

Increase Proper Recycling at Mobify: Feasibility and Viability Report

For Sarah Ciaccia
People & Culture Administrator, Mobify
Vancouver, British Columbia

By Lansì Chu
English 301-99A Student, UBC
Vancouver, British Columbia

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ABSTRACT

To be done (as it is not due for this assignment).

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of Problem

Mobify strives to be an environmental friendly company where paper usage is kept to a minimum, employees biking to work, and using reusable tableware and dishes. Mobify realizes that it is increasingly important and the company is setting a leading example. The office has two sets of garbage bins; each for a different material: paper, compost, mixed bottles, and general garbage. Through observations, it appears there is considerable room left for improvement on how Mobify employees recycle in the office.

B. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to identify ways to enhance recycling practices at Mobify. An example of motivation for this is shown through when the company provides catered lunch. The lunches are individually packed to ensure the quality of food is not compromised through transportation. As a result, much byproduct is produced and does not get recycled properly due to not knowing which bin they belong in. By improving proper recycling practices we can reduce ecological footprint, increase reusability, and increase awareness.

C. Scope of Inquiry

The solution to be investigated will be a combined solution of raising awareness and providing labels. Since recycling is not only limited to the workplace, this would yield the most benefit in the long-run and can be immediately implemented. To assess the feasibility of these two methods, the following areas of analysis will be pursued:

1. Internal:

1. Has there been any sessions/workshops held for the importance of recycling?
2. What are the current perspectives from employees of how they are doing in terms of recycling?
3. Are there currently any plans to address this issue? If so, what has been done?

2. External:

1. How are other similar companies/institutes dealing with their in-house recycling situation?
2. What is the goal of the city of Vancouver in terms of recycling? Are we close to that measure?
3. What measures are the city of Vancouver taking to ensure citizens are recycling? Could we utilize their methods they are undergoing?

3. Implementation/Result:

1. What are some of the costs that Mobify may need to incur?
2. At the end of this implementation, what are the effects?

D. Overview of Data Sources

Primary data sources for this formal report will include observation and interviews. The observation will create a first feel of the severity of this issue. Observations of how other companies/institutes are dealing with recycling will also be scheduled. Interviews will be conducted with Sarah Ciaccia, the People & Culture Administrator to understand of any undergoing plans pertaining to recycling, and a few other employees who have been with the company for more than four years for their thoughts of how the company has placed the importance of recycling over time.

Some secondary sources will include research for the methods and measures that the city of Vancouver are taking to encourage citizens to recycle. Furthermore, through

researching online, gain an understanding of what their goals are for the level of recycling.

E. Proposed Solution

There are several ways to address this situation. To effectively tackle it, possible causes are identified. One possible source is the lack of knowledge and awareness regarding recycling. A feasible solution for this is to host a small workshop, such as a lunch and learn session (where people get together during lunch to learn about a specific topic), to convey the importance of recycling. Another possible cause is the uncertainty of which bin a certain item belongs in. To combat this, a potential solution could be anticipating what items the recycler may have, create labels corresponding to those items and place the labels by the bin to indicate what goes where. Another solution could be investing in a system where it scans the piece of garbage and tells you which bin it belongs in. Note only will this be a costlier solution, it is also not so beneficial in the long-run for the recyclers as they are not practicing correct recycling. Thus, this solution will not be pursued.

II. DATA SECTION

A. Recycling at Mobify

In determining steps to take to increase proper recycling at Mobify, several preliminary actions need to be taken. First, interview were conducted with Mobify's Human Resources' personnels. After speaking to Lauren Mew, People & Culture Manager, I was able to gather insights regarding Mobify's current and future plans for sustainability in the office.

Currently Mobify has two sets of bins designated for different materials in the kitchen and easily accessible garbage and paper recycling bins around people's desks. The bins in the kitchen are labelled 'Garbage', 'Mixed Paper', 'Compost', and 'Mixed Containers' as provided by the building management. Furthermore, Mobify also employees Lykki's recycling services for safe disposal and recycling of electronics. Additional efforts made towards sustainability are shown through requesting Foodee, food delivering company, to deliver food more in family style rather than individually packed and having many reusable dishes and utensils in the office. These efforts are greatly appreciated and should be continued.

As for future plans in terms of sustainability, Mobify has inquired the executives to come up with volunteer ideas to give back to the community. More related to recycling, work is currently undergoing with the Director of Design, Jaybe Allanson, to device Mobify branded labels for the bins in the kitchen.

B. Mobify Employees' Experiences

The next action taken to determine the viability is gather areas of improvement in the employees. Through this survey, areas focused are: personal recycling habits and experience with recycling in the office.

How often do you recycle?

16 responses

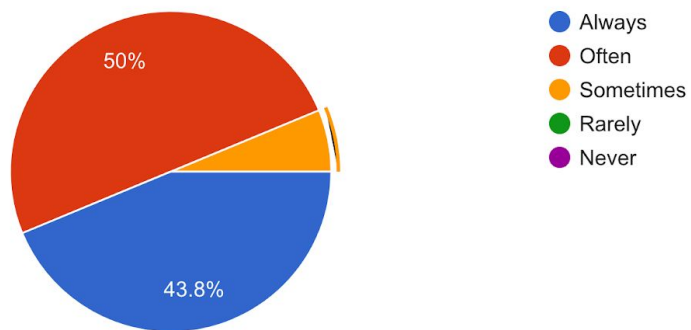


Figure 1. Survey results: 8 - often; 7 - always; 1 - sometimes.

As shown in figure 1, out of the 16 participants, eight stated they recycle “often”, seven “always” recycles, and one recycles “sometimes”. While this may be biased as it is self-reporting, it is evident to see that individuals actively make efforts to recycle.

Are you satisfied with the recycling procedures in the office?

16 responses

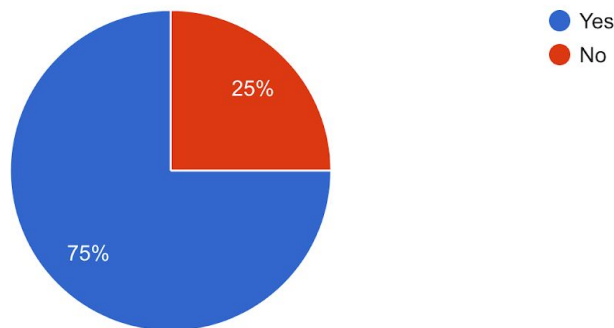


Figure 2. Survey result: 12 - yes; 4 - no.

As depicted in figure 2, it becomes apparent that the current methods of recycling in the office are not satisfying about a quarter of the office if this statistic is extrapolated. Digging further into this, some participants explain why they are unsatisfied:

- “I sometimes wish there would be some education on what types of plastic can be recycled or even pictures showing what common items go in which container.”
- “We should label the recycling bins with examples of what should go in them. What are the blue ones for? Paper I think - no idea.”
- “I’ve seen people stand near a recycling and garbage bin, and toss their Tim Horton’s cup into the garbage. I know that the cleaners go through the garbage later and sort it, but I don’t know if they know that, and it makes me worry about their recycling habits at home.”
- “We could add a soft plastics recycle”
- “I’ll still answer, because there are blue bins scattered around that people don’t use properly or care to use properly and some education/specification around these would greatly improve their use.”

Given these responses, a common theme is the confusion around what material belongs in which of the recycling bins.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Summary and Interpretation of Findings

Mobify is providing the infrastructure for recycling through the bins and services. However, even with sufficient means to recycle, the effort does not go far without the correct knowledge. This is supported by the survey participants' feedbacks. There are confusions around what the blue bins around people's desks are meant for and general guidance of what common items should be recycled in which container.

This report has gathered insights from the People & Culture team of what current and future plans Mobify has in terms of recycling. To recap, the company currently provides recycling bins in the kitchen as well as around people's desks for ease of access. For future plans, Mobify is rebranding the recycling labels to enhance visibility. Given these actions, it is highly feasible to provide labels with images of common items that Mobify employees may encounter to show where they belong. For example, once a Starbucks or Tim Hortons coffee cup is empty and rinsed, the lid and the cup can be recycled as containers while the sleeve can be recycled with mixed waste paper (Recycling Council of British Columbia, 2018). Having images to illustrate this may help increase proper recycling.

Furthermore, as some employees have mentioned, it would be helpful to hold education sessions around sustainability and/or recycling. This recommendation is also feasible as Mobify encourages employees to conduct "Lunch & Learns" where any topic can be discussed to educate the employees. This opportunity can be utilized to educate and raise awareness regarding the impact of recycling.

B. Recommendations

Based on the findings illustrated above, feasible and viable recommendations to increase proper recycling at Mobify are the following:

- When working with Jaybe to rebrand the recycling label, include images to show which common items belong in which recycling bin.
 - To determine the common items, observation studies can be done to see which ones are prevalent.
- Conduct Lunch & Learn sessions to educate employees on proper recycling practices.
 - The presenter could be a Mobify employee with a passion for sustainability or we can reach out to the City of Vancouver and inquire if they have representatives who are able to present in their effort of achieving Zero Waste 2040 (City of Vancouver, 2018).

IV. REFERENCES

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