this newsletter to anyone you think might find it of value.

All the very best,

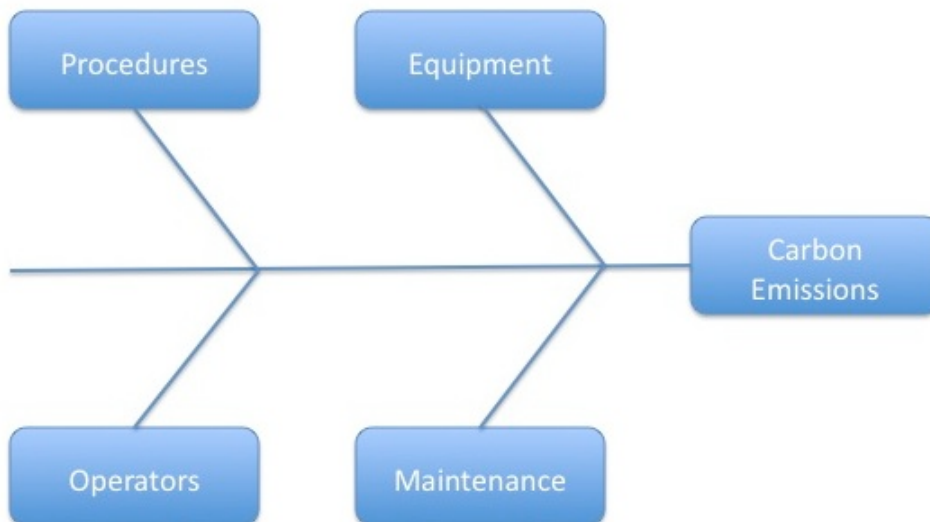
Gareth

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Doing the Right Thing (and Doing Things Right)

The makeup of your carbon footprint will depend on your business sector, the size of your business and how you operate. I could write a book on how to cut that footprint in every sector, but here's a simple little tool that will work in any situation. It should be familiar to many - the fishbone diagram:



I've set up the main bones of the fish for you for internal Carbon Management. The two boxes to the left

represent human issues and the two on the right hardware. The two above the central line are about doing the right things, the two below are about doing things right. If I were American, I'd probably say "Neat, huh?".

So a piece of equipment operating incorrectly, say a leaking compressed air line, goes under 'maintenance', whereas if you do not have the correct size of air lines, then that comes under 'equipment'. Taking the example further, specifying the air pressure higher than it needs to be would come under 'procedures', messing about with compressed air guns comes under 'operators'.

If you run a simple business (eg a small service sector operation), you could probably do one diagram for the whole business. For manufacturing, you'd probably have to break your operations down into chunks (eg boilers, fleet, moulding process, coatings, goods out). Draw them big, very big. Then, pick a group of people from the relevant sections (engineering, production, QA, logistics, building management etc), arm them with a load of post-its, point them at the diagram(s) and tell them to get going.

Once you've identified the problems, rank them in importance and then start brainstorming* solutions. The more people you involve in the process, the more buy-in you'll get for the solutions.

Simple. Next time we'll look at more complicated stuff.

* The epilepsy support groups do not find this word offensive, so I'm happy to use it!

News

The price of crude oil has doubled in the last 12 months. 'Nuff said.

At the time of writing, the UK Government is about to publish its renewable energy strategy. If [the Guardian](#) is right about its contents, then it could be the blueprint for a revolution in the industry. No mention of [feed in tariffs](#) though.

The [Carbon Trust is offering £250k](#) to help you innovate low carbon technologies. The list of suitable types of project is reassuringly wide, but you'll have to find 40% of the total project costs elsewhere. The first deadline for applications is 7 August 2008.

Tip of the Month

If you have a large fleet, monitor odometers against vehicle logs or fit trackers to your vehicles. Eradicating unofficial use of vehicles can do wonders for your fuel bills.

The small print:

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