



**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY**

ROUTEMAP
**BUILDING
GREEN SKILLS**

**A JUST TRANSITION TO A NET-ZERO,
RESILIENT FUTURE**

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BNP Paribas is fully mobilised and committed to accelerate the net zero transition. The collective goal across the economy is to create a just transition path, that will move society and multiple sectors towards a resilient future where both people and nature thrive.

At the heart of this transition is ensuring that every organisation has the right skills and capabilities to mobilise people and resources towards the climate action mission. This huge culture shift means supporting teams to adapt, developing knowledge networks, and enabling sustainability leadership across all levels of an organisation.

We are delighted to have partnered with BITC to support extensive engagement on this research and roadmap, and the process of collaborating with diverse stakeholders is necessary and valuable to scaling up just transition. We are looking forward to further collaboration with BITC, our clients and sustainability leaders to put the insights and recommendations into action.

ANNE MARIE VERSTRAETEN,
VICE CHAIR OF BNP PARIBAS UK

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INTRODUCTION

Business in the Community (BITC) was formed in 1982 by business leaders who recognised that healthy high streets depend on healthy communities. 40 years later, the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis have shown how interconnected and vulnerable the systems that underpin our shared prosperity are.

We also know much more now about how businesses and communities need Earth's life support systems to be in good health and the ways our current economic model is undermining those systems. Extreme weather, failed harvests, floods, droughts and other impacts that used to be rare are becoming more common. Those least able to adapt are hit hardest. We are, ultimately, all in this together

The UK must rapidly decarbonise its whole economy and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate if we are to prosper. In the context of rapidly rising energy, food and transport costs, the transition to a net-zero, resilient future, done right, can be a pathway to a healthier, fairer, more prosperous society.

If done badly, today's problems will multiply.

BITC's analysis tells us the best future for businesses and communities lies in:

- collaboration and innovation
- decarbonising buildings, agriculture, and transport
- making places and value chains resilient
- supporting the people and places most at risk of losing out to access opportunities to build better lives
- restoring the health of nature in towns, cities, and the countryside.

This routemap has been developed through a comprehensive research process during 2022; it aims to answer the question of where do we start and plot potential paths forward.

It builds on research we commissioned from Anglia Ruskin University on the skills landscape in the UK.

This formed the knowledge base for a series of innovation sprints that involved more than 100 business and civil society leaders. Together, they looked at the challenges and opportunities ahead and began to co-create solutions to building the skills, culture and capabilities their people need, now and into the future.

Bringing this to life with case studies from a range of businesses, it provides a starting point for organisations making the journey to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive.

We have identified key organisational capabilities and skills gaps to consider and especially focused on the process that every business can undertake to build their own personal routemap, as there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

HOW TO USE THIS ROUTEMAP

This skills routemap forms part of a series of resources and activities BITC has produced to support member businesses to lead a just transition. It supports businesses with the skills step of their just transition plan, following BITC's **Seven Steps for Futureproofing Business**.

The routemap recognises that organisations will have different starting points and needs when it comes to building the skills, culture and capabilities to thrive.

It's an interactive PDF, designed so you can click on the sections to move through **LEAD**, **EMBED** and **INCLUDE** in an order that matches your organisational priorities and where you are on your journey. We suggest organisations starting out begin with **LEAD**. Alternatively, you can read it as a normal document.

Use this routemap to develop your plan of action on skills and **sign up on our website** to show your commitment and track your progress.

For supporting research and the business case, see our **Right Climate for Business report** and **Skills for the Transition factsheet**.

**EVERYBODY WILL HAVE A GREEN JOB IN THE FUTURE.
EVERYBODY WILL NEED GREEN SKILLS...
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT ORGANISATIONS TRAINING
THEIR EMPLOYEES BUT ALSO STAFF TRAINING
THEIR ORGANISATIONS.**

ALISON GREIG,
GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE, ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

BUSINESSES MUST ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION

Pressure is mounting on businesses to play a leading role in driving the transition and helping the communities they serve to prosper.

- Investors are demanding robust evidence that companies are managing climate risks and opportunitiesⁱ.
- The public wants companies to do more to help make personal action easier and more affordableⁱⁱ.
- Workers are drawn to employers who are acting on the climate and ecological crises and will give them opportunities to be part of developing solutionsⁱⁱⁱ.

To make meaningful progress, businesses need to equip people with the knowledge, skills and capabilities to transform their organisations and the wider economy.

BITC is calling on every business to play their part in delivering a just transition – and to start now.

BITC HAS DEFINED A JUST TRANSITION FOR UK BUSINESSES AS:

A just transition ensures a fair and inclusive journey to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive.

Businesses must design this future with diverse stakeholders; create economic opportunities and equip people to access them and actively regenerate communities and nature.

Our Seven Steps for Futureproofing Business help businesses design and deliver just transition plans.



WHY FOCUS ON GREEN SKILLS NOW?

Companies consistently identify the lack of a trained workforce in their organisations and inadequate strategies to develop the capabilities needed as major barriers to achieving climate goals, according to a recent Microsoft report^{iv}.

LinkedIn's Global Green Skills Report 2022 showed that job postings requiring green skills grew at 8% annually over the past five years, while the share of green talent has grown at roughly 6% annually in the same period^v.

With the UK's overall skills and productivity gaps consistently lagging behind the rest of Europe and the US^{vi}, the challenge here is particularly acute^{vii}.

Green Alliance research^{viii} shows that every major sector in the UK needs to close a significant skills gap to meet net zero. Unless businesses and government take action now, the UK will fail to reach net zero by 2050 and will be contributing to global warming beyond safe limits for humanity.

In the energy and buildings retrofitting workforces alone, National Grid predicts 400,000 new energy recruits are needed between now and 2050 to meet these targets^{ix}, while PwC reports that up to 66,000 new tradespeople will need to be recruited annually to do the 500,000 retrofits and 600,000 heat pump installations that will be required each year until 2025 and 2035 respectively to meet net zero targets^x.

Some sectors such as housing, transport, and agriculture are already experiencing skills shortages just delivering the status quo, let alone net zero^{xi}.

BITC's own research for COP26, surveying 8,000 people and 2,000 businesses^{xii}, showed that only 11% of people in the UK thought their jobs would change significantly or that they would need new skills as part of the transition. Of those who did, 8 out of 10 did not think their employer was doing enough, or didn't know what their employer was doing, to help them prepare.

This means that employers need to think and act now to equip people with new capabilities. Both 'technical' and 'essential' skills are needed to unleash the flexibility, creativity and problem-solving to enable individuals and organisations to navigate the future. The transition to net zero and increasing supply chain disruptions from climate impacts will increase the intensity and speed of transformation that businesses need to make.

Skilled and committed people are at the heart of every successful business, providing the culture and capability needed to innovate and adapt to a rapidly changing world. Meeting investor, customer and employee expectations will require companies to bring together skills and climate action strategies as a priority.

UNLESS BUSINESSES AND GOVERNMENT TAKE ACTION NOW, THE UK WILL FAIL TO REACH NET ZERO BY 2050

UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT UK LANDSCAPE

Research conducted for BITC by Anglia Ruskin University^{xiii} showed that there are still significant gaps in understanding and building the skills and capabilities needed to drive effective climate action in the UK.

BOTH 'TECHNICAL' AND 'ESSENTIAL' SKILLS ARE NEEDED... TO ENABLE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO NAVIGATE THE FUTURE.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS ALL BUSINESSES

There is a huge amount of upskilling required at the general business level, which requires a joined-up, data-driven approach from employers, educators and government using traditional and new educational approaches that are affordable and fit in with people's existing life and work commitments. Functions such as HR, IT, marketing and procurement all have roles to play, but the specific details of how skills needs will change are still light. Many of the challenges and opportunities ahead are people related and there is a huge need to build trust, so leadership and facilitation skills are vital. Data has the potential to improve the sustainability of supply chains, but, ineffective legislation, the lack of a skilled workforce and short-term corporate goals are a problem.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the regions already struggling with productivity have a high proportion of people employed in lower skill, high carbon sectors. Green jobs tend to have higher skill levels, so people in these regions are more vulnerable to job losses unless they are helped to retrain. While there will be clusters of new green jobs in hubs around the country (e.g., Tees Valley), green skills such as retrofitting of buildings and implementing circular economy approaches are more dispersed, so need a different approach. We still don't understand the dynamics of job creation in the transition, especially in rural communities. Community energy initiatives are often volunteer-run and lack the skills and processes to deliver at scale.

SECTOR SPECIFIC CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Green finance is recognised as a source of job growth, especially in London, but skills needs are not yet fully understood. Transitioning energy sector employees has a high cost and previous energy deployment patterns have seen women and local communities lose out. There is a lack of awareness of what stakeholder demands and new regulations will mean for manufacturing and industrial businesses and a lack of skills and knowledge to put into action. Decarbonising transport will have a big impact on jobs in subsectors and supply chains and new skills will be needed.

GETTING CLEAR ON GREEN SKILLS

Many organisations may think that green skills aren't relevant to them because they aren't in energy or environmental technology sectors. However, the Science Based Targets Initiative, (SBTi) identified that companies need to cut absolute emissions by at least 90% to achieve net zero and at least 50% of that needs to be achieved by 2030^{xiv}.

The increase in mandatory reporting requirements against initiatives like the Taskforce for Climate Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) means that both the risks of achieving net zero and the impacts of a rapidly changing climate must be considered and publicly reported on. As a result, every company will face unprecedented change in coming decades and those who do not take decisive action to build the capabilities they need to adapt may not survive^{xv}.

A 2019 UK policy report from the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment found that one-fifth of jobs (21%) across the UK, equivalent to more than 6 million people, involve skills that could either experience demand growth or demand reduction in the transition, with the positive and negative effects of this being roughly equal.

The report identified construction, followed by manufacturing and transport, as the sectors where most focus is needed both to seize the employment boost of the green economy and in terms of skills and retraining^{xvi}.

While certain sectors can expect more change than others, every sector will need green skills as UK businesses move towards net zero and resilience.

PwC's Green Jobs Barometer^{xvii} analysed job advertisements that are considered 'green' to identify the green skills in highest demand in the UK. These mostly apply across sectors, rather than being specific to individual sectors. The top five terms are:

- 1. SUSTAINABILITY**
- 2. ENVIRONMENTAL**
- 3. CARBON**
- 4. RECYCLING**
- 5. INFRASTRUCTURE**

Recent thinking about education for sustainability and the future of the workforce focuses on competencies, capabilities and resilience. Organisations need to think holistically about how they might need to change in response to the climate crisis by:

- understanding the capabilities and competencies needed to deliver an effective transition plan and where the gaps are
- identifying colleagues most at risk as you transition and what that means for them
- upskilling and reskilling current and future employees to build shared resilience
- creating a culture that embeds accountability, encourages innovation, and inspires climate action at every level.

When we refer to green skills in this report, we're talking about:

The knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes required by people and organisations to thrive as part of a fair and inclusive transition to a net-zero, resilient economy.



WHERE DO WE START?

While each company will need to identify its own, individual approach, there are several key gaps that will apply to most organisations.

- 1.** Equipping leaders with the knowledge, skills and mindsets to understand the full impact of both action and inaction on your business model and operations and the changes that will be needed to survive and thrive in the transition.
- 2.** Boosting facilitation and engagement capabilities to build trust, bring diverse internal and external stakeholders with you and empower people to contribute their ideas and enthusiasm to building a culture of innovation and learning.
- 3.** Giving every employee a grounding in climate and biodiversity and helping teams translate that knowledge into what they need to do to respond so that you build individual and organisational resilience.

A FRAMEWORK TO TACKLE THE SKILLS CHALLENGE

1. CONSIDER

THREE KEY GROUPS:

a) Your current workforce.

b) Your future workforce.

c) Workers who are most at risk in the transition.

e.g., those with low skills, on low pay and/or who are part of a group more likely to be disadvantaged in the labour market (these will be a subset of the two categories above).

2. UNDERSTAND

AND DEVELOP YOUR ORGANISATION'S SKILLS NEEDS ACROSS THESE THREE CATEGORIES:

a) The mindset, attitudes and understanding that will enable people to translate the risks and opportunities of the climate crisis and the societal shift to a net-zero, resilient future into action in their role.

This includes foundational climate skills, including an understanding of the climate crisis and its drivers, which will enable employees to make meaningful contributions to the transition.

b) The essential and transferable skills that people will need to move into different roles as their careers and employers adapt to the new business as usual in a net zero, climate resilient future.

These include critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication, self-management, leadership, teamwork and digital skills.

c) The technical skills that businesses will need to adapt to changing legislation and reporting requirements (see IEMA's recent report and toolkit^{xviii}) and hard skills needed to directly support the transition from high carbon activity.

e.g., insulation, solar and heat pump fitting, circular product design/repairs and nature conservation.

3. BUILD

BOTH THE CULTURE AND CAPABILITY WITHIN YOUR BUSINESS TO DELIVER IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING AND COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT.

BUILDING CULTURE, CORE COMPETENCIES AND CAPABILITIES

Skills for the transition will vary from business to business, but many non-technical skills will be common across a range of businesses, including those transferable skills that will make it easier for employees to adapt to changing roles or move to new ones. Key competencies that will apply widely are set out below.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Foster new mindsets and capabilities</p> | <p>VALUE VULNERABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create safe spaces for leaders to become comfortable with uncertainty and lean into what matters for long term success. ● Encourage leaders to be vulnerable and welcome critique so every interaction drives learning. ● Build leaders' confidence to hold many moving parts and trust their teams to own the detail. <p>DARE TO LEAD</p> | <p>ENCOURAGE REBEL IDEAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversify the thinkers you involve in tackling problems to bring breadth and depth to issues. ● Devolve decision making authority to maximise access to talent and build agility. ● Provide resources and support to enable people to test ideas, fail, learn and repeat, banish blame and reward effort to build an innovation culture. | <p>USE SYSTEMS THINKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Know your systems, how roles, teams and your organisation fits into the bigger picture and where pressure points are. ● Acknowledge the complexity and interconnections within those systems and use scenario planning and other tools to understand implications and options. ● Think and act across life cycles and leverage points. |
| <p>Become transformation literate</p> | <p>ADMIT THE UNKNOWN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand your organisation's culture, find champions, and identify levers for maximum impact with minimum effort. ● Involve diverse stakeholders from inside and outside your organisation in creating a compelling vision for the future. ● Be open and find ways to create shared benefits. | <p>BE TENACIOUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is what you've trained for – you can do this. ● Create support systems for when times get tough. ● Keep learning and celebrating what goes well. <p>TEMPERED RADICAL</p> | <p>CONNECT DOTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build networks and add value by facilitating connections between the people and organisations who wouldn't normally mix. ● Focus on enabling others rather than doing it all. ● Keep looking out to the big picture to spot where unexpected consequences may occur. |
| <p>Harness the power of HR</p> | <p>GET FUTURE FIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support and empower teams to reimagine how your core products, services and ways of working may need to adapt. ● Co-create changes to jobs and career pathways with your people, especially those at risk. ● Embed eco-literacy and essential skills as part of a strategy to encourage and reward life-long learning. | <p>REWARD PROGRESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure everybody has KPIs linked to achieving your climate action goals tied into financial and non-financial rewards. ● Create unusual incentives to promote innovation by understanding intrinsic motivation and harnessing positive competition. ● Celebrate and share success. | <p>GROW YOUR TALENT PIPELINE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand how adapting to a net zero, climate resilient future will shape the jobs and skills you will need. ● Grow your own by upskilling and reskilling current employees and nurturing talent from the communities where you operate, ensuring you focus on creating opportunities for those who are at risk or disadvantaged. Involve tomorrow's workforce today to unlock potential by bringing the passion, creativity and insights of young people together with the wisdom and experience of your current workforce. |

THREE KEY FOCUS AREAS

The evidence we have gathered points to three key focus areas that will have the most impact.

Action is needed across all three to ensure your organisation and people have the skills to thrive in the transition. However, leaders who can challenge, inspire, and empower others provide the foundation.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT BUSINESSES START BY FOCUSING ON LEADERSHIP.

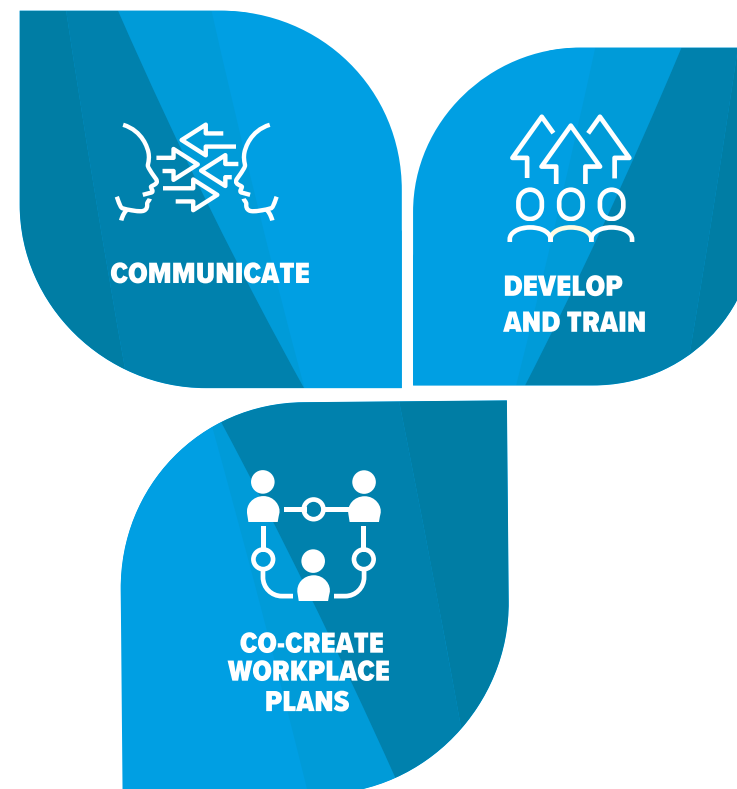
LEAD

EQUILEADERS TO EMPOWER EVERYONE



EMBED

ENABLE EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE



INCLUDE

ENSURE UPSKILLING FOR ALL



LEAD

EQUIPLEADERS TO EMPOWER EVERYONE

COMPANIES ARE MORE THAN 5X MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION WHEN LEADERS HAVE ROLE-MODELLED THE BEHAVIOUR CHANGES THEY ARE ASKING EMPLOYEES TO MAKE.

McKinsey[®]

Equipping leaders with the confidence and capabilities to create an enabling culture for transformation, empowering others across their organisations to solve problems and develop innovative approaches is critically important.

Building climate-related knowledge and expertise is essential if leaders are to incorporate risks and opportunities into business strategy, and give stakeholders, from investors to youth activists, confidence in what their organisation is doing.

There is also a need for humility. A willingness to sit with uncertainty and discomfort. To bring in diverse thinking from people that leaders wouldn't normally engage with and create solutions together.

To embrace failure as a core part of innovation and change, so that learning from mistakes becomes more important than assigning blame, and employees at all levels can help push personal and organisational comfort zones to deliver solutions.



CASE STUDY: CROWN WORKSPACE

HOW CROWN WORKSPACE EMBRACED FAILURE TO REVOLUTIONISE THEIR BUSINESS MODEL

Challenge:

CrownWorkspace's core business is commercial relocations for large businesses – however, over a decade ago it became obvious that the standard process for this service was producing large volumes of preventable waste with approximately 1.2 million desks and 1.8 million office chairs going to landfill every year in the UK.

Skills implemented:

- VALUE VULNERABILITY
- ENCOURAGE REBEL IDEAS
- ADMIT THE UNKNOWN
- REWARD PROGRESS

After conversations with the board, senior management, and some trusted clients, Crown Workspace implemented a test-and-learn model to incorporate reuse, recycling, and refurbishment into their model to provide a radically different, and sustainable offering to their clients. This required a skills overhaul from top to bottom starting with the board.

As well as introducing the new skills needed to deliver their sustainable service offering, Crown Workspace also re-evaluated their pay incentives and targets to ensure that all departments were pulling in the right direction and conducted audits after every pilot project to see whether there were any skills and incentive gaps. Identifying these gaps helped them to build a new business case for their proposition.

Approach:

'We needed to create that safe space for them and say, "it's okay not to be an expert in circular economy,"' says Ann Beavis, Head of Sustainable Development. 'We had to start from the beginning for the whole team to build the knowledge and understanding needed at all levels in the organisation. We have always had a culture of embracing failure at Crown Workspace and without it, we wouldn't be where we are today.'

CASE STUDY: SHOOSMITHS

SHOOSMITHS, NET ZERO AND THE MESSAGE, AUDIENCE, DELIVER STRATEGY

Challenge:

Forlaw firm Shoosmiths, creating a link for all staff, including senior leaders, between its daily work and the need for organisation-wide climate action is critical to achieving its ambitious net-zero goals.

Skills implemented:

- ADMIT THE UNKNOWN
- VALUE VULNERABILITY
- REWARD PROGRESS
- GET FUTURE FIT

As well as embedding environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals into its business strategy, partner remuneration and reward and the competency framework, the organisation is acting to upskill employees through a range of internal communications and training opportunities.

Approach:

CarolineWhite-Robinson, Head of Organisation Development and Learning & Development, explained the approach. 'We have implemented a Message, Audience, Deliver strategy: what's the message that people need to hear, who's the best audience we want to reach and how are we going to deliver.'

Caroline highlighted that giving staff a safe space for open discussion was a learning piece for them, 'There was a lot of sharing, and what came out of that for me was actually a richer conversation about ESG rather than just giving the link to the training and saying you have got to do this. We are going to continue doing that through our partnership programme and roll that down to principal associates.'



DEVELOP THE RIGHT MINDSET

Create a culture of transformation

Today's leaders require a different mindset with an emphasis on listening and empowering teams and individuals to drive transformational change. Start with the idea of 'beginner's mind' – a state of mind that's free of preconceptions and expectations, filled with curiosity and open to possibilities.

Resources: Brene Brown, [Dare to Lead](#); Donella Meadows, [Dancing with systems](#); Meyerson & Scully, [The Tempered Radical](#)



UNDERSTAND RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Translate climate risks and opportunities into strategy

Help your leaders to understand climate-related risks and opportunities. Use systems thinking tools to understand how individuals, teams and your organisation interact with others, where unexpected consequences may emerge and how different scenarios may play out. Embed cycles of action learning – plan, do, review, repeat – to test and learn so you can build an innovation culture.

Resources: [The right climate for business: leading a just transition](#); [Business in the Community Factsheet: Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures](#)



ALIGN BUSINESS GOALS AND CLIMATE ACTION

Share knowledge, skills and accountability across your organisation

Consider how roles and jobs will need to change and what this means for future skills. Build green skills into your workforce planning, upskilling communities, and supply chains to fill existing gaps and meet future skills needs. Align targets, rewards, and recognition to drive and celebrate results, creating opportunities for people to develop new skills through learning on the job.

Resources: Use BITC's [Seven Steps for Futureproofing Business to set goals](#); [Measuring and Reporting Circular Economy in Business to measure them](#) and [Responsible Business Tracker®](#) to track your progress.



CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Enable leaders to learn and grow

Provide a safe space for leaders to be vulnerable and learn. A space where it is okay to fail, to challenge and be challenged, is important for leaders grappling with new topics and complex systems. Ensuring psychological safety enables people to perform at their best and innovate.

Resources: Forbes, [Safe Space: How Psychological Safety Can Make Your Team More Effective](#)



DIVERSIFY DECISION MAKING

Tap into individual motivations, perspectives, and ideas

Recognise that organisations are associations of people, each with their own intrinsic motivations, barriers and needs. The climate crisis threatens people's lives and livelihoods and cannot be solved with the same thinking that created it. Be brave enough to give people opportunities to make decisions and try out their ideas to find the most creative and effective solutions..

Resources: Matthew Syed, [Rebel Ideas: the power of diverse thinking](#); RSA ANIMATE: [Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us - YouTube](#)

WINNING LOOKS LIKE:

- All senior leaders—executive and non-executive directors – understand climate risks and opportunities, the implications for your business and how collectively you will contribute to delivering a fair and inclusive transition.
- Leaders across your organisation have the skills and knowledge they need to translate this understanding into business strategy. Long-term commitments and short-term goals are embedded in operational plans, with clear accountability tied into reward systems.
- Delivering the strategy is acknowledged as a critical transformation project, with clear goals around cultural change and innovation in business models, products, services, and ways of working prioritised over incremental improvement.

WATCH OUTS:

- Lead by example—senior leaders have great responsibility to pave the way. People will notice if you are using your privileged position to avoid acting yourself.
- Beware greenwash – are you saying one thing in your climate strategy but prioritising others in your conversations with trade bodies, suppliers, employees, and government?
Understand your organisation's culture to identify where there might be silos, discontent or worry. Focus on building trust and rewarding contributions to give people confidence that they will be okay if they challenge the status quo as part of your transition journey.

GETTING STARTED:

- Bring your senior team together to learn about the risks and opportunities of action and inaction in tackling the climate crisis and support them to work through any anxiety and overwhelm.
- Agree how you will embed a just transition at the heart of your business strategy, allocating roles and responsibilities across the team to lead development and implementation.
- Create a plan to involve employees, customers, suppliers, and the communities you serve in developing your just transition plan and build the skills needed to facilitate open, honest, and productive conversations that lead to action.

EMBED

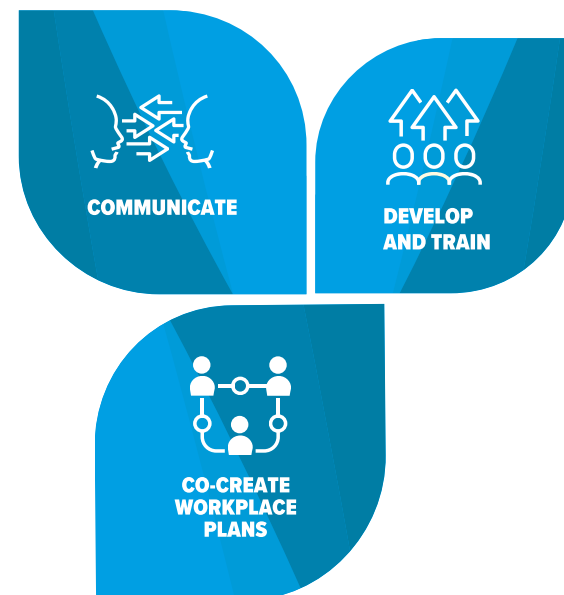
ENABLE EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE

Every organisation will need to tailor their approach to their sector, business model, departments, and roles. But leaders at our sprints agreed that a common approach can help give everyone the confidence and capability to contribute. People in core roles, such as finance, procurement, and HR, will require many of the same new skillsets regardless of where they work.

Businesses that are doing this well are empowering leaders and their teams to develop their own responses to the challenges presented by the risks and opportunities, the overarching strategic objectives and their personal strengths and aspirations, identifying and supporting champions at different levels of the business and making foundational climate training available to all.

THE FUTURE ECONOMY MUST BE STRUCTURALLY EQUAL, SO IT IS STRUCTURALLY STABLE.

ANNE MARIE VERSTRAETEN,
VICE CHAIR OF BNP PARIBAS UK



CASE STUDY: BNP PARIBAS

GETTING EVERYONE TO BASE CAMP ON CLIMATE

Challenge:

AtBNPParibas, moving forward with skills for the transition towards net zero required having the right foundation in place. This meant having a strategy to address climate change, and engage employees in that journey, that was articulated through the organisation's purpose and values.

Skills implemented:

- **GET FUTURE FIT**
- **ADMIT THE UNKNOWN**
- **ENCOURAGE REBEL IDEAS**
- **CONNECT DOTS**

Through recognising the need to embrace sustainability education and embed ESG into every part of the bank, BNP Paribas is transforming the business of banking.

Approach:

BNPParibas have developed multiple sustainability training tools over the last four years, providing education to all staff globally on sustainable finance, environmental and societal issues. From their 'We Engage' series reaching more than 40,000 staff to date, to their ESG Business essentials mandatory e-learning and 'Sustainability Academy', they are committed to continuous learning and development.

The bank put 400 of its employees through the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability and Leadership programme and established an experts' group called NEST (Network of Experts in Sustainability Transitions), of 250 to 300 leaders to provide insights and thought leadership aligned to their CSR strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The organisation also identified those people who were passionately challenging BNP Paribas on sustainability issues and created communities around them, for example, CSR groups and environmental groups, to learn from their insights and experiences with colleagues.

Finally, fostering technical expertise is critical, and BNP Paribas has created specialist communities within the bank to accelerate the transition to net zero.

CASE STUDY: JACOBS

MAKING SUSTAINABILITY EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Challenge:

Globalsolutions company Jacobs is building skills to address climate response and leverage digital transformation – embedding sustainability as the responsibility of all employees, regardless of role. As a large organisation of more than 55,000 people globally, ensuring awareness and a foundational level of climate knowledge across Jacobs' global employee base is vital and requires multiple approaches.

Adam Liddle, Corporate Sustainability Director at Jacobs said, 'We're relatively advanced in our thinking about sustainability, but the challenge now is operationalising it, through our objectives and commitments, and supporting our employees in how to apply them practically, every day.'

Skills implemented:

- **GET FUTURE FIT**
- **REWARD PROGRESS**
- **USE SYSTEMS THINKING**
- **CONNECT DOTS**

Jacobs' PlanBeyond 2.0SM approach operationalises sustainability and climate action plan commitments across the business, with a focus on active leadership. Six 'Sustainable Business Objectives' are mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with climate response as one of three core accelerators in the company's 2022-24 corporate strategy.

Approach:

Focusing on what sustainability means to Jacobs as an organisation and within that, how PlanBeyond is integrated across the global business, has helped to educate employees on how they can get involved.

Jacobs recently teamed with the Royal Scottish Geographical Society to make climate literacy training available to all employees, by creating a Jacobs-specific version of the Climate Solutions Accelerator e-Learning Course. All employees are encouraged to take the course, which covers policy context, mitigation, and adaptation, as well as solutions that can be implemented at the individual, team, and market level.



CO-CREATE WORKFORCE PLANS TO DEVELOP YOUR ORGANISATION

Make green skills part of your strategy

Both the innovation sprints and interviews BITC conducted on lifelong learning, told us that building the capabilities to tackle the climate crisis are not included in current workforce plans and that sustainability and HR professionals don't often work together to align strategies. But the level of change ahead will mean that few roles will stay exactly as they are, and most people will need new skills. Bring together a cross-organisational team to review how jobs and skills needs might change through a range of scenarios and refresh your workforce plan for the next three, five and ten years to make sure you are investing now to succeed in the future.

Resources: IEMA and Deloitte, [Greening your organisation: A blueprint for green workforce transformation](#); Deloitte, [Organizational models: A network of teams](#) | Deloitte Insights;



COMMUNICATE

Meet people where they are and focus on possibilities

Ensure transformation is not just top-down but inclusively harnesses passion and commitment from all levels of the organisation to tackle problems, design the jobs of the future and identify the skills and training needed. Use regular and consistent communication across a range of media and channels to motivate, inspire and support action. Choose language that meets people where they are. Use gamification to inspire positive competition and storytelling to share successes, as well as learning from failures and personal experiences that can help others.

Resources: Katherine Hayhoe talk on [Saving Us \(YouTube\)](#); Frameworks Institute, [Climate Change and Environment](#), Futerra, [Sell the Sizzle](#); McKinsey, [The new possible: How HR can help build the organization of the future](#);



DEVELOP AND TRAIN

Enable people to develop skills through real life learning

Provide ongoing upskilling and retraining opportunities across the business – from the boardroom to the shop floor. Use a range of delivery methods to give everyone the level of climate knowledge they need in their roles and support teams to apply that knowledge and practice the essential skills like problem solving, teamwork and personal resilience as part of developing and delivering their teams contribution to the plan.

Resources [What Skills are Needed to Support the Net Zero Transition?](#); The Carbon Literacy Project; Skills Builder Universal Framework for Essential Skills; Green Alliance, [Closing the UK's green skills gap](#)

WINNING LOOKS LIKE:

- HR and Sustainability leaders collaborate closely to develop training, communications and incentives. They empower teams to... design and deliver future roles, gain the skills they need and nurture wellbeing through the transition.
- Training and education are open to all employees and tailored to the needs of different roles and organisational priorities. People are enabled to learn with colleagues they don't normally work with to facilitate diverse thinking, share learning, and promote innovation.
- Teams work together to understand how their roles can contribute to delivering a just transition, are empowered to co-create the roles of the future and are supported to gain the skills to succeed.

WATCH OUTS:

- There is significant ambiguity about what the transition to a net-zero, resilient future will involve and much that is out of an individual organisation's control. Your people will have different levels of comfort with ambiguity and uncertainty. Adopt a range of approaches in your communication and engagement plans to involve people across the organisation.
- Anticipate resistance to change – build in time and opportunities for people to engage and listen to concerns but be aware that a few negative voices can cause a ripple effect. Agree some strategies to deal with this in as positive a way as possible, just in case.
- Be mindful of your own potential blind spots and listen to your body to see where stress may be occurring because of this work. Your role may be changing from one of doing to one of facilitating others to design and develop interventions. Make sure that you are building your own resilience and looking after your own wellbeing.

GETTING STARTED:

- Bring your HR and sustainability teams together to share learning and collaborate on workforce planning, developing and delivering training and equipping teams to develop plans and design job role changes.
- Build a two-way communications and engagement plan that allows time for people to work through fears and concerns whilst also celebrating examples of collaboration, innovation, and impact to expand the art of the possible. Listen at least as much as you talk.
- Review the skills and wellbeing needs of sustainability, HR, and other teams at the heart of delivering the transformation programme, then make sure they are well supported.

INCLUDE

ENSURE UPSKILLING FOR ALL

The impact of moving to a low-carbon future will not be felt equally. Individuals and communities that are already facing economic and social disadvantage are likely to be hit harder by economic and climate shocks. Businesses share a responsibility to take decisive action to protect those at risk and ensure fair and inclusive opportunities in the transition.

Skills gaps will also impact some communities more than others. Communities in rural areas, those dominated by carbon-heavy industries, and those with lower levels of educational attainment are all likely to be significantly affected in the transition unless businesses implement measures to lessen the impact.

Some groups are less likely to participate in training than others: for example, 49% of people from lower socio-economic groups have received no training since leaving school, compared to 20% of their wealthier peers^{xx}.

As low-skilled workers will be less able to find new work if their role is made redundant than highly skilled employees^{xxi}, there is a risk that some groups will be left behind.

Upskilling is key, but there will need to be a sea change in the way that many employers design roles and deliver training. Thinking in terms of green skills rather than green jobs and positioning the transition as an opportunity rather than a threat are important for engaging and motivating the workforce.



CASE STUDY: SIEMENS

HOW SIEMENS IS UPSKILLING FUTURE TALENT

Challenge:

For technology company, Siemens, upskilling the community is an essential part of its journey towards a just transition.

‘The nature of our business means that the majority of our employees have a good understanding of what we mean by green skills,’ explains Olivia Whitlam, Head of Sustainability at Siemens. ‘But we know that the same isn’t true of future talent. That’s why, with the help of BITC, we put a lot of effort into community outreach, particularly with young people from disadvantaged groups and their families.’

Skills implemented:

- GET FUTURE FIT
- ENCOURAGE REBEL IDEAS
- GROW YOUR TALENT PIPELINE

Siemens has focussed on climate literacy and fostering future talents across the education system through various partner programmes which address green skills gaps in future generations.

Approach:

Working with the National Literacy Trust, Siemens has funded bespoke training to over 240 Eco Literacy Champions, a team of volunteers throughout England who promote awareness of environmental issues and sustainability to children and families, while also helping to raise their literacy levels through specialised activities and events.

Teach First is a charity that develops and supports teachers and leaders in disadvantaged communities. Through its partnership with the organisation, Siemens is helping STEM teachers to incorporate the transition to a decarbonised economy into the curriculum.

As a national partner of the Greenpower Education Trust, Siemens also sponsors its Sustainability Award, which challenges young people to use the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals to inspire a Greenpower project.

From a business perspective, we need future talent to understand how important technological innovations will be to achieving net-zero. This fundamental goal drives our outreach strategy.

CASE STUDY: SUEZ

BUILDING SKILLS FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE

Challenge:

In a changing economy and a challenging and complex sector, Suez has moved beyond being a waste collection business to being an energy and materials recovery business. To make that possible, Suez focused on people.

Skills implemented:

- GET FUTURE FIT
- USE SYSTEMS THINKING
- CONNECT DOTS
- GROW YOUR TALENT PIPELINE

Across the whole business, from frontline staff at their sites through to engineers, sales and customer-facing roles, the business has developed and invested in skills for its existing and future workforce needs. This includes upskilling and reskilling experienced staff from shrinking sectors with transferable skills that can be quickly enhanced for new roles.

Adam Read, Suez External Affairs Director and past CIWM president, said: ‘We recognised that there really wasn’t an obvious pool of talent that was going to be ready-made for us.’

Approach:

In partnership with Northumbrian University, Suez co-created an advanced programme on the fundamentals for running an Energy from Waste plant and trained 20 people from the power sector for each of their nine sites. The outcome was not only developing core competencies across the business but also setting up the training programme as the industry standard.

Innovation has been a priority for the business, and it’s through harnessing data to predict challenges that they’ve been able to foresee business models, opportunities and skills of the future. Now Suez is looking to further embrace circular systems with those insights. Developing professional skills in repair and reuse and implementing new capture, storage and on-line sales processes will be crucial for the business going forward.

The business is already creating relationships with key sector bodies, employers, and trainers as well as forming partnerships with other organisations to help make this transition a reality, including representation on the UK Government’s Green Jobs Delivery Group.



IDENTIFY THOSE AT RISK

Target your support

Use mapping and auditing techniques to understand the environmental impact of operations, identify skills gaps and target investment in skills. Use equality impact assessments in skills plans to focus on vulnerable groups.

Resources: PWC's [Green Jobs Barometer](#); Responsible Restructures: [Facing the Future Together](#)



INVEST IN COMMUNITIES

Enable everyone to take up opportunities

No-one should be shut out of work because of their background or life experience. People from disadvantaged backgrounds are often disadvantaged in the workplace, education and training. Open doors to green jobs, upskilling and reskilling opportunities – both for existing employees and for potential future talent.

Resources: Business in the Community toolkit: [How to Inspire, Hire and Grow Diverse Talent](#)



INSPIRE AND SUPPORT

Co-create skills plans with employees

Use positive narratives and diverse role models to create a 'positive urgency' and inspire a wide and diverse take up of opportunities. Highlight green jobs and skills that build on employee's existing skills and interests or open up new possibilities.

Resources: IEMA and Deloitte, [Greening your organisation: A blueprint for green workforce transformation](#)

IT'S REALLY HELPFUL TO HAVE SOME REALLY TANGIBLE EXAMPLES OF WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE EMERGING SO THAT COLLEAGUES CAN THINK 'I WANT TO ACTUALLY UPSKILL', OR 'I WANT TO RESKILL TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF 'THAT'.

CORDELIA OSEWA-EDIAE,
STRATEGIC INCLUSION & CULTURE CONSULTANT, BT

WINNING LOOKS LIKE:

- Businesses work with local stakeholders, including through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and GrowthHubs, to share their skills needs and opportunities and collaborate to boost green skills and jobs.
- Your climate action plan is viewed by all employees as a positive urgency; rather than something to be feared. Colleagues with low skills, on low pay, and/or with characteristics that would make them disadvantaged in the labour market, are enabled to access opportunities to improve their own lives as part of the transition.
- Employees from right across the organisation are engaged in conversations around the transition; particular efforts are made to ensure that people with diverse backgrounds are given a voice.
- Every employee has ownership of their upskilling journey, working in partnership with their line manager to identify when, where and how they will learn. Focus on learning by doing, but also ensure you have a dedicated training budget available to support people, particularly those at risk, from disadvantaged groups and on lower pay, to develop themselves for future opportunities.

WATCH OUTS:

- Ensure that everyone, especially those most at risk in the transition, are enabled to access upskilling opportunities. Take time to understand motivations and barriers to participation. Businesses may need to rethink their messaging, ensure paid time for training and/or create more bespoke solutions.
- Diverse groups may not feel comfortable speaking out. Make the right channels available to encourage everyone to have their say and treat every voice with respect. Share inspirational stories from diverse leaders and champions from different departments and roles.
- Don't forget your future workforce in your plans. Be sure to involve a diverse range of potential employees from your community, from young people yet to enter the workforce to older people and others who have taken time out looking to return.

GETTING STARTED:

- Reframe the message. For many people, climate action equals job losses and is therefore to be feared. But it can present opportunities to upskill and increase pay, job satisfaction and job security. Help people to see the potential to better their own lives.
- Support line managers to work with their teams to identify potential risks and opportunities for different roles. Agree how roles will change and any new skills that will be needed. Map against current employee's skills to co-create bespoke development plans.
- Carry out a training audit. Identify whether particular groups of employees have been less engaged in upskilling. Explore why this is the case and what you can do differently to increase participation in the future.

WHAT NEXT?

to create your just transition plan covering each of the seven steps.

2. Join our Climate Action Leadership Team

Speak with your relationship Manager.

3. Get bespoke help

with your just transition plan from our advisory team.
Speak to your relationship manager.

4. If you're not yet a member, join BITC

to access our network and support.

THANK YOU

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Facilitators:

Serge Rashidi-Zakuani and Antoinette Humphreys from Sky Labs.

Sponsors:

Sarisher Mann, Anne Marie Verstraeten, Peter Ling, Zoe Maitland, Richard Lindsay and Tracey Fuller from BNP Paribas Group

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ⁱ [Mark Carney: Investing in net-zero climate solutions creates value and rewards | United Nations](#)

ⁱⁱ [Half of UK adults believe that if action on climate change had happened sooner, household bills would not be as high as they are now - Business in the Community \(bitc.org.uk\)](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Unily \(2020\) Future of the Sustainable Workplace available here:](#)

<https://www.unily.com/insights/guides/future-of-the-sustainable-workplace-in-the-age-of-covid-19-and-climate-change>

^{iv} [Microsoft \(2022\) Closing the Sustainability Skills Gap: Helping businesses move from pledges to progress, available here:](#)

[Closing the Sustainability Skills Gap \(microsoft.com\)](#)

^v [LinkedIn \(2022\) Global Green Skills Report, available here: li-green-economy-report-2022-annex.pdf \(linkedin.com\)](#)

^{vi} [OECD \(2023\) Compendium of productivity indicators, available here: OECD Compendium of Productivity Indicators 2023 | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)

^{vii} [Green Jobs Taskforce \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

^{viii} [Closing the UK's green skills gap » Green Alliance \(green-alliance.org.uk\)](#)

^{ix} [Building the Net Zero Energy Workforce | National Grid Group](#)

^x [Green skills as an enabler of UK retrofit \(pwc.co.uk\)](#)

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<https://www.pwc.co.uk/who-we-are/our-purpose/building-trust-in-the-climate-transition/supporting-a-fair-transition/green-jobs-barometer.html>

^{xviii} <https://www.iema.net/all-jobs-greener>

^{xix} [McKinsey \(2021\), Losing from day one: why even transformations fall short, available at:](#)

[The science behind successful organizational transformations | McKinsey](#)

^{xx} [Social Mobility Commission](#)

^{xxi} [Centre for Progressive Policy](#)



Business in the Community (BITC) champions responsible business as essential for long term economic growth and resilience. We convene, campaign, and consult with business to tackle society's most pressing challenges—from climate change and place-based regeneration to inequality, workplace wellbeing, and inclusive growth.

Founded by His Majesty King Charles III in 1982, BITC has over four decades of experience in engaging business and delivering measurable impact in both business and in communities through evidence-based interventions. As a trusted partner to business and government, BITC convenes leadership, influences policy, and accelerates action—helping shape a future-ready economy that works for everyone.

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