

ENSPIRE SESSION 8

Creating Persistence



This webinar explored practical, organizational, and behavioural strategies to build and sustain energy savings over time. Persistence grows out of commitment, planning and organization, supported by strong project development and financing practices, reinforced through communications and training, and sustained by effective monitoring, targeting and reporting. Together, these elements move organizations from ad hoc projects to a long-term culture of continuous improvement.

Getting Leadership Buy-In

Building persistent energy savings begins with strong leadership commitment that positions energy management as essential to organizational performance. When top management integrates energy objectives into business planning, assigns clear responsibilities, and supports reporting processes, it helps create the organizational pull needed to implement energy management practices.

Strategic Energy Management (SEM)

SEM is an organization wide approach that embeds energy performance into policy, procedures, and daily operations to maintain long-term savings. It balances technical improvements with behavioural reinforcement and strong organizational structures. One SEM framework organizations can use is the Plan Do Check Act cycle, which supports planning, implementation, monitoring, corrective action, and continuous refinement.

Project Development & Financing

Anything that increases the chances of a project's success helps to build trust, improving the likelihood the next project will get approved. Successful projects begin with effective project development, financing, planning, and engagement. By viewing energy efficiency as an investment rather than an expense, project leads can speak the language of CFOs and senior leaders, demonstrating value through metrics such as ROI and lifecycle costing. Recognizing the broader benefits such as reduced maintenance costs, improved comfort and reliability, enhanced asset value, and ESG alignment strengthens the business case for energy efficiency projects. A variety of financing mechanisms can support energy upgrades, including traditional lending, third party service agreements, incentives, and innovative approaches such as revolving funds. Revolving funds reinvest utility cost savings and rebates into future projects, creating a self sustaining source of capital for energy efficiency improvements without requiring new funding.

Behaviour Change & People-Powered Persistence

People and organizations are complex, and meaningful change happens at the individual level, where values, habits, and biases influence how people respond to new expectations. A structured approach is essential. Use a guiding framework, such as Prism's seven step campaign planning framework, offers a practical way to design energy efficiency initiatives that are intentional, measurable, and aligned with organizational realities. Success depends on knowing early on what to track, how to track it, and how results will be reported to build momentum and reinforce new habits. Persistent energy savings ultimately come from the combination of technology and engaged people working together to maintain performance over time.

Training

Training is essential for sustaining performance and works best when it is planned with clear objectives and measurable outcomes. It should be purposeful rather than ad hoc, and creative, hands on approaches such as energy treasure hunts often lead to deeper learning than traditional classroom sessions. People may have the skills, but training empowers them to act.



Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable procurement is a way to influence the market through purchasing choices. Embedding sustainability in procurement can help your organization be ready for regulatory changes, generate cost savings and improve end-user and building occupant health and wellbeing. When evaluating products and services, intentionally select local partners and suppliers committed to environmental and social responsibility and chose options that are more energy efficient, contain recycled content or are made of low carbon materials, and consider if and how the items can be recycled or disposed of at end of life.

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Sustainable Waste Management

Sustainable waste management involves reducing, reusing, and recycling materials to minimize waste sent to landfill, improve resource efficiency, and lower environmental impacts through practices like waste sorting, composting, and circular material use.

Communication and the Power of Stories

Clear and timely communications are critical to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and persistent energy savings. Taking the time to identify key audience and tailor your communications to what is important to them will significantly improve the effectiveness of your efforts. As energy is difficult to visualize, stories can be used to make energy concepts more relatable. They turn abstract information into something personal and memorable. When messages create relevance and emotional connection, people pay more attention and are more likely to engage. Using simple, meaningful stories helps capture interest quickly and makes key ideas easier to recall and act on.

Monitoring, Targeting, Reporting

Energy Management Information System (EMIS) make energy performance visible by transforming raw data into information people can act on. Analysis is essential, because data alone cannot show if systems are performing well. CUSUM, which tracks the cumulative difference between actual and expected consumption, is a vital tool for demonstrating savings and signalling when corrective action is needed. Both RETScreen and simple spreadsheet based regression tools can support this analysis and help organizations verify results and respond quickly to performance changes.

Access Resources and the session tool kit [here](#):

Access the Session recording [here](#):

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