

# Creating a Green Office Certification Program for Iowa State University

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## Background and Objectives

Many universities offer green office certification programs as a method to engage faculty and staff in their sustainability program, to encourage sustainability practices among faculty and staff, and to recognize sustainability efforts that are being made in offices across campus.

The project focus was to create a green office certification program for Iowa State University that encompassed the social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainability; that motivated behavior; that was engaging and educational for participants; and that could be used by all offices, regardless of size or facility.

## Methodology

- Began with a checklist that combined aspects of other green office programs
- Completed three phases of beta testing with a variety of sizes and types of offices, including a university services office (EH&S), an academic office (CELT), and two small faculty offices
- Gathered feedback from participating offices and used this feedback to modify the checklist and develop recognition pieces for participation
- Worked with various university departments to ensure the checklist was in compliance with the university's recommendations and priorities

WASTE		SECTION SUBTOTAL:	0
ID	Action		Pts.
			0
W.1	We conducted an audit of our waste stream.		4
W.2	We have held at least one Office Clean Out Day that promoted recycling and reuse in the past year.		1
<b>Open &amp; Online Supply Waste</b>			
			0
W.3	We set double-sided printing as a default on our office computers, and we placed a visual prompt on our copy machine to remind members of our office to double-side copy.		2
W.4	We have an office policy to use reduced paper margins in order to decrease the length of documents we print.		2
W.5	We hold zero-waste staff meetings (at least 80% of the staff meetings are zero-waste).		2
W.6	We use an electronic timesheet system.		2
W.7	We use electronic financial reports.		3
W.8	We keep a stack of previously used paper near printers to be used for scratch paper or internal memos, made into notepads, or loaded into a designated bypass tray on printer for printing internal or draft single-sided documents.		1
W.9	We have a designated area in our supply closet, or elsewhere in our office, for sharing office supplies that can be re-used (file folders, binders, pens, paper clips, etc.).		1
W.10	We have a designated person in our office who unsubscribes people from Receiving multiple copies of the Almanac and Current.		2
W.11	We have a designated person in our office who unsubscribes people from Junk mail.		2
<b>Management Print (number 1 of the following)</b>			
			0
W.12a	We have installed toner auto-replenishment software to eliminate keeping excess toner in inventory. OR		2
W.12b	We have eliminated all personal printers and utilized a shared, networked print environment only OR		3
W.12c	We have undergone a full managed print assessment and implementation, including elimination of most/all personal printers, with our preferred Managed Print Services supplier, DocuSense.		4

Figure 1: An excerpt from the original green office checklist

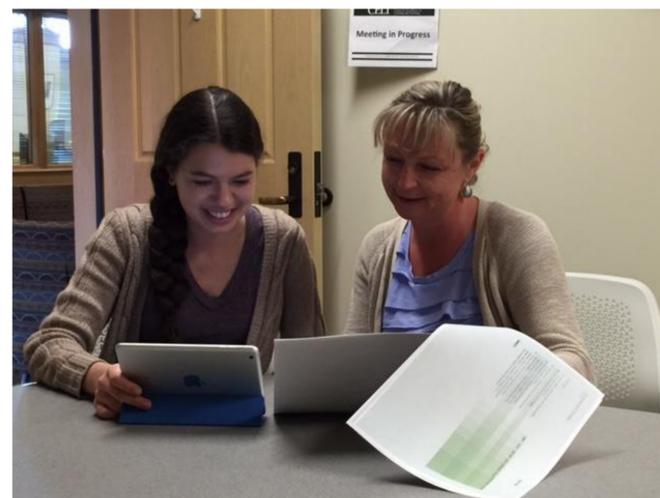


Figure 2: Beta testing the checklist with CELT

SECTION ONE: WASTE		NAME OF OFFICE / GROUP:					
GENERAL:		ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	NEVER	INPROGRESS/EXPLAIN	NOT APPLICABLE/EXPLAIN
1.	We have conducted an audit of our waste stream.						
2.	We have held at least one Office Clean Out Day that promoted recycling and reuse in the past year.						
3.	At least 80% of our staff meetings are zero-waste.*						
4.	We use electronic financial reports.						
5.	We keep a stack of previously used paper near printers to be used for scratch paper or internal memos, made into notepads, or loaded into a designated bypass tray on printer for printing internal or draft single-sided documents.						
6.	We have a designated area in our supply closet, or within our office, for sharing office supplies that can be re-used (file folders, binders, pens, paper clips, etc.).						
7.	We have a designated person in our office who unsubscribes people from receiving multiple copies of journals and publications.						
8.	We have a designated person in our office who unsubscribes people from junk mail.						
<b>PRINT MANAGEMENT:</b>							
9.	We set double-sided printing as a default on our office computers, and we placed a visual prompt on our copy machine to remind members of our double side copy rule.						
10.	We recommend reduced paper margins (.5 inches) in order to decrease the length of documents we print (when a different margin size is not required).						

Figure 3: An excerpt from the final green office checklist

## Product Modifications

- Eliminated 'tax-form' appearance and moved towards a more user-friendly format to make completing the checklist easier
- Changed the process of receiving credit for actions from an all-or-nothing compliance system to a "Always/Usually/Sometimes/Never/In Progress/Not applicable" scale to allow opportunities for growth and progress within offices
- Added more social sustainability and community involvement components to make the checklist more comprehensive
- Added definitions of terms and links to resources in order to make the checklist more useful, informative, and interactive for program participants

## Outcomes

- Faculty and staff are more interested and engaged in a program that is specifically tailored to opportunities that are relevant to their needs, is connected to Iowa State guidelines and recommendations, and is user-friendly
- Participants appreciate the ability to track sustainability efforts and to set and accomplish short- and long- term goals for themselves and their offices
- Faculty and staff are interested in making sustainable changes when provided with resources and tips on how to do so
- Recognition through electronic images usable for websites and/or a signed certificate suitable for display are the preferred means of recognition for participation in the program