1. Creating support

Support from sentior managers and staff is a prerequisite for introducing a new policy. The management team needs to have an awareness of the health problems experienced by staff and must be convinced of the benefit plants bring to the workplace in terms of improving working conditions. Therefore highlight the importance of plants in the workplace with the aid of appropriate examples, research results and informative material. Also involve the people responsible for health policy in the plan for formulating a plants policy.

5 reasons to have plants in your company

- Fatigue, headache, coughing and irritated eyes reduced by 30%.
- Staff are less stressed.
- Computer monitor workers feel better and are more productive.
- Plants permanently cut absence due to illness. In one Norwegian hospital it fell from 15% to 5%. That is a 60% reduction.
- Plants offer a good return on investment *(see example)*.

Businesses often have an inviting bunch of flowers on display at reception. Plants not only brighten an area for customers - they also make it a more pleasant, inviting and healthy place to work. As a business you can benefit from the health effects of greenery by bringing plants into the workplace.

In many workplaces the ventilation is far from ideal and smoking is still permitted. In addition, all sorts of materials and machines release harmful substances, such as formaldehyde, toluene, benzene, solvents, ozone and toner. This can cause health problems. Even in offices with good climate control systems, over 25% of staff are dissatisfied with the working environment.
In addition to improving the ventilation and positioning printers and copiers in a separate area, installing plants can also help to improve the air quality in the workplace. They evaporate water through the leaves, absorb heat (and noise) and remove dust and pollutants from the air. Plants thus keep the climate healthier and more stable, and reduce symptoms and conditions associated with poor working environments.
Plants do not just offer a benefit inside the building. Deciduous plants on the sun-facing side of the building keep the heat out in the summer an allow heat to enter in the winter. This can cut a company's heating costs by 20%.

EXAMPLE

You will earn back an investment in plants within a year. Take a look at the example for a company with 100 computer monitor workers where the absence due to illness is reduced by 1%:

One-off investment in 100 planters	£ 10,000.-
Annual costs	
• Maintenance/replacement	£ 3,000.-
• Depreciation	£ 2,000.-
	£ 5,000.-
Annual income	
-1% absence due to illness = annual salary	£ 20,000.-
Yield	
1st year	£ 5,000.-
Subsequent years	£ 10,000.-