

Sodexo advocates for cross industry collaboration to increase green skills

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[Sodexo UK and Ireland](#) is advocating for cross industry collaboration to advance green skills¹, enabling organisations, including its own, to meet net zero commitments.

Recognising that every role in its organisation must adapt to meet the challenges posed by climate change, Sodexo is embedding green skills within its workforce, providing training and learning opportunities for its people at all stages of their career journey through a dedicated training centre which it has partnered with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) to establish.

Green skills are vital for businesses transitioning to net zero and refer to the capabilities that enable individuals to contribute to sustainable development and address pressing environmental challenges, such as climate change.

There is a growing need to ensure the workforce is equipped with the necessary green skills to support economic growth. A recent Skills England report² identified that 2 in 5 workers will play a central role in supporting the transition to net zero; however, without investing in green skills, employers will face challenges in sourcing a workforce with the relevant expertise.

According to the Climate Action Tracker³, 90% of the world's GDP is covered by a net zero commitment, and yet a LinkedIn Global Skills report 2024 uncovered a significant gap exists between corporate sustainability commitments and the skills workers needed to achieve them. Currently, the demand for green skills is growing faster than the supply. The report highlights that by 2030, one in five jobs will lack the green talent to fill it; by 2050 this is predicted to be one in two jobs.⁴

Sodexo already has a sustainable learning pathway in place, through which 71% of its senior leaders and on-site managers have completed the green skills training so far. To extend the opportunity to all employees as well as its clients, and supply partners, Sodexo is partnering with IEMA to establish a dedicated training centre which will enable individuals to access the skills training necessary to drive the transition to a low-carbon economy.

To support this goal, Sodexo has identified different job families, from senior leadership to frontline colleagues at its sites, and mapped skills competency across these key role families. This mapping helps determine the specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for green skills to be incorporated into every role.

Alongside its established [community of practice](#) with clients and supply partners, which it set up in collaboration with FuturePlanet in 2023, the new dedicated training centre sees Sodexo take another pivotal step toward reaching net zero and fulfilling its commitment to foster a culture of environmental responsibility within its workforce.

Claire Atkins Morris, Sustainability Director, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: "Spotlighting on green skills goes beyond meeting our own commitments. It empowers our employees and partners, including clients and suppliers, to make a meaningful impact. As we advance towards our net zero target, we recognise the crucial role our workforce plays in transforming our operations. We cannot achieve this without every role within the organisation recognising the part they play in adapting and transitioning. By investing in green skills, whether through training and upskilling, we are not only future-proofing our business but also contributing to a sustainable future for the communities we serve."

Martin Baxter, Deputy CEO, IEMA, added: "As the country transitions towards net zero, green skills are likely to continue to be one of the defining recruitment trends of the future. Businesses that invest in their workforce's green capabilities today will reap the rewards of a sustainable tomorrow. We're pleased to be working with Sodexo on their ambitious green skills programme and look forward to supporting them on their journey to becoming an accredited IEMA training centre."

Sodexo's focus on green skills aligns with over a decade of efforts to combat climate change. Partnering with WWF to measure and reduce its carbon footprint, Sodexo became the first foodservice business, and one of the first organisations globally, to have both near- and long-term net zero targets validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) in 2022.

In 2021 having reached its target to reduce GHG by 34% by 2025, Sodexo UK & Ireland set out a comprehensive roadmap to [net zero 2040](#). In January 2024 Sodexo reported it was ahead of schedule having achieved a 37% reduction in absolute greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across scopes 1, 2 and 3, compared to its baseline year of 2017. This reduction represents the removal of approximately 400,000 tonnes of carbon (tCO₂e) from its footprint at 31 May 2023.