



The £3.4 million idea

How British Gas improve their business by listening to their employees

British Gas

British Gas are the largest UK energy and home services company, serving twelve million homes in the United Kingdom and employing more than 30,000 employees. With the unprecedented pace of change in the energy utility sector putting downward pressures on operating margins, the need to focus on operational efficiencies and continual business improvements has increased dramatically.



Sideways 6

Sideways 6 are an innovation platform powering employee idea campaigns at numerous FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 firms. Their integrated approach leveraging existing communications channels, helps companies dramatically increase and improve their knowledge about improvement opportunities on the frontline.

The Challenge

One of the biggest challenges in the utilities sector is seeking new ways to improve processes and customer satisfaction so as to reduce costs and increase revenue.

To significantly strengthen British Gas's capacity for these improvements, they are asking employees for their ideas and insights to better understand how their business works on the frontline. With this active encouragement for frontline employees to share, British Gas nurtures a culture of improvement that facilitates precisely that.

"The feedback and insight we get from our employees is of huge importance and helps my team shape the future of change and allows us prioritise the work we have to do."

The Solution

British Gas sought help from Sideways 6 to adopt a solution-based approach to their employee ideas programme. With an active Yammer network already in use, Sideways 6 were able to offer British Gas an accessible, intuitive and social solution for their employee idea programme.

"Prior to the introduction of Sideways 6 our business had not taken advantage of Yammer's functionality and infrastructure to successfully crowd source"

In August 2016, British Gas set up a Yammer group called 'Make A Good Idea Count' (MAGIC) where employees are encouraged to post, discuss and like ideas they have.

"We have witnessed how supportive our people are towards each other thorough liking and offering constructive comments on each others ideas."

British Gas were able to capitalize on Yammer's open and social nature to capture more ideas and of higher quality from employees.

The £3.4 million idea



In August 2016, three call centre employees shared an identical idea independently from each other in the Yammer group. Manish from Mumbai, Sadia from Leicester, and Wayne from Cardiff put forward "a small change with a potentially big impact".

British Gas had texted customers to advise them when the company had tried to phone them, but didn't give the customer the option of texting back. Why not give the customer this option? Texting could be used to keep the customer updated with the solution of their issue.

The British Gas innovation team took on the idea and trialled it in the call centre offices in Cardiff and Mumbai. This simple change had a substantial impact on call centre productivity and customer experience.

The texting option for customers sped up issue handling time and repeat customer outreach dropped close to 0%.

The improved process also made lives easier for customers so that the customer satisfaction rate increased by 15%.

The estimated to produce business value of £3.4 million in cost savings through higher productivity and additional revenue through higher customer satisfaction.

"MAGIC/Sideways 6 has allowed us to deliver successful business wide campaigns that have focused on generating ideas that focus on business improvement"

Sideways 6

While enterprise social networks are great as front-end for idea programmes, idea submissions need to be managed in a professional and scalable way. This is why British Gas decided to work with Sideways 6. The idea management platform is specifically designed to power ideas programmes on enterprise social networks. Sideways 6 captures ideas submitted on the Yammer network and provides programme managers with tools for capturing, managing, filtering, reviewing and analysing ideas and communicating back to idea submitters.

Sideways 6 makes it easy to process large volumes of ideas.

"Due to the automation of many tasks made possible by Sideways 6, we could focus their energy on challenging users to come up with solutions to their feedback."

"I only wish S6 had been in place when I used to process and allocate submissions. So much time wasted."

Results

10 Months into the Ideas Programme



6,770 posts and ideas

Ideas focused on improving processes, efficiency, customer experiences, safety, and engagement



60+ ideas implemented

250+ more ideas are in development



52,209 interactions

People discussing and liking ideas



3,459 members

MAGIC is now the most used group within the British Gas Yammer network



Flagship idea projected to
reduce costs by £3.4 million
over the next five years