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MAKE LIFE BETTER

Transportation
Sustainability
Wellness

CORPORATE BIKE PROGRAMS

A Best Practices Guide

Bikes are finding their way into corporate transportation, sustainability and wellness programs because of their significant ability to impact daily efficiencies and the bottom line.

The League of American Bicyclists recognizes companies with "Bicycle Friendly Business" awards. The latest round included some of the world's largest, most respected companies, like Facebook, Apple, Hewlett Packard and Williams-Sonoma.

Bike programs like these require work in five areas:

- Infrastructure
- Operational support
- Motivational programs
- Education
- Commitment

INFRASTRUCTURE

If you build it, they will come. With the right infrastructure—bikes, parking, showers and safe roads—more employees will use bikes and get around more efficiently.

Bike Fleets

Company bike fleets are an efficient way to navigate large corporate campuses; to travel to meetings in urban centers; to deliver packages in densely populated areas; and to bike commute.

Corporate campuses throughout Silicon Valley, including Google, Facebook and Apple, use bikes as an alternative to cars and company shuttles. Urban headquartered companies like Williams-Sonoma, with buildings throughout San Francisco, have bikes available for inter-office travel. Companies like FedEx and UPS use bikes for deliveries in dense cities like Paris, and in U.S. cities during the holidays. And General Mills and Sunpower have loaner fleets for employees who want to try bike commuting.

Bike Parking, Showers, Lockers

Having a convenient and secure place to store bikes during the workday, as well as a place to shower and clean up are important amenities. They can be the make-or-break for many employees weighing the decision to bike commute.

Facebook and Sunpower, for example, encourage bike commuting with showers, lockers, towel service and indoor bike racks. Levi Strauss & Co. built a large secure bike room with convenient parking for 200 employee bikes and a DIY repair station.





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Safe Roads and Routes

In the U.S. our roads were originally built for bikes but have since been focused on motorized traffic. Companies committed to a bike program need to look at their own parking lots, streets and surrounding neighborhoods. Is it convenient and safe to get to and from your office? Are you working with your local transportation authority and bike coalition to improve surrounding streets? The safer and more efficient the roads, the more people will ride. And interestingly, the more people ride, the statistically safer it is for everyone.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

It's one thing to have great infrastructure, but if your program's not supported, it won't hit its targets.

Liability and Risk Management

For company bike fleets, it's important to make sure you've done everything you can to reduce liability. This includes plans for insurance, helmet use, education and maintenance. With careful upfront planning your program will operate smoothly, without undue risk.

Bike Repair and Maintenance

If you have a bike fleet, then you must have a plan for regular maintenance and repairs. Depending on your physical set-up, you may also need re-balancing services, as bikes will migrate and not always be available where and when employees want them. Some companies, like Google and Genentech, contract for on-site maintenance while others have staff to handle it.

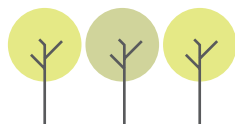
Some companies offer on-site bike repair for commuters, through either a visiting mechanic or full-time mechanics on site like you'll find at Facebook's new Bike and Transportation Hub. Employees also appreciate DIY bike repair stations, like those at Salesforce.com, Facebook and Levi's.

MOTIVATIONAL PROGRAMS

Like any good sustainability initiative, being a bike friendly business requires methods for motivating employee engagement.

The simplest is the federal Qualified Commuter Tax Benefit, \$20/month for employees who meet the minimum requirements for bike commuting. Even though it's a small amount, it's highly desired by serious bike commuters as it offsets much of the cost of riding a bike. Even better are internal systems that track and reward employees for commuting by bike.

Some of these systems are evergreen, providing incentive throughout the year. Others are seasonal and tied to events like Bike-to-Work Day.





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Incentive Programs

Clif Bar & Company has made bicycles a key part of their Sustainability Benefits Program and has made rewards a key part of participation.

Employees who bike commute at least twice a month are eligible to receive \$500 cash for the purchase of a commuter bike or a retrofit of an existing bike. Employees who eliminate cars from their commute can earn up to \$960 a year in rewards. Employees accumulate points that can be redeemed for a variety of rewards including commuter checks, cash, Clif gear, and even climate offsets.

Events and Campaigns

Kimberly-Clarke's bike program and sponsorship of their "Get Up and Ride" global bike-to-work campaign began with a single employee in Wisconsin. The campaign spread quickly and involves Kimberly-Clarke sites worldwide.

And for those who love to ride, there's nothing more motivating than healthy competition. At Specialized, employees track their bike commuting stats against other members through their Commuter Club.

EDUCATION

[We've polled thousands of employees to understand what motivates or deters people from bike commuting. Safety is the #1 reason for not cycling. "I don't feel comfortable riding with traffic." The most bike-friendly businesses offer safe cycling education to their employees.](#)

Workshops

One-hour workshops, often conducted as a part of existing lunch-and-learn programs, are the most popular. Countless companies offer these workshops as a part of Bike-to-Work month, including Williams-Sonoma, Salesforce.com and Facebook.

Internal Resources

Companies with comprehensive programs have a designated area on their internal websites for bike program information. This includes tips for safe cycling, links to outside resources, maps, routes, and workshop videos. Some companies have staff that provides direct assistance. Nike, for example, has a department that helps employees plot out the safest route to and from work as well as guide them to resources to make their ride easier.

COMMITMENT

[We've seen programs that started strong but didn't have the institutional support for the long haul. This type of support requires the bike program to be tied to corporate objectives. For instance, Facebook's goal of 50% alternative transportation drives their long-term commitment to cycling, which in turn helps them achieve their desired program results.](#)

Being bike friendly has moved from a nice idea to an important and valuable sustainable business strategy. Given the momentum in this direction, we'll see many more companies incorporate bikes into their sustainability plans.