



My Journey workplaces

Ten Ways to Make Your Business Bike-Friendly

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Please note some of the content in this article has been adapted to reflect the UK cycle offering.

Spring is a great time to make your business more bicycle-friendly. In addition to fabulous bicycling events and fundraisers that take place during the warmer months, policies that support biking to work can be an excellent long-term management decision.

Bicycle-friendly businesses garner good PR -- you demonstrate to your clients and community that you are a company that is concerned about the wellness of its employees and the environment. As a good corporate citizen, you'll be helping to reduce pollution, traffic congestion, per capita road expenditures, climate change, and acid rain.

To recognise your company, many cities offer bicycle-friendly business awards. A bike commuting program also provides something wonderful to brag about in your company sustainability reports.

In addition, cyclists make good employees -- healthier, happier employees are more productive, and you'll attract employees who value health and well-being, possibly lowering your insurance premiums.

With fewer employees driving, you may have more parking spaces for customers, and you might save money if you subsidise employee parking.

Bicycle-friendly practices and policies can be cheap, while still leading to big results. Without further ado, here is a list of steps, ranging from easy to "varsity level", that your company can take to become a more bicycle-friendly organization. Who knows, your company may already be doing some of these things.

1. Install bicycle racks in front of your business. Having sufficient bike racks out front is an easy way to encourage employees to ride, while also laying out a veritable welcome mat to customers who are cyclists.

2. Participate in cycling events. Encourage your staff to switch to two wheels and reboot their commute on Cycle to Work Day in August. Or how about getting your office to compete with other area businesses to get the highest percentage of its employees biking for Cycle September. Taking part in such events is a fantastic, free way to engage employees and garner a little positive publicity.

- 3. Offer cyclist discounts.** Retailers and restaurants should consider offering a small discount for customers who arrive by bike, even if just during bike specific events throughout the year.
- 4. Keep a "loaner" lock on hand.** Purchase a U-lock to ensure that employees feel secure about riding to work- even if they forget their lock one day. You could also purchase an office tyre pump. Don't forget to register that lock online in case the keys get lost.
- 5. Use bicycle couriers.** Consider how you could use bicycles to deliver packages or goods from your business, either with a bicycle courier company or by employees. Larger items can even be delivered by bicycle trailer or cargo bike
- 6. Offer safe cycling training for employees.** Active transportation advocacy groups, and some cities themselves, have bike commuting "ambassadors" who offer free lunchtime talks on safe and effective cycling. Schedule one for your office and show employees you encourage cycling and care about their well-being.
- 7. Guarantee emergency rides home.** Provide a free taxi ride home for bike commuters in the event of family emergency or other extenuating circumstances. This will instil more confidence in employees to ride a bike to work.
- 8. Make space available inside your workplace for bicycle parking.** An area that can be monitored by staff or security cameras will further reduce the possibility of bike theft and encourage cyclists to bring their often-pricey bikes to the office. Other advanced parking options include outdoor covered parking with limited access, bike lockers, or outdoor covered parking that is in view of security.
- 9. Shower facilities.** Providing employees access to shower facilities is a great "varsity level" step to making your workplace bicycle-friendly. If you don't have shower facilities in your own building, consider negotiating for employee access to facilities or gyms in nearby buildings.
- 10. Cash or in-kind incentives for cyclists.** Provide bike commuters with incentives equivalent to those you provide to other commuters. This might mean cash in lieu of the parking subsidy you'd otherwise provide, or paid mileage for trips made by bike. For example, Mercy Hospital in Sacramento provides cyclists additional incentives, beyond those it provides to drivers, through its "Commuter Options" program. Employees even earn free lunch vouchers for every day they commute by bike.