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Waste Audit at Innovation Works London (C)

William Diebel and Professor Stephan Vachon wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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Laura Pendlebury had just led a waste audit at Innovation Works London (Innovation Works). On July 2, Pendlebury determined that she had a week to review the waste audit data before reporting back to Sienna Jae Taylor at Innovation Works. Pendlebury assured Taylor she would be able to provide a short waste audit report and present her team’s findings and recommendations for improvement at the meeting.

data collection and analysis

Pendlebury and her team proceeded with the waste audit on June 26. As outlined in her waste audit plan, Pendlebury had her team record data on the weight and composition of each waste bag that was collected for the audit (see Exhibit 1). Although the audit did not yield all of the data Pendlebury had originally sought to attain, she was encouraged by her team’s discoveries and believed she could help Innovation Works improve its waste diversion rate.

Despite not having access to most of Innovation Works’ organic waste from the collection period, the team was happy to find approximately one-third (48 pounds, or 22 kilograms) of Innovation Works’ organic waste on site when they arrived to complete the audit. Taylor determined that waste haulers had removed 108 pounds (49 kilograms) of organic waste prior to the audit.

Pendlebury met with her waste audit team on July 5 to discuss the results. Now that the team had the raw data from the waste audit, they needed to determine the waste diversion rate. Unfortunately, this calculation was not as straightforward as they had hoped. They wondered what constituted *diverted* waste. The team also discussed Pendlebury’s observations during her tour of Innovation Works. For example, she had noticed that most of the receptacles throughout the facility were for landfill. Landfill bins were located at most flex-desks and private offices, recycling bins were generally located at two or three high-capacity sites (i.e., large blue bins) on each floor, and organic receptacles were located in eating areas and washrooms. Drawing from the data, Pendlebury aimed to develop two or three key learning points.

Exhibit 1: Innovation works WASTE AUDIT DATA

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bag #** | **Stream** | **Overall Weight**  **(in pounds)** | **Waste Component (in pounds)** | | |
| **Landfill** | **Recycling** | **Organics** |
| 1 | Landfill | 6.1 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 4.9 |
| 2 | Landfill | 16.6 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 12.2 |
| 3 | Landfill | 5.7 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 4 |
| 4 | Landfill | 24.0 | 6.7 | 2.6 | 14.7 |
| 5 | Landfill | 24.0 | 2.6 | 7.7 | 13.7 |
| 6 | Landfill | 18.3 | 1.1 | 11.1 | 6.2 |
| 7 | Landfill | 17.5 | 2.2 | 4.1 | 11.2 |
| 8 | Landfill | 20.7 | 2.4 | 9.1 | 9.2 |
| 9 | Landfill | 4.4 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 2.3 |
| 10 | Organics | 14.8 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 14.7 |
| 11 | Organics | 4.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.4 |
| 12 | Organics | 5.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.4 |
| 13 | Organics | 4.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.1 |
| 14 | Organics | 6.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.0 |
| 15 | Organics | 8.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 8.9 |
| 16 | Organics | 4.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.5 |
| Bin 1 | Recycling | 23.4 | 1.1 | 22.3 | 0.0 |
| Bin 2 | Recycling | 29.0 | 0.0 | 29.0 | 0.0 |
| Bag | Recycling | 7.3 | 0.0 | 7.3 | 0.0 |
| Bin 3 | Recycling | 24.0 | 1.1 | 21.4 | 1.5 |
| Box 1 | Recycling | 23.2 | 0.6 | 22.6 | 0.0 |
| Box 2 | Recycling | 13.1 | 2.0 | 11.1 | 0.0 |
| Bin 4 | Recycling | 14.9 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 14.4 |
| Bin 5 | Recycling | 24.5 | 4.6 | 11.4 | 8.5 |

Note: 1 pound = 0.453 kilograms

Source: Innovation Works files.