

## Business tips for better waste management

As a business manager, deciding to make a difference in your community by adopting better waste management practices can be very rewarding. Reducing waste sent to landfill and recycling materials has a direct positive impact on the environment and benefits current and future generations. An efficient waste management system could also save you money in the long run by reducing your waste collection costs, reducing your purchasing costs or providing you with additional income streams.

### Successfully making a change can be easier said than done

To help you on your journey, here are a few tips inspired by Tasmanian business managers who have already seen the benefits of improved waste management:

- Start by making a plan. What waste does your business produce and where does it go? Write down a few quick ideas of what could be done to reduce your waste.
- Take small steps. Processes can be perfected over time as you find what works and what doesn't. One small change that is achievable is better than a big change that can never be implemented.
- Talk about your project with your network. Other businesses may have ideas that could apply to your business too.
- Contact your local council for waste collection information and recycling advice.
- Consider what second use you can find for the materials you throw away. Reusing is usually simpler than recycling.
- Assess whether a person or an organisation could benefit from what you usually discard. Someone's waste is someone else's treasure.
- Find out how you can move up the waste hierarchy scale.



## Once you have found a few ideas, share them with your staff

Involving your team early in the process increases their motivation and engagement, and they could also bring new ideas to the table. Try these ideas for getting your staff on board:

- If you don't have the time to do it yourself, have a motivated senior employee or manager in charge of the project.
- Hold quick waste management meetings to measure progress and encourage staff, or add a topic to your usual team meetings to keep it at top of mind.
- Make waste management as easy as possible for staff by providing them the right tools that will help in their daily tasks.

### Persistence is key.

It can be hard to motivate staff at first, but the benefits of doing so are worth it, and it will soon become a natural part of their tasks.

## Get inspired!

Whether you simply choose to reuse cardboard boxes and to install recycling bins, or decide to try a more ambitious project like becoming a zero waste business, remember that all steps towards managing waste count. Here are some inspiring examples from Tasmanian businesses who decided to make a difference:

- A supermarket reuses its unsold vegetables to prepare ready-made meals. Any unsold meals are offered to the local community to help people in need.
- An electrical contractor collects scraps of metal at the end of his jobs. He invested in a metal processing machine and sells the scrap to a local dealer. The machine quickly paid for itself.
- A restaurant kitchen added buckets near its vegetable cutting stations to encourage the collection of off-cuts for use in veggie broth.
- A supermarket offers its green waste to local farmers for use as livestock feed.
- A restaurant works with a worm farm that transforms their green waste into plant fertilizer, which is then used to grow the veggies that they buy to prepare meals.
- Many local businesses have added a recycling station in their lunch-room to encourage staff to sort their waste.

Better waste management is one part of a process to becoming a more sustainable business.

You can also consider ways to reduce energy and water waste; to not only help you save money, but also help your local environment.

