

PAPER SAVING FOR OFFICES

What is this Action Sheet about?

This Action Sheet is a questionnaire developed by the Institute for Zero Waste in Africa, aimed at helping businesses to prevent waste paper. If you work in an office, or know someone that does, maybe you can find a way to pass on these resource-saving tips.

BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

How Does Your Business Rate on the Paper Scale?

Take a moment to assess the potential for your business to improve its paper-efficiency. Which of the following paper waste prevention opportunities has your office implemented?

1) Is double-sided (duplex) copying and printing the norm in your office? (Note: duplex means printing on both sides of the paper.)

Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:

- Set printer(s) to duplex via your computer software or retrofit printer(s) with duplex hardware & software.
- Set the output default on copier(s) to duplex
- Purchase or lease only equipment that can produce duplex copies reliably.
- Establish and disseminate an office duplexing policy:
- Use office organizational tools that facilitate duplex formatting (e.g., files that bind on the left hand side versus the top)
- State exceptions to the policy
- Educate staff about the policy, why it's important, and ensure that all know how to duplex
- If it is impractical to set printer/copier default outputs to duplex, train staff on how to set and use the duplex function on printers/copiers
- Post graphics and signs encouraging duplexing near copiers and printers

Resource Efficiency Benefits: duplex copying and printing reduce the amount of paper that needs to be posted or filed, thus reducing handling time and storage space and costs. Duplexing also reduces paper purchasing requirements.

Note: while duplexing printers may appear more expensive, if you analyse the cost per page over the Life Cycle, they are less expensive!

2) Do you refrain from printing hard copies for drafts?

Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:

- Save documents on disk, CD or zip disk
- Double check that hard copy reports or memos are only made for people who need them
- Print only pages required rather than the complete document, or email the document to them

3) Have unnecessary reports been eliminated? And all reports streamlined to reduce report size?

Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:

- Review existing reports to determine if any can be streamlined, combined or eliminated
- Use narrower margins and compact fonts
- Employ reduced line spacing and use shrink-to-fit feature to easily fit all text onto fewer pages
- Print more than one page on a page – 2 pages per page, double sided, means 4 pages on one!

- 4) Does your firm minimize duplicate periodical subscriptions and eliminate unnecessary subscriptions?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Purchase state revised statutes, code of regulations and other documents on CD or as an on-line service, rather than books
 - Reduce subscriptions to the same journal within your office; keep them centrally located with a sign-out list
 - Eliminate complimentary subscriptions to journals that are not pertinent to your practice or that are not read often
 - Donate old magazines or trade journals — investigate whether universities, technicians, *community* libraries, State prisons, schools, etc. could use them
- 5) Are single-sided sheets reused in your office?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Collect paper that has been used on one side. To avoid any confusion cross out the side that has been used
 - If a surplus printer is available, designate it as a "Draft Printer" and stock it with paper printed on one side. In copiers with multiple trays, stock one of the trays with draft paper and provide directions on which tray to select for draft copies.
 - Make scrap pads from used paper
 - Use outdated letterheads for in-house memos
- 6) Do you refrain from posting the original of a fax?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Confirm on the phone. Save paper and provide personalized customer service.
- 7) Have all forms in your office been streamlined?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Redesign forms to be more efficient, using fewer pages
 - Go paperless with electronic forms (administration, filing forms etc)
- 8) Does your firm minimize pre-printed letterheads that can get outdated?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Create a template for printing letterheads in house
 - Order smaller batches so letterhead stock can be current
- 9) Are mailing lists kept current?
Yes / No / Not yet? Here's how:
- Remove duplicate names and out-of-date entries from mailing lists.
 - Ensure that there is your return address on your mailings, so returned mail can be used to update mailing addresses

Motivating Change in your business:

- Avoid giving too much information at once; give information in manageable pieces
- Put facts in terms that people can relate to, and the message should be easy to understand. A shocking fact can help motivate a person to initiate change
- Explain why it is important to stop wasting resources. Where possible, present benefits in terms of cost savings, resources saved, customer satisfaction, and corporate and personal responsibility towards future generations
- Personalise information by relating it to things familiar to the audience and present it so that it stands out. Reiterate the message in different ways, but avoid being redundant

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: This Action Sheet is based on Institute for Zero Waste in Africa publication: Paper Saving for Offices.
Email: zerowaste@iafrica.com