

WORKSHOP D

Empowering employees to drive sustainability

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Your hosts



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Agenda

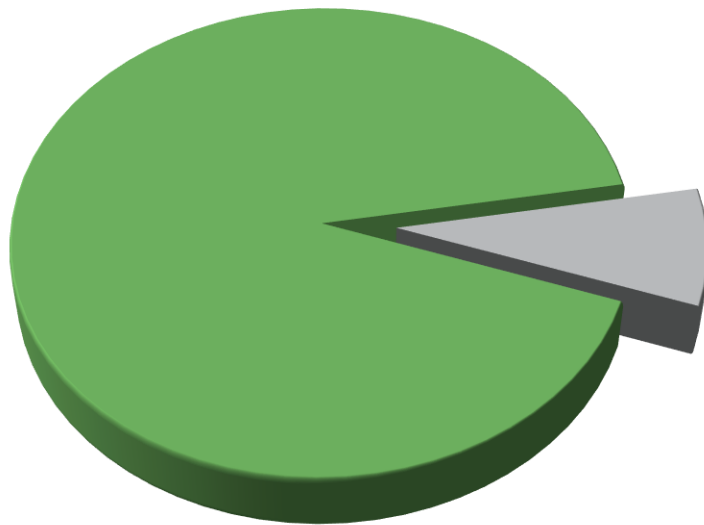
- Introduction
- Looking beyond the slogans and strategy
- What does it take to really change the dial?
- Where are we today?
- What's stopping us?
- How can we move forward?
- Key takeaways



Looking beyond the slogans and strategy

The slogans are compelling, and the strategies are ambitious. Driving sustainability is a critical issue for everyone, not just executives, yet many struggle to engage with it fully.

92% of employees in the Retail industry are found in store or distribution not head office.



Effective engagement of the broader workforce and building **shared goals and accountability** is critical to achieving your sustainability goals.

Beyond being the right thing to do, and achieving SDGs, the **commercial benefits** of prioritising sustainability are clear:



Enhanced attraction & retention of talent



Increased engagement & productivity

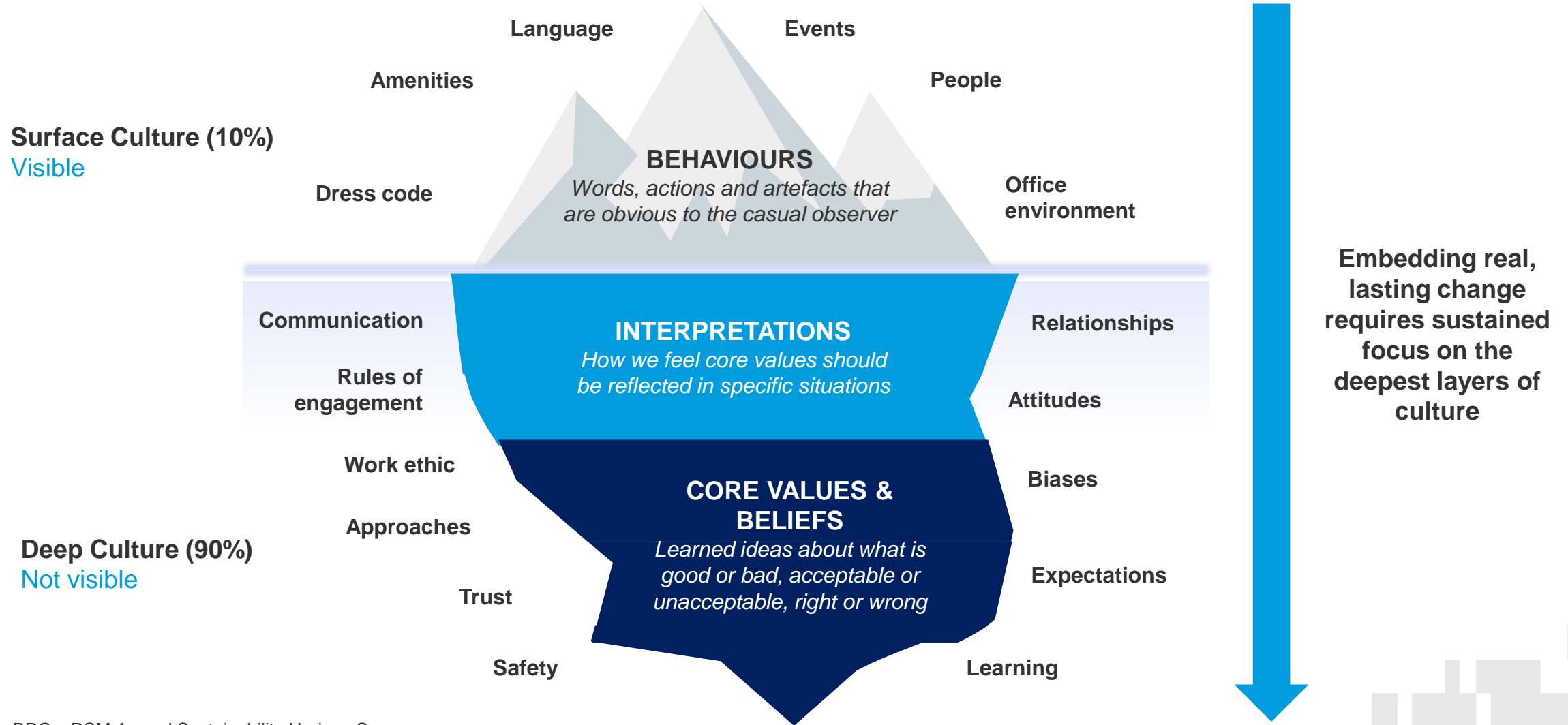


Greater customer loyalty & retention



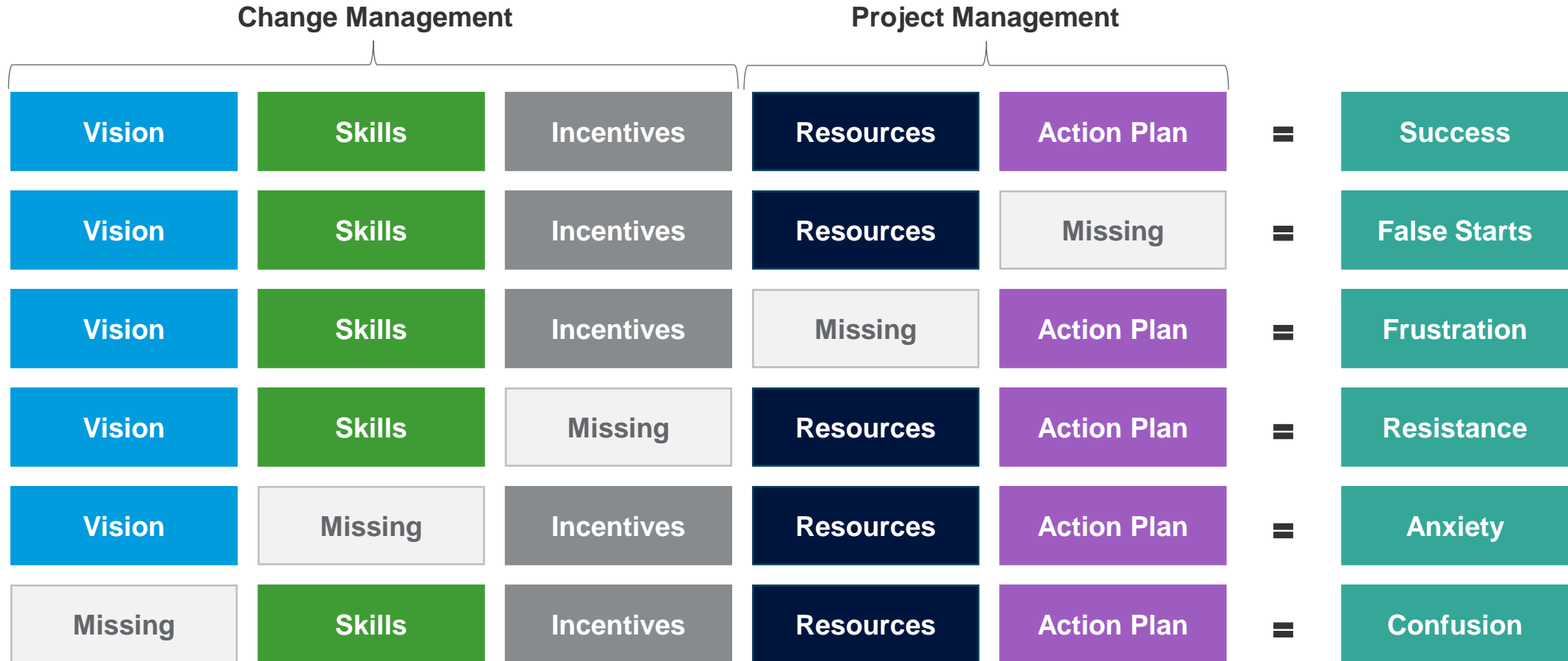
Ongoing competitive advantage

Understanding the depth of culture



The critical ingredients for change

It's not just about the what, but also crucially the how...



Opportunities for everyone

Sustainability is not a standalone initiative for only some parts of a business; it is an organisational mindset that requires the active engagement and focus of everyone, whatever their role, whatever their department.

**Strategy &
planning**

**Supply chain
management**

**Logistics &
distribution**

**Store
operations**

**Marketing &
sales**

Finance

**Human
resources**

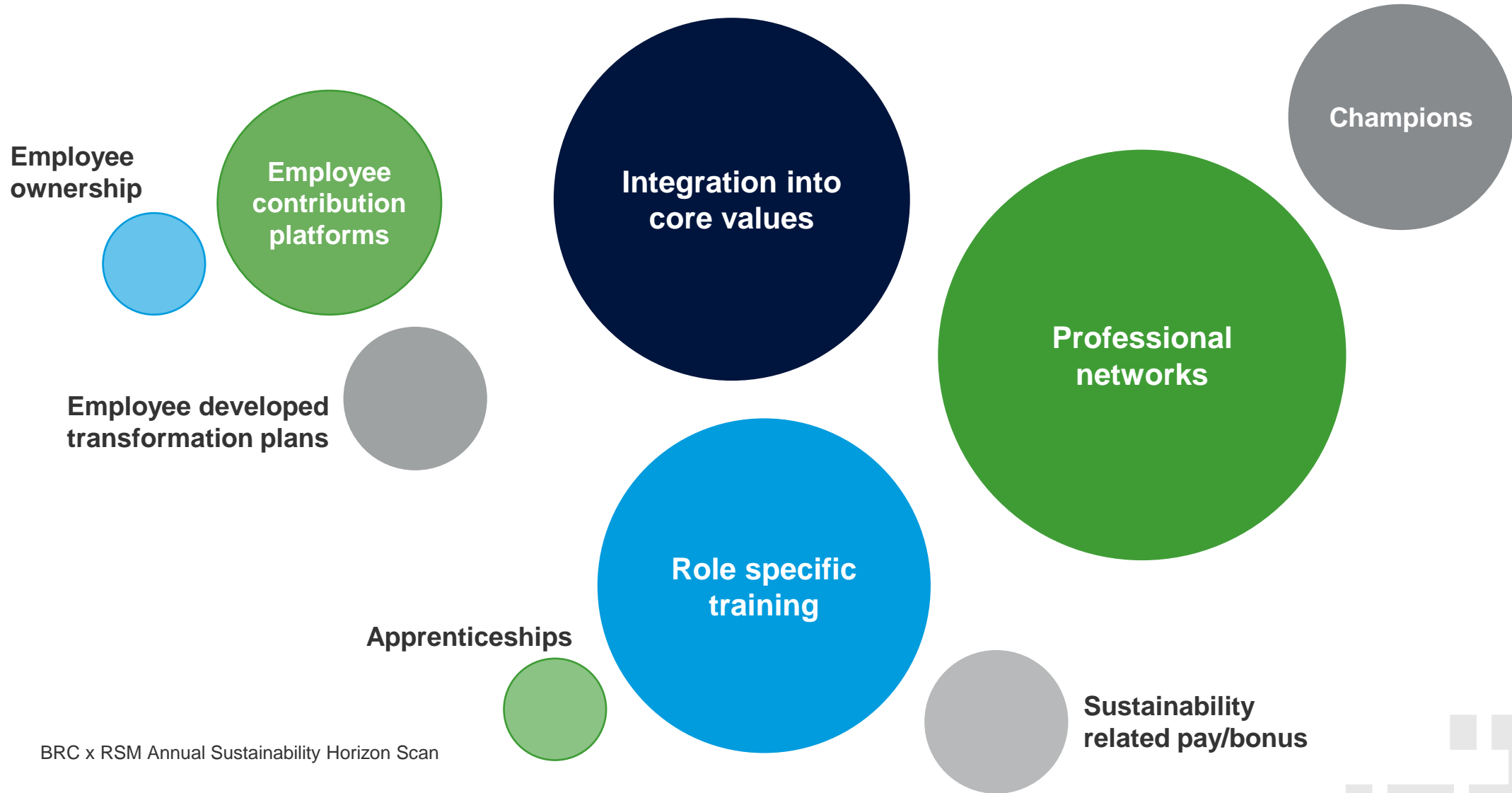
IT & systems

Making it personal

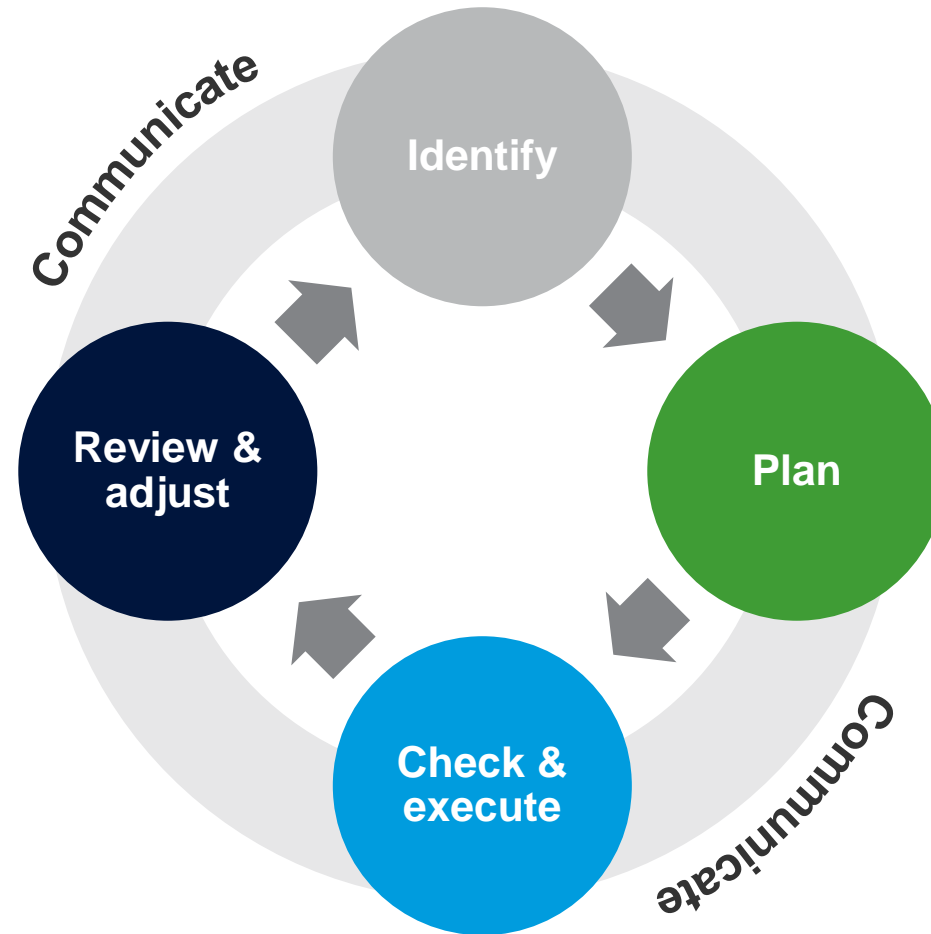
Beyond strategic initiatives and large-scale operational changes, to make sustainability more than just a corporate goal, you need to make it personal and equip your people with the platform, the skills, and the incentives to take ownership.



Many of you have already started...



Don't let it become a tick in the box



Key takeaways



**Make it a
priority for
everyone**

**Make it a
shared
endeavour
but make it
personal**

**Make it an
everyday**

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Outputs and considerations

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Outputs and considerations

- Highlighted the need to focus more energy on engaging the many rather than the few. Where much of the focus continues to be on strategy and executives, given that 92% of the retail workforce work outside head office, there is a need to change the narrative and focus on those who work in our stores and warehouses if we really want to change the dial. However, we acknowledge that whilst it is the right thing to do and has numerous commercial benefits for a business, many still struggle to engage with sustainability fully.
- Discussed some of the key barriers preventing people from engaging in sustainability from simply the breadth and complexity feeling overwhelming to a lack of a sense of accountability and ability to make a personal impact, coupled with a sense that it is a choice rather than a necessity and a lack of tangible, immediate incentive.
- Discussed how you truly empower your employees and drive lasting behavioural, and mindset change when faced with so many barriers. It isn't about making one big change or finding a quick fix, it's about nurturing a long-term culture shift addressing every aspect of the organisation, right down to the very roots and breaking long standing habits and routines, as opposed to just focussing on the visible low hanging fruit.
- Considered the importance of approaching change in the right way to make it stick, through ensuring there is not only a clear vision for the future but also a practical, visible plan in place supported by the right resources outlining how we will get there, encompassing a compelling narrative about what's in it for individuals and reassurance that the right support will be in place to build necessary skills and knowledge to enable people to make the change.
- Outlined some practical suggestions about actions that businesses can take to engage and empower their employees around sustainability, recognising that many of the businesses in the room already have initiatives and measures in place. We highlighted that no initiative in isolation is likely to make a significant difference and that instead a culture of continuous improvement and communication will be required on an ongoing basis to make progress.

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Key factors impacting the success of an initiative

1. It is key to breakdown the topic of sustainability and recognise what people in different roles really need to know rather than getting too technical or expecting them all to become experts.
2. Making initiatives connected but bitesize was also recognised as a critical success factor along with also enabling clear benefits and incentives to get involved.
3. Engagement and positivity are contagious and therefore sometimes planting the seed with the few can lead to successful propagation to many. Conversely, it is recognised that enthusiasm does not also equal expertise and there is a need to carefully differentiate between the two to ensure the right impact.
4. Champions are a popular choice but to realise the true benefit it is important that there is continuing support and sponsorship for the role at an executive level.
5. It is important to make sure that you are planning initiatives from the perspective of the average employee, putting yourself in their shoes rather than your own, and it is also recommended that real time is spent “on the shop floor” to understand what will work and what won’t work.
6. Finally, not being afraid of creating a bit of competition to drive engagement was highlighted.

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Key challenges

1. **Communication** was noted as a key challenge for all and in particular, how to effectively navigate the “permafrost” that often exists in organisations between leadership and the shopfloor. It was noted that translating the strategy into something that really resonates with the majority of employees is difficult and that in many cases the KPIs used are unrelatable.
2. **Having sufficient resource** within CSR function to do everything you would like to do given the scale of competing demands was also highlighted as an issue.
3. **Greater shared accountability** across senior levels of an organisation to engage the business.
4. **Training** needs to go beyond technical presentations and needs to be creative and designed and delivered by individuals who have expertise in L&D not just CSR.
5. **Danger in building up too much hype** within an organisation but then not being able to match the momentum of delivery.

We heard many inspiring initiatives that have successfully navigated the challenges including:

- Creating actionable plans at shop level
- Competitions based on reporting
- Competitions to design and run executive sponsored initiatives
- Presentation of displaying triple bottom line dashboards as desktop screensavers
- Creative use of communication platforms such as Viva Engage

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