



We're doing  
**great work,**  
but how do I make sure everyone knows about it?

GAINING  
TRACTION

➤ **Do you find it frustrating when you have put so much hard work into being a responsible business but no-one knows about it? Or struggled to raise the profile of what you're doing, both inside and outside your organisation?**

It's a common problem. Although we communicate every day, in a multitude of ways, sustainability communications brings a set of unique issues to consider and pitfalls to avoid. Sustainability activities are often complex, frequently involving months or even years of planning; the last thing you want is your work to be ignored, misrepresented or labelled as 'greenwash'.

EXPERT  
OPINION



**Kim Barton, senior consultant and communications specialist**

In my opinion, good communications always comes down to well thought-out strategies and planning. Answering 'who, what, where, when and how' is the best place to start and helps focus your priorities. Once you have answered these questions, you can start building your communications plan. I recommend looking forward between three and six months, making sure you identify any major milestones (such as the release of your sustainability report) and opportunities (staff speaking at conferences, World Environment Day etc). You can then start creating an ongoing plan of communications to make sure that your sustainability activities are prominent both within and outside your organisation.

For the best chance of success, it helps to keep five golden rules in mind when approaching your sustainability communications:

- 1. Be strategic** – more often than not, communications are thought of as something for the end of a project; this is a big mistake. A good communications strategy, developed at the start of any activity, will give you the best chance of success.
- 2. Be scientific** – much of sustainability activity is based on a scientific approach – with the right skills, complex issues can be communicated effectively without dumbing down the content or confusing the audience.
- 3. Be timely** – so much of communications is about saying the right thing at the right time. If you don't have a clear timetable it's all too easy to miss opportunities to get your message out.
- 4. Be realistic** – it's important to set clear and achievable objectives for your communications based on the resources you have available.
- 5. Be consistent** – putting your message out there once is probably not going to be enough. There is so much information available your messages can easily get lost. You need to keep saying the same message again and again to ensure it finally gets heard.

HELP ME SOLVE  
THIS PROBLEM

Get in touch for a chat about sustainability communication.

Drop us an email at [info@imsplc.com](mailto:info@imsplc.com)



RESOURCES

Not quite sure how to communicate your sustainability activities?

Check out our 'Shout About Sustainability' services at [www.imsplc.com](http://www.imsplc.com)