Energy Management Journey Guide

Step 1

Why is Energy Management for you?

The Fuel Card Group initially decided to undertake Energy Management back in the summer of 2011, to give credence to our fleet management services CO2 Count and MileageCount. Another major factor that influenced our decision to implement Energy Management was to ensure that we adapted early to the increasingly important requirements of sustainability legislation (i.e. 20-20-20 targets). Since implementation we have seen a reduction in energy consumption and significant cost savings.

Step 2

Top management buy-in

For a successful management system you must have top management buy-in; this will ensure that you have the resources and the drive for an effective implementation and system. We have appointed a management representative (under the role of Energy Manager) who oversaw the implementation. It is important that this representative receives the right training to do the job, along with any other important people involved in the project.

Step 3

Choosing an auditing body and setting an audit date

For us it was SGS, the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company, who have now been auditing the Fuel Card Group's quality management system for over 20 years. Once you have chosen your auditing body you can then set a date for the audit (this doesn't have to be done straight away but it gives you something to work towards). Make sure you give yourselves enough time to implement the system; 12 months should be enough for most organisations.

Step 4

Pre-audit

An optional step, but one that is often worthwhile, is bringing your chosen auditing body in around this time for some GAP analysis work. This is a type of pre-audit that identifies any 'short-falls' in your current operations against the ISO standard.

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Step 5

Documentation

At this point you can start to build all the documentation that the system requires. For us this included: an overall Energy Manual linking everything to the ISO standard; mandatory procedures, as required by the ISO standard; operational procedures specific to our business; plus any records/spreadsheets needed to monitor and measure energy use and consumption.

Step 6

Implementation

The implementation involves 'closing the gaps' identified in step 4 (the pre-audit). This involves top management allocating the resources required to perform actions and implementation needed for an effective Energy Management System.

The first step for us was to perform an Energy Review of all sites/operations in line with the requirements of the ISO standards. As an office based business, this involved us making an inventory of all energy using equipment, as well as spreadsheets to record our energy uses (electricity and gas).

From this data we then set about implementing the procedures that have been documented and operational controls required.

Step 7

Internal auditing

Once all procedures and controls have been documented and implemented they must be regulated to ensure that they are met and upheld throughout the company. This is done through internal auditing and is a requirement of the ISO 50001 standard. Ensure that there are relevant trained personnel to perform internal audits on all aspects of the system; this will ensure that the procedures and controls are meeting ISO requirements at planned intervals.

Internal audits should highlight any non-conformances you have in your system, allowing you to take preventive and corrective action against them and to ensure that, when it comes to the certification audit, the system will be fully compliant.

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Step 8

Management review

When the implemented documentation and operations of your Energy Management System have been running for a couple of months, and you have a sufficient amount of internal auditing conducted, a management review should take place to review the system.

This gives top level management a chance to review the system and all that is involved including internal audits, action plans and all energy data. These are a requirement of the standard and should be performed a minimum of once a year and minutes need to be recorded.

Step 9

Audit

By the time you come to your audit date you should have a functioning Energy Management System in place with sufficient documents and records to prove it. Audit length depends on the size of the business and its operations; with the Fuel Card Group, having an annual ISO 50001 audit consisted of 2.5 days at three of its sites.

Auditors will review your system against all clauses of the ISO 50001 standard, but if you have implemented and audited your standard effectively you should have no issues. The auditors will give you observations, minor non-conformances and major non-conformances based on what they see. Observations are seen as improvements that can be made that require no essential action, and they will not affect accreditation. Minor non-conformances won't affect accreditation this time around, however if they are not dealt with they could be a problem in the future. Major non-conformances are serious deviations from the standard and could affect your chances of accreditation.

If all is well the auditors will recommend you for ISO 50001 accreditation and you should receive your official certificate in a matter of weeks. Note that this is just the start of your accreditation; they are audited on an annual basis to ensure you are keeping the system up to date, so keep your documentation and procedures relevant and applicable, and use internal auditing to effectively pin point any areas that are lacking.

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