

The cycle-friendly workplace



Five easy steps to:

- ✓ Increase workplace wellbeing
- ✓ Increase staff productivity
- ✓ Reduce pressure on parking
- ✓ Reduce greenhouse gas emissions





This booklet will help you create a more cycle-friendly workplace, one that actively encourages people to travel to work by bicycle. At the Royal Children's Hospital we have built a secure covered bicycle parking area for over 60 staff with PIN number entry. Because it is near the canteen it has good natural surveillance and there are bikes in it all year round.

From a CEO's point of view there are many benefits in creating a cycle-friendly workplace. Those who ride to work say that it is fun and helps them keep fit. Some certainly appreciate the money they save. The benefits of a productive and healthy workforce all come back to the organisation and the people we serve. From a financial point of view it has helped ease our car parking problem in a cost-effective way. The contribution to the community of quiet, efficient and non-polluting transport is another bonus.

I encourage you to follow the steps set out in this booklet and help make cycling, walking and public transport positive ways of getting to and from work for your employees and visitors. We have found the advice and assistance of Bicycle Victoria helpful in implementing our solution, and I am sure they would be happy to help your organisation as well.

Assoc. Prof. Kathy Alexander

Chief Executive Officer

Women's & Children's Health

*Including The Royal Women's Hospital
and Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne*

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Step by Step

Whether your organisation employs two people or two thousand, you can take five easy and cost-effective steps to make your workplace cycle friendly. The important thing is for management and staff to work together. It's as much about attitudes and people as it is about facilities.

Step one discover the benefits

Page 2

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Read on to find out more about the benefits of promoting cycling for your business or organisation:

- Healthy
- Cost effective
- Improves access to your workplace
- Environmentally friendly

Step two improve facilities

Page 3

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Some of your employees may already cycle to work, others may be interested in doing so. A good place to start is by talking with them about the facilities they need:

- Bicycle parking
- Showers and change rooms
- Clothes lockers

Step three create a cycle- friendly culture

Page 6

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Work with people throughout your organisation to build a cycle-friendly culture. There are many ways this can be achieved:

- Encourage managers to actively endorse cycling
- Appoint a keen cyclist as cycling coordinator. They will make your job easier!
- Support the formation of a Bicycle User Group (BUG)

Step four provide incentives

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After you've achieved some of these first steps and seen some of the benefits to staff and the organisation, you can consider initiatives such as:

- Interest-free loans to encourage staff to buy bikes
- Incentives for bike travel
- A fleet of bikes for use by staff

Step five celebrate and plan further activities

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As the benefits grow, you'll want to do even more. Plan and coordinate ongoing programs for a healthy workplace that encourage cycling, walking and public transport.

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Resources and contact details

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Step One – discover the benefits



Cycling can assist your business or organisation to be healthier, more productive, reduce costs and to take greater care of the environment.

Health and wellbeing benefits

Cycling is a low-impact physical activity which means that it is good exercise with a low risk of injury. Regular cycling reduces the likelihood of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, some forms of cancer, stress, anxiety and depression.

Because people are getting regular physical activity as part of their journey to work, cycle-friendly workplaces generally have greater morale, lower absenteeism and higher productivity. There are more effective workdays per employee as a result of improved fitness and mental health.

When DuPont Corporation (US) introduced a fitness program, they experienced a 14% decline in the number of days off which translated to 11,000 saved work days per year (*American Journal of Public Health*, 1990). Swedish researchers found that fit and healthy workers committed 27% fewer errors than non-fit workers (*Ergonomics*, 1983).

In a Canadian government study, the Canada Life Assurance Company saw a 4% increase in productivity amongst staff participating in an employee fitness program. Furthermore, 47% of program participants reported that they felt more alert, had better rapport with their co-workers, and generally enjoyed their work more (*Preventive Medicine*, 1983).

Financial benefits

Support cycling and you support your bottom line with:

- Reduced need for costly car parking
- Healthier staff – less days lost to absenteeism due to illness
- Less staff time lost due to traffic congestion
- Higher productivity and better attitudes to work

Building a new inner-city car parking space costs, on average, \$30,000. The same space will fit 12 bikes, and bike racks cost approximately \$80 per bike fully installed. Savings rise quickly with every employee who decides to ride to work.

Environmental benefits

Cycling burns no fossil fuels, creates no air pollution or greenhouse gas emissions and uses very little land. A cycle-friendly workplace is a great way to show people that your business or organisation cares about the environment. Demonstrate your support for healthy travel by installing bike racks in convenient locations for staff and visitors.

‘Cycle-friendly workplaces generally have greater morale, lower absenteeism and higher productivity’

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Step Two – improve facilities

Once you've identified the benefits, the next step is to use available resources to make your workplace a better place for cyclists.

Bicycle parking

The most effective way to encourage staff to ride to work is to provide a safe place to park. Surveys in the UK have found that secure bicycle parking is the most important factor affecting the decision to travel by bicycle (UK Department of Transport, 2002). Fear of having a bicycle stolen is a big deterrent to riding to work.

It is wise to involve your building or facilities manager and any employees who already cycle to work in your decision about the type of bicycle parking, the quantity needed and where to install it. If it is not possible to do it yourself, think about approaching other building tenants or adjoining businesses to pool resources.

Types of workplace bicycle parking

- **Simple bike racks**
 - > in a safe, easy-to-use location
- **A bicycle cage or shed**
 - > with good surveillance
 - > preferred for security, convenience and protection from the weather



Paul Pinkney, chef

Paul pedals the Blue Train Express

Paul Pinkney, head chef at Blue Train Café, cycles 10km each day from his home in Elwood to work at the Southbank precinct in Melbourne. He parks his bike in one of the 31 racks in a secure bicycle parking cage on the second level of the underground car park.

Before Bicycle Victoria helped the Southgate Management install the bicycle parking cage, Paul had been storing his new bike on the Blue Train premises, to the chagrin of his fellow chefs and management worried about access to fire doors. Now several chefs and half a dozen staff regularly ride to work at Blue Train Café.

Paul says 'A lot of us are quite young and only working part time, so riding a bike is the best way to get to work. Sometimes we work late and by the time we finish, public transport has stopped, so being able to cruise home on the bike is fantastic.'

Cycle parking for visitors

Visitors to your organisation might also need bicycle parking. There are two options:

- 1. Allow visitors to use secure staff bicycle parking.** Let visitors know by including this as part of the access information supplied on invitations to meetings or other events.
- 2. Provide on-street parking in a public location.** If possible, install visitor bicycle racks close to the building entrance (within 30 metres) where there is good surveillance by people walking past or overlooking the racks. Your local council is usually able to provide on-street bike parking.

How many racks?

Deciding how many racks to install is a matter of judgement and experience. A good guide is to start with one for every 10 full-time employees. It is usually relatively easy to add more if needed. The Draft Victorian Planning Provisions specify at least one rack for every 20 full-time employees for new buildings. Bicycle Victoria can help you decide.

Important considerations:

- consult with current bicycle users
- do a site inspection to note where people are parking informally
- consider current and expected staff numbers, and their likely or desired use of bicycles to travel to work
- estimate numbers of visitors arriving by bicycle



Staff parking at Southbank

Standards for bicycle parking

Bicycle parking should be conveniently located, secure, covered and well-lit. The following publications are useful references:

Bicycle Parking Solutions

User-friendly, quick-reference brochure published by Bicycle Victoria (Dec. 2003) with full details of factors to consider when installing bicycle parking.

www.bv.com.au [Keyword: Bicycle Parking]

Check out the Bicycle Victoria website for tips on assessing your parking requirements and information on bike parking products.

Bicycle Parking

VicRoads brochure downloadable from www.vicroads.vic.gov.au and available from Bicycle Victoria.

Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 14 – Bicycles

Technical specifications including Australian Standard AS 2890.3 for bicycle parking. Published by Austroads (1999) and available from VicRoads.

Melbourne: Bike Map 2003

The City of Melbourne's bike map locates public parking rails and bike parking in public car parks.



Bike cage at Royal Children's Hospital



Changing facilities and showers

If you are able to provide quality changing rooms and shower facilities, these will be a big incentive for riding to work and a sign that you are serious about promoting cycling in your workplace. Showers and changing rooms can also be used by people who walk, run, do yoga or other physical activity before work or during lunch breaks.

If it is not possible to provide amenities at your location, you could negotiate with an adjoining building or a nearby gym or club for your employees to use their facilities.

Facilities should be secure, able to be locked and preferably located in well-lit areas as close as practicable to bicycle storage areas. Well-designed changing rooms will include showers, non-slip floor surfaces and toilets.

Bicycle Victoria recommends at least one shower for every 10 bike spaces and the Draft Victorian Planning Provisions specify the same for new buildings (one shower for the first five bike spaces and then one per ten after that). There should be at least one change space for every shower. For more information, see www.bv.com.au [Keyword: Parking provisions].

Storing clothes

Lockers are as important as showers because they enable staff to store personal items such as towels and clothing. Ideally, they should be well-ventilated, secure and lockable. There should be at least one clothes locker for every bicycle space. Alternatively, staff could store their clothes and cycling gear in a lockable room which has shelving and hooks for hanging clothes. Again, ventilation is an important consideration.

Other facilities and equipment

You can make cycling to work even more attractive to your employees by providing:

- an iron and ironing board
- hair-dryers
- a cyclists' notice board
- sunscreen (in bathrooms)

A toolkit

You could also provide a set of company bicycle tools. In particular:

- a floor pump
- spare tubes
- puncture repair kits
- a set of allen keys, spanners and screwdrivers

A toolkit will make life easier for your cycling employees and it is another symbol of your organisation's commitment to creating a cycle-friendly workplace.

*'You don't have to go it alone
– think about sharing facilities
with surrounding businesses'*

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Step Three – create a cycle-friendly culture



Once you've made steps towards providing the basic infrastructure to support your employees cycling to work, the next step is to create a cycle-friendly culture.

Management endorsement

Perhaps most important is for senior management to show support. Employees need to know there is no stigma attached to riding; they won't be embarrassed or looked down upon by arriving in bike clothes or getting into the lift in bike gear.

Chip Goodyear, CEO, BHP Billiton



Leading by example

Managers may want to get involved in Bicycle Victoria's Ride to Work Day™ held in October each year. They can show their support by sponsoring a workplace breakfast and providing prizes, or they can go one step further and ride to work on the day. BHP Billiton CEO Chip Goodyear regularly leads by example as he pedals through pre-dawn Melbourne to the headquarters of the world's biggest mining company.

Flexible approach

If you relax your organisation's dress code, especially on Fridays, this can encourage staff to cycle. Flexible working hours can also be an incentive for employees to walk, cycle or use public transport to get to work. Now that workplace agreements are more common, think about developing a human resource policy or workplace agreement that provides these flexibilities.

Appoint a Cycling Coordinator

Most workplaces already have regular cyclists and these people are your best resource when it comes to creating a cycle-friendly culture. They can assist new riders with journey planning, match them up with 'bike buddies' from their own area, provide tips about transporting clothes and answer questions about riding in traffic. You might like to formally enlist their help and give them the title of Cycling Coordinator. Another possible role for the Cycling Coordinator might be to form and manage a Bicycle User Group.

Support a workplace Bicycle User Group (BUG)

One of the best ways to encourage staff to cycle to work is to support the formation (or ongoing existence) of a workplace Bicycle User Group (BUG). A BUG is a social group of staff who cycle to work and who encourage other people to try cycling.

Boeing BUG



A BUG can work with you to improve the conditions for cycling at your organisation, for example, advising on how many bike racks are needed and where they should be located.

A BUG should also be fun. When judges, barristers and legal support staff formed the Victorian Bench and Bar BUG, they exemplified this spirit by naming themselves 'Wigs on Wheels'.

BUG members can share tips on gear and best routes to work, and experienced riders can give good advice and support to those starting out. A BUG may be able to set up a 'bike buddy' scheme to assist novice cyclists.

Managers often report spin-off benefits from the establishment of workplace BUGs. Membership is typically diverse, representing all departments and all levels of seniority. As such, BUGs can draw people together and facilitate communication in your workplace.

Bicycle Victoria has a start-up manual for BUGs, see www.bv.com.au [Keyword: BUG]

Boeing BUG takes off

Simon Whitehead, Design Engineer with Boeing company Hawker de Havilland, recently launched the Boeing Bicycle User Group (BUG) with the support and involvement of senior management.

'I wanted to raise the profile of cycling among the employees and increase the safety and enjoyment of cycling to work by sharing with others,' he said.

The Boeing BUG now has 56 members across their two sites in Bankstown, Sydney, and Fishermens Bend in Melbourne, ranging from factory floor workers to senior managers, extending in age from early twenties to a spritely seventy.

The Boeing BUG is organising regular social rides and a newsletter and has support from the company's Human Resources and Marketing Departments and coordinates fundraising efforts through the Employees Community Fund. Simon said the best thing about the workplace BUG is that you get to meet and mix with other cyclists in the company who you probably would never have met otherwise.

'Regular cyclists will jump at the opportunity to help build a great cycle-friendly culture'

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Step Four – provide incentives



As part of creating a cycle-friendly culture, you can provide information and encouragement at very little cost.

Information on cycling routes and facilities

You could collate a simple package of information giving details on the bicycle facilities at your organisation plus the nearby cycling routes (Bicycle Victoria keeps a full set of available maps). This information could be distributed to your staff via email, the intranet or memo and included in orientation material for prospective and new staff. Your workplace BUG could have its own page on the organisation's website or intranet.

Install signage

Signage highlighting the bicycle parking, showers, lockers or the way to walk to the nearest bus stop or railway station is a very positive, inexpensive way to show you value 'active transport'.

Posters in lifts and lunchrooms advertising cycling to work or BUG meetings let your staff know that your organisation supports cycling.

Provide cycle proficiency training and bike maintenance workshops

If some staff are not confident about riding to work, your organisation could help staff access cycle proficiency training and/or bicycle maintenance workshops. By providing training, or helping staff access professional help, you'll be managing the risks while increasing the skills and confidence of your staff. It's a proven way to increase the level of staff cycling to work at relatively small cost.

Join in Ride to Work Day™

Ride to Work Day™ is organised once a year by Bicycle Victoria to highlight the enjoyment and benefits of commuting by bike. Ride to Work Day™ is for everyone from regular rain-hail-or-shine riders to novices who've never ridden to work before.

There is a free cyclists' breakfast and social get-together in the Melbourne CBD that attracts hundreds of first time cyclists, as well as similar smaller events throughout Victoria. Workplaces are encouraged to join in and many hold their own events at their own venues.

For more information on Ride to Work Day™ see www.bv.com.au [Keyword: RTW] or call on 1800 639 634 or 03 8636 8888.

Focus on productivity

The Productivity Commission, situated in one of the office towers near the corner of Spring and Collins Streets in Melbourne, has ideal facilities for cycle commuters. A secure bike cage in the building's car park and showers and storage/locker facilities make cycling an attractive option compared with driving into the CBD.

Matt Stubbs, an economist at the Commission, said 'When I moved to Melbourne and my job here, all the facilities made riding to work easy. Having the lockers at work means I can leave my suit and shoes at work and only need to carry a clean shirt in my backpack.'

Matt coordinates an informal 'BikeBus' of colleagues who ride to work together from Melbourne's northern suburbs. Matt said, 'most people's concerns seem to be about knowing which route to take and having the confidence to ride in traffic, so having others to ride with helps alleviate these concerns. It's amazing how little time it takes before people's confidence and fitness increases.' The BikeBus occasionally takes longer routes to work (along the Yarra River or down the Moonee Ponds Creek trail) and regularly stops somewhere en route for a quick coffee before work.

CASE STUDY



Join other events like Around the Bay in a Day™ – or create your own

Bicycle Victoria runs a number of cycling events including The Great Melbourne Bike Ride®, Around the Bay in a Day™ and The Great Victorian Bike Ride®. Encourage your staff to enter a team in these events and wear the organisation's colours on the event. Bicycle Victoria also operates Escapades™ self-guide cycling packages ideal for social groups.

You can also create your own events. Why not make the last Friday of every month a ride to work day at your organisation?

Speak to your local bike shop

Workplaces can also set up supportive relationships with local businesses including bike shops. Treasury BUG in Spring St, Melbourne, has established a link with its nearest bike shop, CBD Cycles. The bike shop has organised maintenance workshops for Treasury staff and regular discounts.

Contact the Retail Cycle Traders Australia 03 9376 1255 for a bicycle retailer near your company who is interested to provide information and special deals for your staff.

Provide incentives

There are many ways of encouraging increased use of bikes and demonstrating commitment to the cycle-friendly workplace. One initiative that has been successfully implemented by Micrologic Solutions, a participant in the Cycle Friendly Employers program in Cambridge, UK, is a holiday rewards scheme. Every time employees ride to work they accrue additional time off. For those who ride regularly, this amounts to two or three extra days off per year. Alternatively, you might create a 'frequent rider' program with points going towards bicycle accessories such as cycle computers or bike panniers.

Reimburse employees

If you are able, you could encourage your employees to be active by reimbursing them for costs such as gym fees (for use of facilities), bike storage fees or bicycle maintenance. In addition, you could change employment conditions to allow staff to package their bike or public transport pass as part of their salary. For example, EPA Victoria provides a subsidy for employees to become Members of Bicycle Victoria.

Offer interest-free loans for bicycles

Another option is to assist your staff to purchase bicycles by providing interest-free loans, in the same way that companies sometimes provide loans for home computers or yearly public transport tickets.

Provide bicycles for work purposes

If your staff make local trips within 5km for work purposes, consider buying a pool bicycle or a fleet of bicycles for this purpose. For short trips, it is faster and healthier for staff to cycle. It also saves your organisation the expense of taxi fares or of owning and running pool cars for short trips.

If you create a fleet, along with the bicycles you'll need to provide helmets (in a variety of sizes), locks, reflective vests and possibly a cycle computer (for recording kilometres travelled). You might like to offer some level of training for staff – talk to your training or OH&S officer about what's reasonable.

Several councils in Melbourne including the City of Yarra and City of Port Phillip currently provide pool bikes for short local trips and convert the kilometres travelled into 'greenhouse gas emissions saved' in order to meet their goals under the Cities for Climate Protection™ (CCP) Program.



EPA Victoria Staff

Moreland leads the way

Through the TravelSMART 'Better Ways to Work' Program, Moreland City Council is committed to increasing the use of sustainable transport options in journeys to, from and during work. As part of this program, Moreland City Council provides staff with indoor bike parking, lockers, showers and bike maintenance equipment. Those who are keen to buy or upgrade their bike also benefit from Moreland's special loan offer. Council pays for the bike up front and staff members pay it off using pay deductions – interest free!

In addition, Moreland has two pool mountain bikes with helmets, panniers and u-locks that are available for staff use for travel to meetings and site visits. The bikes can also be borrowed on weekends or while a staff member's bicycle is off the road for short periods. The bicycles can be borrowed and used at any time, and the staff member simply registers their name with the bike fleet coordinator and collects the key. There is a large and a small bicycle, ensuring that all staff members can ride safely and comfortably.

Bike parking around Moreland has recently been improved to help encourage bike use by both staff and residents. Cyclists are able to leave their bikes securely at over 20 businesses equipped with new bicycle racks. The racks have been installed by the City of Moreland as part of an ongoing program at no cost to the businesses.



*Gilbert Richardson,
Manager Transport Development,
Moreland City Council*



CASE STUDY

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Step Five – Celebrate and plan further activities



If you've already taken some of the steps outlined in this brochure, it's time to acknowledge those gains and build on them.

Celebrate!

Celebrate by hosting a bike breakfast on Ride to Work Day™, award certificates to the section that has increased their level of riding to work the most, and put an article in the staff newsletter about the new bicycle parking facilities. Use your imagination to find the way to celebrate that suits your organisation and your employees.

Tell the world

When you are celebrating, don't forget to let your customers and clients know that you are a cycle-friendly workplace. You could advertise this in the local paper, in your annual report and when recruiting new staff. Talk to your media officer or public relations section about how to go about this.

Produce a Company Bike Plan

Build on the gains you have already made and make sure that good ideas aren't lost by writing a Company Bike Plan. This is a formal way of documenting where you've been and what your ultimate destination might be. It would include specific actions such as nominating a workplace Cycle Coordinator, organising a Ride to Work Day™ breakfast, and practical measures such as installing more bike racks.

You may also wish to look at promoting other forms of sustainable transport, alongside cycling, through a broader Access Plan. An Access Plan typically includes measures to support walking, cycling, public transport, car pooling and tele-commuting. One possibility is to provide a basic guide to reaching your organisation by walking, cycling or public transport. Such a guide can be designed for staff or visitors and ideally includes bicycle parking information and a map.

For more information on how to prepare an Access Plan, see the TravelSMART website: www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au and search for Employer Pack.

Do a travel survey

If you are planning an extensive program of actions to encourage your staff and visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport to travel to your organisation, you might want to conduct a survey of current modes of travel. In the survey you could ask your staff and visitors for suggestions about what would encourage them to take 'active transport' to your organisation.



Resources and contact details

Bicycle Victoria

Bicycle Victoria is Australia's largest and fastest growing cycling organisation. We are a self-funded community organisation that is independent of government. Established in 1975, we aim to get more people cycling more often, including to work.

phone 03 8636 8888

fax 03 8636 8800

email bicyclevic@bv.com.au

web www.bv.com.au

Bicycle User Groups (BUGs) and cycling clubs

Bicycle Victoria maintains the following lists:

- A-Z listing of Bicycle User Groups
- A-Z listing of cycling clubs

You can find this information and a start-up manual for BUGs at www.bv.com [Keyword: BUG].

VicRoads

The VicRoads website www.vicroads.vic.gov.au has lots of useful information about bicycle facilities, including information on public bike parking, the road rules and bike maps.

Cycling Promotion Fund

The Cycling Promotion Fund is an industry initiative with the aim of increasing bicycle use. For information on the Fund's projects and resources see www.cyclingpromotion.com or phone 03 9818 5400.

TravelSMART

TravelSMART is an innovative program which helps people reduce their dependency

on the car and choose sustainable travel alternatives such as cycling, walking or catching public transport. TravelSMART's workplace program helps Victorian employers reduce the impact of their work-related travel through simple, innovative strategies and ideas. For more information see www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au.

Local Councils

Contact your local council for maps and information on local cycling routes. You can talk with them about their plans for improving facilities near your workplace.

The Department of Infrastructure's website has a comprehensive list of local council contact information; see www.doi.vic.gov.au.

Draft Victorian Planning Provisions

Draft provisions for bicycle facilities are available from the Department of Sustainability and Environment. For information on this, email planning.systems@dse.vic.gov.au.

Bike Maps

Bicycle Victoria keeps a comprehensive list of available bike maps. Many local councils have free bike maps, notably the City of Melbourne. The Melway Street Directory shows shared paths and has an overview map of bicycle facilities in Melbourne.

We value your comments

Please tell us what you think of this booklet by contacting Bicycle Victoria on 03 8636 8888 or 1800 639 634 or email bicyclevic@bv.com.au.

This booklet is the ideal starting point for managers and employers who wish to explore the benefits of creating a vibrant, cycle-friendly workplace. By encouraging more people to ride to work you'll be helping to create a workforce that is happier, healthier and likely to enjoy their work more.

'I ride to work regularly. For me, exercise is critical. It provides an outlet from the demands of the job and gives me time to think.'

Chip Goodyear
CEO BHP Billiton



Photo: James Davies / Fairfax Photos



Follow the five easy steps at a pace that suits your workplace:

- Step one** *discover the benefits*
- Step two** *improve facilities*
- Step three** *create a cycle-friendly culture*
- Step four** *provide incentives*
- Step five** *celebrate and plan further activities*

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