

 INTERNAL CHANGE AGENTS

Built In, not Bolted On

How to move sustainability from a separate workstream to the way your organisation actually operates, one decision, one conversation and one redesigned process at a time.

— *FutureFit Collab Practical Guide Series*

READ TIME

30 min

AUDIENCE

Internal change agents

FOCUS

Embedding practice

TOOLS NEEDED

None

INTRODUCTION

The **design** problem hiding as a values problem

If sustainability still feels like extra work in your organisation, that is not a values problem. It is a design problem.

The system around you has not been built to make the sustainable choice the natural one. This guide does not give you more things to add to your list. It helps you remove sustainability from your list by folding it into the work that already happens.

You do not need a new strategy. You do not need a budget or a mandate from the top. You need a different entry point. One redesigned decision. One team conversation. One pathway changed from the inside.

How this guide moves: *three moments, end to end*

DIAGNOSE

Where sustainability is still extra

Three signals that tell you sustainability is still running outside your normal operations.

ACT

→ Four practices that embed

Four ways to fold sustainability into decisions, conversations and processes that already happen.

SUSTAIN

→ What to expect when you begin

What to expect when you begin, from the first pushback to the moment your role starts to shift.

1

One redesigned process is enough to start. You are not redesigning the whole organisation. You are changing one pathway.

DIAGNOSE

The integration map

Sustainability that sits outside normal operations is fragile. It depends on one person's motivation, one team's budget, one leader's attention. When any of those change, the whole thing moves with them. Use these three signals to find where it is still running as an add-on.



What bolt-on sounds like.

"We have a sustainability programme." It has a name, a lead, a budget, a working group. It runs alongside the real work, not inside it. If the programme pauses without changing how anyone does their daily work, it is still optional.

What built-in looks like.

Built-in sustainability does not need its own meeting or its own budget line. It lives inside the decisions, conversations and processes that already happen whether you are there or not. That is the difference.

Key insight

"The goal is not to talk about sustainability more. It is to need to talk about it less, because it is already in how decisions get made."

ACT

Four shifts that embed

These are not programmes. They are changes to how your team already operates. Each one starts with something that already exists.

1

Find the decisions that already exist

Inside, not on top

Before

A sustainability step added at the end of the process

A checklist at the end of a process is still an add-on. It depends on someone remembering to run it. It disappears first when things get busy.

mechanism

Decision integration



start where friction is lowest, one question inside one recurring decision

After

A sustainability lens inside a decision that already happens monthly

Ask where a sustainability consideration fits naturally inside a decision your team already makes. That is where embedding is fastest and most visible.

2

Redesign one process from the inside

Three moments, end to end

Before

Sustainability review added to the end of the project sign-off

A checkpoint at the end does not influence decisions already made. It records them. That is compliance, not embedding.

mechanism

Process redesign



three moments redesigned across one workflow is enough to start

After

Sustainability lives at three points inside the procurement cycle

Map one workflow from start to finish. At each step, ask: where does a sustainability consideration belong here, not beside it? Change three steps. Run the redesigned process once.

3

Run a 30-minute team conversation

One question, openly asked

Before

"This is what our sustainability policy says we should do."

A policy briefing makes sustainability external. Something handed down. The team receives it but does not own it.

mechanism

Shared discovery



people discover sustainability is not foreign to their work, it is partially there already

After

"What do we already do that aligns with what we say we value? What does not?"

One good question asked openly surfaces concrete examples, builds shared language and moves the conversation from abstract to operational. 30 minutes. One team.

4

Make the sustainable choice the easy choice

Change the default, change the habit

Before

"The sustainable option requires four extra steps."

People take the path of least resistance. When the unsustainable choice is easier, faster or cheaper, most people take it. Not from apathy. Because that is how organisations work.

mechanism

Default redesign



when the sustainable option is the default, people take it without being convinced

After

"The sustainable option is the default. Opting out requires the extra step."

Identify one place where the unsustainable choice is currently easier. Write a one-paragraph proposal to flip that default. That is the simplest form of embedding.

SUSTAIN

What to expect in the first eight weeks

Embedding does not happen in one meeting or one redesigned process. It happens in the accumulation of small changes: in **language**, in **defaults** and in what people do automatically. Here is what to expect.

Eight-week embedding arc: what changes and when

FutureFit Collab, 2026

Weeks 1–2 Resistance shows up	Weeks 3–4 Language shifts first	Weeks 5–6 Leadership notices	Weeks 7–8 Your role shifts
<p><i>Weeks 1–2</i></p> <p>Resistance shows up</p> <p>"We already do this." Acknowledge the intent, then ask what happens under pressure. The gap between those two answers is where the work is.</p>	<p><i>Weeks 3–4</i></p> <p>Language shifts first</p> <p>Colleagues use sustainability thinking in conversations not about sustainability. Notice it. Name it. That is evidence of embedding, not coincidence.</p>	<p><i>Weeks 5–6</i></p> <p>Leadership notices</p> <p>Build visible results at team level first, then bring evidence upward. Internal proof is more persuasive than external benchmarks.</p>	<p><i>Weeks 7–8</i></p> <p>Your role shifts</p> <p>You move from doing to enabling. From expert to facilitator. That shift feels unsettling. It means you are succeeding.</p>

A reminder worth keeping



Embedding happens when the sustainable choice becomes the normal choice. Not when people remember to be sustainable.

Forgetting would feel strange.

FUTUREFIT COLLAB

Ready to move from good intentions to daily habit?

FutureFit Collab helps organisations move beyond compliance and into embedded practice. We work at team and organisational level to redesign the conditions, not just the expectations. If you are ready to go from bolt-on to built-in, we would like to talk about what that looks like in your specific context.



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Does sustainability feel like extra work in your organisation?

Forward this guide to a colleague who is the only person in their team carrying sustainability. The argument for embedding is not about scale. It is about starting in the right place. **One process, redesigned from the inside, is enough to begin.**



PRACTICAL GUIDE SERIES

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