



# LEADERSHIP TEAM CONVERSATION GUIDE



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You've measured your baseline and started to think about setting your targets for reducing your carbon emissions. So, your next step is to write an action plan!

It's essential that your leadership team supports this journey as you'll need their backing to make sure your efforts are a success.

Here are some ways you can engage your leadership team, and answers to some questions that'll probably come up.



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# WHAT YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM MIGHT ASK

## // Why should we do this?"

It makes business sense. Present stats and case studies to your leaders around winning business, staying competitive, improving brand reputation, keeping employees - the list is endless. By the end they'll be asking why they haven't started sooner!

## // How will we achieve this?"

There are lots of ways net zero can be achieved, and most depend on the budget available. It's worthwhile working out the various steps needed to achieve the targets so they can see the path towards net zero. Include different cost levels so they can assess the difference. It'll also be easier to update on progress towards milestones if you're regularly providing progress reports. Share the fact that this project is a journey and will take time and effort, ask for their input into target setting and what's realistic in terms of other business priorities.

## // How long will it take, is it soon enough and does this give us enough time?"

This is a time bound target - for example to achieve a 50%



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reduction of your carbon footprint by 2030. Explain why this target is important to reach with some examples of how you'll do it. It's also ok to say that you don't have all the answers and that some things will be worked out along the way.

### **// How much will it cost?"**

Ultimately the senior team is accountable for the financial success of your business, so they'll always need to see the facts and figures. Have an upfront conversation about the cost involved in terms of resource, potential changes and offset costs.

At the start of your journey this can be a difficult question to answer. You should explore and present potential costs such as offsetting and energy efficiency upgrading. However, the key is to stress that although there'll be upfront costs, you'll see ongoing reductions over time. Some larger companies may place a payback period limit or return on investment on their initiatives. For example, replacing lightbulbs is an upfront cost but the electricity savings cover that cost in three years.

### **// What are our competitors doing and where are we in relation to them?"**

Research your competitors' climate action and net zero efforts and how they talk about them, get familiar with industry specific goals and use case studies from your sector. Businesses tend to



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have a competitive streak and seeing other organisations working in the same place publicly sharing their journeys (winning new business and improving their brand reputation along the way) can really drive home how critical it is to act now and get ahead!



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# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

You need to establish your senior leaders' comfort levels and the speed you're able to move at. They may need your guidance on some of these questions so make sure you go prepared with some suggestions!

## // How ambitious can we be?"

Although net zero is the end goal, it's good to establish the short- and long-term ambition. Does your leadership team want to reach net zero by 2030, 2040 or 2050?

## // Who's accountable, and are they in agreement?"

While the responsibility to be a net zero business crosses all roles, the leadership team is ultimately responsible. To make sure the relevant team is comfortable delivering the work it's important to get buy-in along the way. That way everyone involved in achieving the targets have clear roles and agrees to the targets.

## // Can it be put on agendas as a standing item?"

Ask to have a standing item on the board or leadership team meeting agenda for you or your board sponsor. Ask for clear

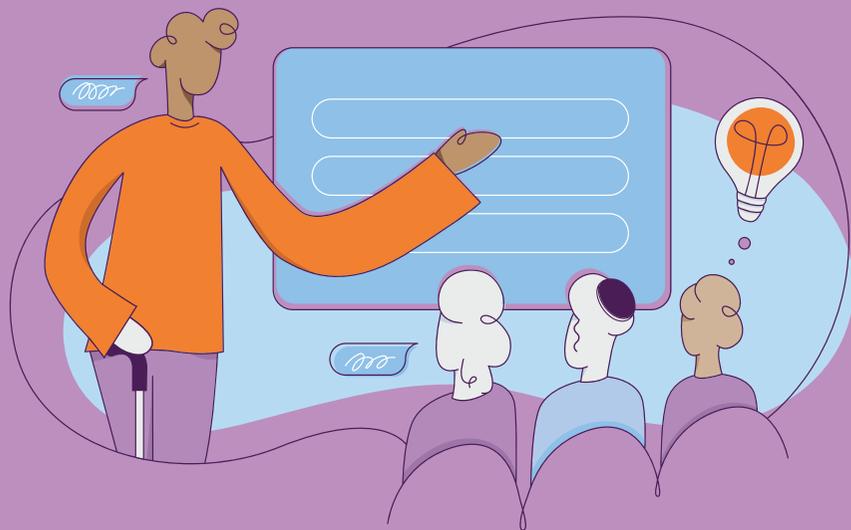


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guidelines around the information they'll need and who'll be presenting. Ideally, your board sponsor will be involved in the wider work and can make updates but be ready to share headlines during your journey as and when needed.

### “Is there any ringfenced budget?”

You'll undoubtedly need to present your leadership team with a detailed breakdown of figures of where and why budget needs to be spent. However, it's a good idea to convey to them that reaching net zero isn't possible without a budget and to explore if any has already been ringfenced.



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