

## Making change the norm

ESTA and the Energy Institute have developed Energy Conscious Organisation (EnCO), a new behaviour change initiative to tap into an ignored source of savings. *Jes Rutter reports*

A significant part of the solution for UK Government and end user organisations to meet the UK's 2050 net zero target is the still largely ignored focus on behaviour change.

Evidence suggests that behaviour change offers around 50 per cent of the total potential energy efficiency savings available. The other half comes from technology and yet, as important as it is, technology gets all the focus. A shift in focus is required, and soon, to ensure that the 'hidden' and largely untapped savings available from behaviour change are realised.

Behaviour change, in terms of energy consumption, is about eliciting targeted behaviours by framing choices in a way that makes them more environmentally friendly and efficient choices become easier to make. Creating a dynamic system between technology and behaviour, rather than viewing them as separate entities is an important part of the intervention, and of being an Energy Conscious Organisation (EnCO).

One major difference to consider, compared to purely technical projects, is that the savings are not necessarily delivered overnight but instead typically take 4-12 months to be fully adopted and for savings to be measurable. This requires an adjustment in expectations, as well as ongoing resource input (however low-level) to maintain and improve energy saving opportunities.

Our ambition is to excite people to challenge the norm, and to encourage mass adoption of energy efficiency good practice through more energy-efficient behaviours and embracing the delivery of holistic large-scale behaviour change programmes in organisations.

An Energy Conscious Organisation is one that has employed behaviour change principles to make significant improvements across the following five pillars:

- engagement - very high levels of engagement at every level of organisation on energy management including top management practices, significant users and all colleagues;
- alertness - high levels of alertness/awareness across the organisation in eliminating energy waste, mechanisms to register waste with clearly delegated



responsibilities and practical responses regularly actioned;

- skills - top management, practitioners and significant users are fully skilled in their energy management roles. Commitment to continual learning and up-skilling is demonstrated;
- recognition - the benefits and co-benefits of energy management are widely recognised, and data systems track savings against robust energy targets; and
- adaption - the organisation positively expects and embraces change, adapting and responding to minimise risk and maximise. The principle EnCO objectives are:
  - to deliver an initial 50-100 EnCO programmes for different organisations with results proven using the International Performance Measurement and Verification Protocol (IPMVP) over the next two years;
  - to award EnCO Registered Organisation status to organisations demonstrating good practice in EnCO principles;
  - to capture past and existing case studies in order to create a wealth of evidence on the EnCO web site;
  - to build capacity by substantially increasing the number of skilled practitioners capable of supporting or delivering EnCO programmes;
  - to provide recognition of such practitioners, namely at Registered EnCO Consultant and Approved EnCO Practitioner levels;
  - to provide comprehensive tools, training and resources to practitioners;
  - to collaborate with government, sponsors and other associations to accelerate



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adoption; and

- to ensure that EnCOs will generate 10 per cent of energy reduction savings through behaviour change by 2030.

Before now, even the IPMVP proven case studies (which have demonstrated ~10 per cent savings across an organisation) only covered at most a quarter of the potential areas for behaviour change improvements. A fully holistic approach has the benefits of joining up all of the elements into one cohesive behaviour change initiative.

The benefits of delivering just 100 proven case studies for medium to large energy users, using IPMVP methodologies, is conservatively estimated to be £12.5m/year with an investment of £9.5m. The larger benefits, once this approach becomes mainstream, is estimated to be at least many hundred times this.

There are over 140 interventions of different types of people-driven initiatives that characterise EnCO. The methodology and approach for implementation as one single holistic, robust and best practice approach is being shared as part of the Energy Conscious Organisation initiative.

The ESTA Accredited training programme, aiming to increase the number of practitioners, commenced in July 2020. This is based on a four-module programme, currently being delivered online, which when combined with course preparation and exercises, now amounts to twelve hours of CPD approved study. A post course examination is taken, and success leads the delegate to becoming a Registered EnCO Consultant.

The basic ESTA/EI tools to deliver or support implementation of behaviour change projects are now in place. A dedicated EnCO web site has been launched, case studies written, EnCO qualifications defined (at individual and organisational levels), training courses delivered and an EnCO IPMVP approach has been defined.

To enable change to take place at a faster rate, the initial vision includes delivering 50 to 100 proven case studies using IPMVP in the next two years. This requires 10 to 20 pilot projects in the short term.

- Visit the EnCO website at [www.energyconsciousorganisation.org.uk](http://www.energyconsciousorganisation.org.uk) and get in touch via [admin@energyconsciousorganisation.org.uk](mailto:admin@energyconsciousorganisation.org.uk) ■

