



ENGAGING EXECUTIVE SPONSORS

Follow this guide to recruit your executive sponsor and maintain their support throughout the SEM enrollment process.

STEP 1: Identify your SEM executive sponsor

The best executive sponsors possess the following qualities:

- Serves at a high-level to lend credibility
 - Consider recruiting two executive sponsors: one to serve at a high level, and one who can play a more active role
- Belief in the value of SEM
- Willingness to make time, show up, stay engaged and lend a hand when needed
- Active attendance at first and last workshop, along with quarterly check-ins
- Ability to walk the talk as an energy efficiency leader
- Thoughtful management of staff workload
- Consistent acknowledgement and recognition of the team's efforts
- Readiness to hold the energy champion accountable
- Cognizant that resources have been invested and that SEM efforts should not be taken for granted

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STEP 2: Design the program to enhance executive communications

Program design phase:

- Ensure the active role of your executive sponsor is visible when they approve policies and disseminate information
- Build in 1:1 with your executive sponsor, including at first and last workshop of the program year
- Schedule executive roundtables twice per year, along with quality check-ins
- Take time to build a relationship with executive sponsor before program begins
- Communicate and agree upon expectations of executive sponsor involvement
- Learn the personal motivations of the executive sponsor (e.g., sustainability, cost savings, etc.)

Curriculum phase:

- Write all requirements into description of every role, which will be especially helpful during turnover
- Encourage energy champion to celebrate successes and include the executive sponsor in communications and events
- Introduce energy pitch practices early in the program
- Develop communication strategies that emphasize the energy champion's motivators

Post-program phase:

- Take advantage of all positive public-relations opportunities
- Maintain communication with executive sponsor, especially for assistance with references, re-enrollment and evaluation

This guide was developed by the Northwest SEM Collaborative's Beyond the E working group.

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