

# creating ESG champions

key tips for building stakeholder engagement



# inspiring ESG involvement

Faced with limited time and resources, it can be difficult to establish and maintain a successful sustainability program.

You need the support of everyone in your organization, from employees running day-to-day operations, right through to managers and directors creating company policy.

So, how do you motivate your team and encourage all stakeholders to embrace and advocate for vital sustainability and social impact initiatives? Often, it requires clear communication, ample support, and consistent top down commitment.

That's why in this eBook we help you identify potential barriers to engagement, as well providing key tips and best-practice resources to build lasting impetus for change.

Ensure that your stakeholders not only adopt ESG initiatives, but become the sustainability champions that will drive your company towards a cleaner, safer, more sustainable future – both for your organization and for the planet.





# what's holding your team back?

Implementing ESG initiatives can be challenging. Particularly if you fear a lack of enthusiasm from stakeholders, or worse still, a negative response.

In order to motivate your team and ensure everyone embraces your organization's sustainability program, first you need to overcome barriers to engagement. So, what's holding your team back from sustainability success?

Below are some of the key factors that can discourage active involvement.

## **Lack of Clarity**

When stakeholders cannot connect the actions an organization is taking with the sustainability objectives it has in place, they can easily become discouraged from offering their support.

## **Lack of Buy-in**

Long-term support is essential for sustained success. Without buy-in from stakeholders, especially leadership, programs often lack the resources needed to achieve sustainability goals.

## **Fatigue & Burnout**

Time and energy are finite resources. Participation in sustainability-related activities is often voluntary and may be in addition to a team member's usual responsibilities.

## **Potential ESG champions**

There are a variety of stakeholders in your organization that have the potential to impact your sustainability efforts including:

- employees
- founders and executives
- managers
- directors
- investors



# from stakeholder to sustainability champion

**Transforming stakeholders into ESG champions is critical to your sustainability success. Here are a few easy steps to overcome common barriers and boost ESG engagement.**

## **Step 1. Identify motivating factors**

Of your various stakeholder groups, not all will have the time, interest, or influence to impact your sustainability efforts. Once you decide which stakeholders have the potential to become effective ESG champions, ask yourself: “Why should our stakeholders care, and how can we appeal to them?”

Finding the reason that will motivate a stakeholder to become an active player is essential to building an effective team of ESG advocates.

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### **Get to know your stakeholders**

Take time to discover what your stakeholders care about and what could encourage them to be more involved. Building relationships will drive collaboration and increase program commitment.

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## **Step 2. Demonstrate leadership commitment**

Leadership buy-in needs to go beyond financial support in order to demonstrate a serious commitment to sustainability and social impact goals.

Ensure that leaders regularly discuss the importance of sustainability efforts and work to embed these values throughout the organization. This will give stakeholders confidence that any program initiatives are important and that their personal endeavors are worthwhile.

## **Step 3. Recognize their efforts**

Everyone appreciates having their contribution recognized, including stakeholders. By celebrating and rewarding their efforts, you can help to motivate and inform stakeholders of the hard work involved and the progress made toward key goals.

This can boost support as well as creating feel-good moments for stakeholders as they contribute both to the organization – and to something bigger.

## **Step 4. Communicate consistently**

Communication is key to developing ESG champions. By connecting with stakeholders at every step of a program or initiative, you will have more opportunities to foster engagement.

Not only that, ongoing communication also helps to strengthen the relationship with stakeholders. Building this rapport helps stakeholders feel valued, leading to continued interest and participation and ultimately a better chance of program success.

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### **Two-way communication is vital**

Allow stakeholders to share their insights and ideas for improving sustainability and social impact programs. This helps convert stakeholders into true ESG champions by providing a feeling of ownership in the process and outcomes.

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# checklist for stakeholder engagement

## CHECKLIST

**Understand your audience:** Determine which stakeholders you will be speaking with and tailor your messaging accordingly.

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**Know your company's program:** Be well-versed in your company's sustainability and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices and performance.

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**Frame sustainability as a business opportunity:** Highlight the potential benefits of strong sustainability and ESG practices, such as improved risk management and reputation.

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**Use data to support your claims:** Incorporate quantitative data to demonstrate the financial and social impact of ESG and sustainability initiatives.

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**Provide a clear action plan:** Share specific ways your company is addressing ESG and sustainability issues and outline future plans for improvement.

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**Be transparent:** Be open and honest with stakeholders about your company's ESG and sustainability challenges and limitations.

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**Encourage dialogue:** Create space for your stakeholders to ask questions, provide feedback, and share their perspectives on ESG and sustainability issues.

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**Continue the conversation:** Regularly follow up with stakeholders to address any outstanding questions and provide updates on ESG and sustainability progress.

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# struggling to involve stakeholders in your sustainability journey?

AMCS can help. Our Sustainability Platform offers easy-to-use tools that visualize your data-driven sustainability story, highlight progress, and simplify stakeholder communication.

Create the sustainability champions your organization needs to succeed.

[Contact us](#) today to learn more.

## **AMCS:** **Sustainability that means business.**

AMCS is the market leader in Performance Sustainability, enabling you to boost sustainability and profitability at the same time. With AMCS, you can achieve sustainable growth and transparent social responsibility while also safeguarding the environment and reducing operational risks.

The AMCS Performance Sustainability Suite is an operating system for business executives, managers, and frontline employees that provides end-to-end value and powers strategic decision making.

Our enterprise software and SaaS solutions deliver digital innovation to the emerging circular economy around the world.



