Creating a Green Office Certification Program for Iowa State University
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Background and Objectives
Many universities offer green office certification programs as a method to engage faculty and staff in their sustainability program, to encourage sustainability practices among faculty and staff, and to recognize sustainability efforts that are being made in offices across campus.

The project focus was to create a green office certification program for Iowa State University that encompassed the social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainability; that motivated behavior; that was engaging and educational for participants; and that could be used by all offices, regardless of size or facility.

Methodology
• Began with a checklist that combined aspects of other green office programs
• Completed three phases of beta testing with a variety of sizes and types of offices, including a university services office (EH&S), an academic office (CELT), and two small faculty offices
• Gathered feedback from participating offices and used this feedback to modify the checklist and develop recognition pieces for participation
• Worked with various university departments to ensure the checklist was in compliance with the university’s recommendations and priorities

Product Modifications
• Eliminated ‘tax-form’ appearance and moved towards a more user-friendly format to make completing the checklist easier
• Changed the process of receiving credit for actions from an all-or-nothing compliance system to a “Always/Usually/Sometimes/Never/In Progress/Not applicable” scale to allow opportunities for growth and progress within offices
• Added more social sustainability and community involvement components to make the checklist more comprehensive
• Added definitions of terms and links to resources in order to make the checklist more useful, informative, and interactive for program participants

Outcomes
• Faculty and staff are more interested and engaged in a program that is specifically tailored to opportunities that are relevant to their needs, is connected to Iowa State guidelines and recommendations, and is user-friendly
• Participants appreciate the ability to track sustainability efforts and to set and accomplish short- and long-term goals for themselves and their offices
• Faculty and staff are interested in making sustainable changes when provided with resources and tips on how to do so
• Recognition through electronic images usable for websites and/or a signed certificate suitable for display are the preferred means of recognition for participation in the program

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