



A Global Survey on Sustainability at Work

**How to successfully engage
employees in sustainability initiatives**



October 2022

Table of Contents

Sustainability at Work

Executive Summary	3
Survey Method	4
Survey Results	5
Recommendations	9
Contact	12



Executive Summary

Sustainability has become an increasingly pressing topic for companies all around the world. This is also reflected in the rise of the Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) role. According to research by the Winereb group, the number of CSOs across Fortune 500 companies soared to 95 in 2021, a 228% increase since 2011.

However, a challenge for many sustainability leaders is to successfully engage their workforce in sustainability initiatives. The key to creating a vibrant, sustainable company and to achieving sustainability goals is to find ways to get all employees - from top executives to assembly line workers - personally engaged in day-to-day corporate sustainability efforts.

A way of introducing successful initiatives is to actively listen to what employees consider important and are motivated to engage in.

This is why Capture conducted a global 'Sustainability at Work' survey to give employees a voice and share what sustainability aspects they are excited about and want to see their companies implement.

Survey results indicate that the three areas employees consider most important in relation to their organisation's sustainability efforts are **supply chain sustainability, employee engagement and resource efficiency.**

When asked what sustainability initiatives they are most passionate about and would like to see implemented, the main requests were:

- Transparency and measurement of sustainability efforts
- Education about sustainability and initiatives within the company
- Awareness, inclusion and engagement of employees
- Supply chain accountability
- Development of a concrete sustainability plan and company wide communication of it
- Management buy-in
- Recycling, energy efficiency, sustainable travel and digitisation
- Team initiatives and sustainability challenges

Survey Method

From May to June 2022, Capture conducted a global 'Sustainability at Work' survey and contacted employees from **junior and senior backgrounds, different industries and company sizes.**

The top 5 industries represented are manufacturing (11%), education (10%), health care (9%), IT (9%) and construction (8%).

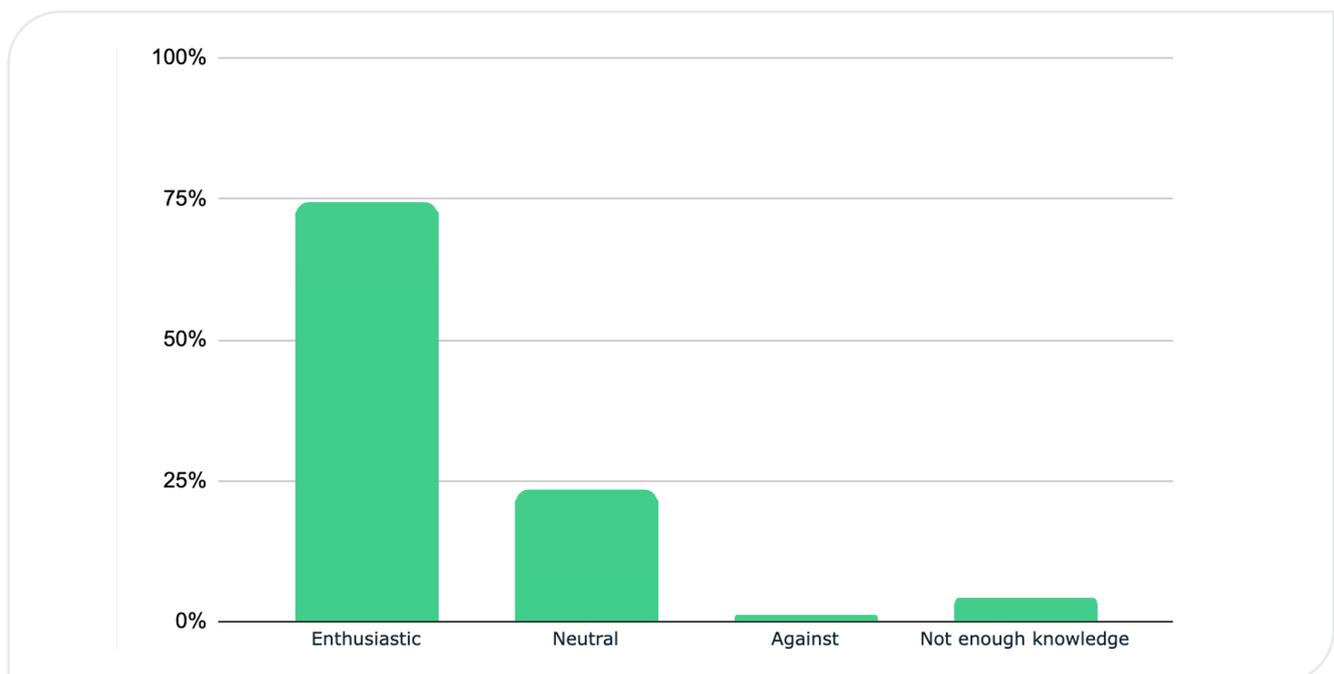
54% of the respondents work at companies with 501+ employees and 46% at companies with 0 - 500 employees.

Based on the employees' responses to an online questionnaire, Capture collected and analysed data from **500 participating individuals from 64 countries.**

Survey Results

How would you describe your personal interest in sustainability?

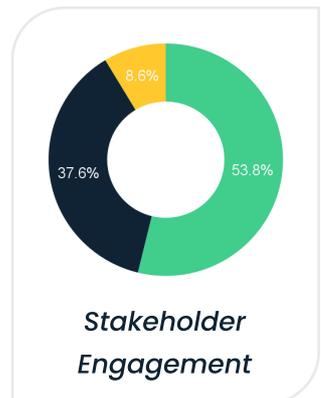
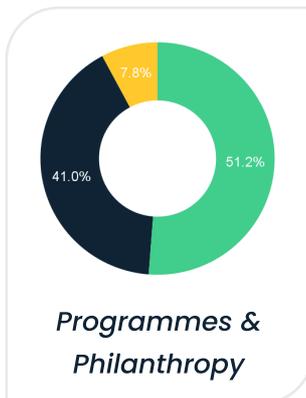
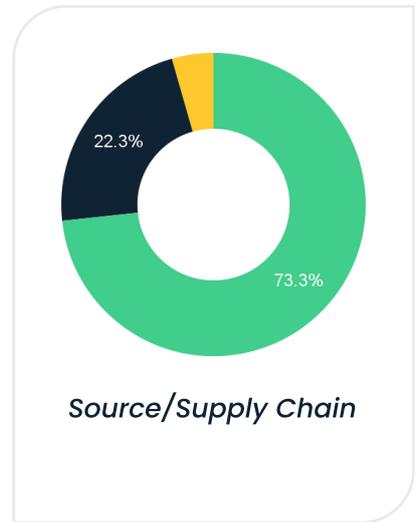
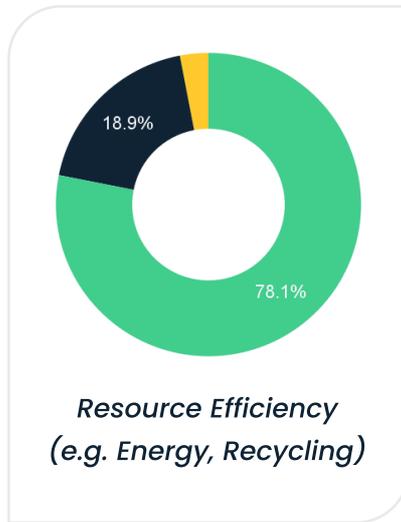
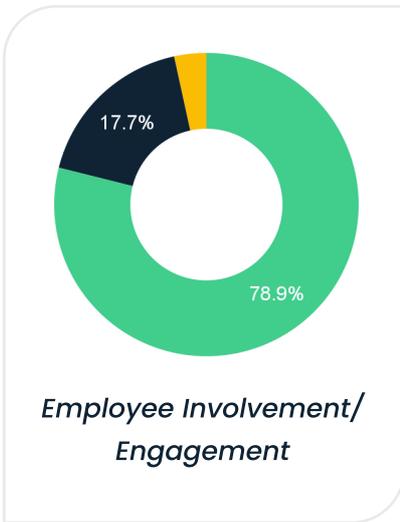
We asked survey participants to describe their personal interest in sustainability and found that **73% are excited about the topic**. This indicates that if a company develops engaging sustainability programs that resonate with what the workforce is looking for, the participation rate and enthusiasm would be high.



Survey Results

How important do you feel the following areas are for your company's sustainability program?

We asked this question to find out which areas employees are most passionate about when it comes to sustainability in the workplace. The findings suggest that the top three most important areas are **employee involvement/engagement (78.9%)**, **resource efficiency (78.1%)** and **sourcing/supply chain (73.3%)**.



Benefits of employee engagement in sustainability initiatives

These results suggest that employees are eager to be actively involved in their company's sustainability initiatives. Being engaged in sustainability efforts has been proven to provide a higher sense of purpose as compared to just showing up at work for the income. A study by the National Environmental Education Foundation in 2016 found that nearly **90% of employees engaged in their company's sustainability work say it enhances their job satisfaction and overall feelings about the company.**

This increased satisfaction and engagement is positively related to business performance and profitability.

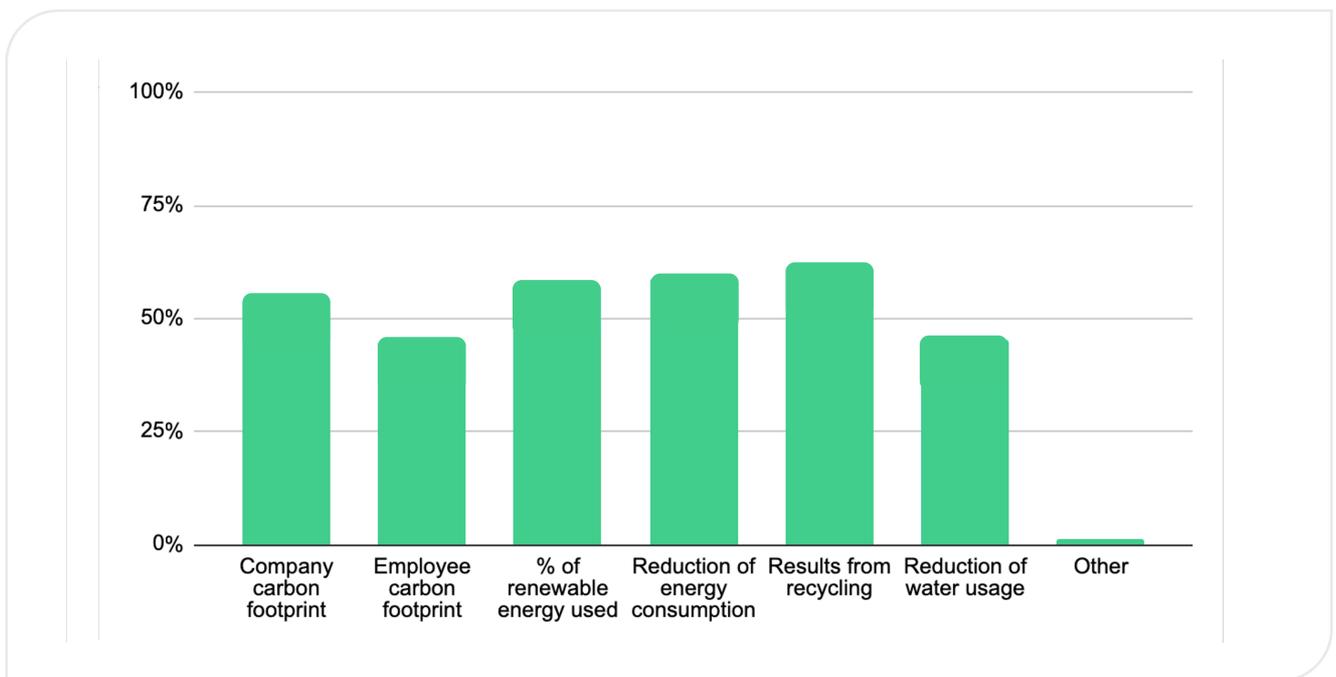
Key sustainability areas to focus on

To achieve this level of employee satisfaction and engagement, companies should focus on designing sustainability programs in the previously mentioned three areas. This will increase employee buy-in and engagement and ultimately get organisations closer to reaching their sustainability targets.

What metrics should be measured to achieve desired outcomes for corporations and employees?

Survey respondents mentioned that the tracking and communication of sustainability efforts is highly important to keep them engaged. They are **not looking for one-time initiatives** but expect their organisations to set **long term goals and report the progress frequently**.

Seeing ongoing improvement can help motivate employees to take part in sustainability initiatives. However, some companies may be unsure about which aspects of their sustainability efforts to track. Thus, we have asked employees to rank the metrics they consider most important to be communicated to them on a regular basis.



Recommendations

In the following section, we explore **what employees are looking for** when it comes to sustainability initiatives and what they are currently missing from the sustainability programs at their companies.

We also asked employees for **recommendations what their companies can do** to address these issues and would motivate them to get further involved. This section serves as a guide for companies looking to develop or finetune their own sustainability plan.

Recommendations

#1

Employee request

Transparency and measurement of sustainability initiatives



What employees are looking for

- More transparency about sustainability initiatives, sustainability goals and the measurement of those
- Consistency is key. One-off activities often seem dishonest and employees don't feel very motivated to be a part of them



How employees propose to address this issue

- Set long-term sustainability goals, provide a timeline of how the company is planning to achieve them and how employees can get involved
- Communicate the plan through the company newsletter and provide monthly updates about the progress
- Include your Green Team in the planning process and provide them with enough resources (time, budget and tools) to oversee the implementation, engage with the workforce and track results

#2

Employee request

Education about sustainability and initiatives within the company



What employees are looking for

- Knowledge of how to implement a sustainable lifestyle at work and in their personal lives
- Education and additional guidance on the topic



How employees propose to address this issue

- Conduct frequent education programmes to teach employees about the importance of sustainability and how they can become more sustainable at work and in their personal lives. This initiative should also be supported by the introduction of digital solutions to further guide them, inspire them and allow them to track their progress
- Provide employees with daily or weekly tips on how to live more sustainably to make sustainability an integral part of their lives
- Introduce sustainability work policies, educate employees about them and remind them frequently. These policies should include initiatives to minimise carbon emissions from travel, minimise water consumption, minimise waste, maximise recycling and follow sustainable working practices such as sourcing only sustainable suppliers and partners

#3

Employee request

Awareness, inclusion and engagement of employees



What employees are looking for

- Awareness about sustainability initiatives at their companies and a clear communication of them
- Inclusion in decision making about what initiatives to implement
- Ownership of sustainability initiatives



How employees propose to address this issue

- Initiate a task force to address potential environmental issues in the workplace and provide them with enough budget to be able to implement and promote sustainability initiatives
- Encourage grassroots-led movements rather than a top-down approach as they might bring more traction and awareness to the rest of the employee population. This can increase engagement and appreciation of sustainability initiatives
- Allocate time for volunteering and for employees to take part in other sustainability initiatives

#4

Employee request

Supply chain accountability



What employees are looking for

- Holistic data from the entire supply chain to make a real impact
- Vendors and partners should be held accountable and their sustainability goals need to be aligned



How employees propose to address this issue

- Introduce sustainability working practices stating that your company will only work with suppliers and other partners with the same sustainability goals
- Help potential partners to take their first steps in measuring sustainability by providing them with the right tools and metrics

#5

Employee request

Concrete sustainability plan and company wide communication of it



What employees are looking for

- A thorough sustainability plan that gets communicated properly across the entire organisation
- Budget approval for sustainability initiatives



How employees propose to address this issue

- Set clear net-zero targets and communicate initiatives and timelines to reach those goals in company newsletters
- Introduce all sustainability initiatives and their progress in the company newsletter
- Provide division heads / team leaders with information about the company's sustainability initiatives, encourage them to share the details with their teams and discuss how each team can contribute

#6

Employee Request

Management buy-in



What employees are looking for

- Management needs to lead by example and make sustainability a company-wide priority



How employees propose to address this issue

- Employees expect their management to lead by example. This means less air travel, use of an electric car, active participation in waste management and recycling policies, etc. These efforts and results need to be communicated to the workforce
- While employees suggest a grassroots approach, i.e. they want to be able to propose and lead initiatives, they still require management to provide the required resources (time and budget) and official support

#7

Employee Request

Recycling, energy efficiency, printing, sustainable travel and digitisation



What employees are looking for

- Consistent, everyday ways to be more sustainable at the workplace
- Recycling options, efficient use of energy, less paper printing and sustainable travel options
- Access to digital technologies to be able to track and achieve their own and their company's sustainability goals



How employees propose to address this issue

- Introduce sustainability work policies with a focus on minimising carbon emissions from travel, minimising water consumption, minimising waste and maximising recycling
- Encourage work from home and ride sharing
- Provide employees with bicycles, subsidise public transportation passes and provide them with tools to offset their travel emissions

#8

Employee request

Team initiatives



What employees are looking for

- Ability to track achievements of their sustainability efforts as a team
- Sustainability initiatives as an opportunity to bond and learn about the topic of sustainability together



How employees propose to address this issue

- Introduce beach, river and park cleanup initiatives for employees to get together on the topic of sustainability
- Run sustainability competitions with awards. The results of these competitions should be shared in the company newsletter to increase awareness of sustainability initiatives and motivate other employees to get involved

Contact

Are you looking for a partner to build a sustainable workforce for your organisation?

Get in touch with us at:

hello@thecapture.club

Serving the world from 1 Irving Place
#09-01, Singapore 369551