

# **ZERO WASTE AUDIT**

**By Zero Waste Japan Consulting**

# WEEK 1

## Individual Observation

At the beginning, give yourselves one week. Work as usual. You don't have to start acting on anything for now. Just try to become more aware of your surroundings and actions first. This week is very important as you start shifting towards a Zero Waste Mentality.

**Monday.** Take a quick look at your trash bin. Become aware of each movement you make towards the trash bin. Write down each item you've thrown away on a little note near the end of the desk/workplace.

**Tuesday.** Notice your habits during lunch. Write them down.

*Exemple:*

- > where you buy your food/drink from, or if you're making it yourself, where do you buy your ingredients from;
- > what container is the food/drink packed in;
- > what tools do you use to eat/drink etc.

**Wednesday.** Walk around the office or the gemba.

Notice all the objects that are made especially to be thrown away.

*Exemple:* coffe cups, plastic spoons, pens, notebooks, scaps of paper, printer toner, cardboad boxes, envelopes etc.

**Thursday.** Become aware of all the times you use an electric appliance.

*Example:* the lamp, computer, printer, coffee machine, office light, phone charger, air conditioner etc. Make a game out of counting how many times or hours a day you use each type of item running on electricity.

**Friday.** Become aware of your movement.

*Example:* transportation to and from the office, how many times you leave your desk or designated working spot in order to go to a meeting/toilet/grab a coffee/grab lunch/ talk to a co-worker or boss etc.

**Rule:** You can discuss with others about what you have discovered, but do not try to compare yourself with other co-workers or criticise their own findings/ideas/opinions.

# WEEK 2

## Group Observation

This step is important because it is the preparatory assesment. The main goal is to check all the contents of the bins at the end of each day, make a big group list, hang it in a visible spot and assess the “before” condition of the company’s general wasting habits.

**Monday.** Write down how many bins are on the site.

Find out how often are they emptied.

Do you separate the garbage?

Find out how much garbage you throw away monthly.

If you don't already have that information, make sure you gather it before beginning the audit.

**Tuesday.** Sort your garbage list into categories:

First, sort them into categories like organics, plastics, bins, cans etc.

Then sort them by priority: vital, convenient, unnecessary.

Lastly, sort them by: disposable, reusable, can be replaced with something more long-lasting.

**Wednesday.** Choose teams of 2-3 people who will work on finding zero waste solutions for each category listed above.

Decide the leader and the time they will meet every day to share their individual results and discuss.

Don't use more than 15 minutes for this task.

**Thursday.** Together, choose only one idea, which is the easiest to do. Write down the implementation requirements.

**Note:** Some ideas are fast, cheap and easy to implement.

Others are more costly, timely, more difficult or require more input from the co-workers.

**Friday.** Gather up everybody's ideas, put them in a visible public spot, leave room for constant improvements.

Organize the findings.

# WEEK 2

## Group Observation

### Rules:

- 1) **Don't judge others' opinion! Every idea is valuable!**
- 2) **Don't criticise what other members are doing or how much they are participating to the task.**  
**Some co-workers might be more excited, some more resistant to change.**
- 3) **Decide to make one small change at a time and thoroughly record the before and after circumstances before starting a new implementation.**
- 4) **Don't set strict goals, just try to find solutions to one challenge at a time.**
- 5) **Team leaders shouldn't set a short time limit for implementation. Remember that everybody has to do their own job first and that the Zero Waste Audit has a different priority level for different co-workers.**
- 6) **Team-leaders should reward speediness, without punishing tardiness of reaching certain implementation goals for hard tasks.**

# WEEK 4

## Implementation Planning

Finally, the week everybody has been waiting for: getting to actually put the easy ideas into practice and check their applicability and feasibility. By calculating the results of the implementation you prove the practicality and benefit of the zero waste implementation planning.

**Monday.** Before anything, record the "before" situation of the idea chosen last Thursday.  
Then work to implement it.  
It should not take more than one day.

**Tuesday.** Record the "after" result.  
Make a report containing both the before "condition" and "after" results.  
Show how much the company has improved thanks to this implementation.

**Wednesday.** Choose another idea and record the "before" circumstances.

**Thursday.** Work to implement idea number 2.

**Friday.** Make a report for idea number 2.

## WEEK 5

# Report the Results of the Audit and Propose Action

**By now you should have already gotten the idea of how to implement a proposed idea, record the before and after situation, and show results of the implementation.**

**Put together the results of the audit and propose further action by approximating future results and possible profits.**