

## Incentive Package for Rideshare

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Your rideshare scheme is more likely to be successful when attractive incentives are incorporated. Offering a package of incentives is an effective way to increase participation and help you employees overcome objections they might have to ridesharing.

### **Trial Period**

In order for incentives to help your rideshare scheme, your employees need to believe in the viability of ridesharing as an alternative commuting option. Getting staff to try ridesharing may require a separate incentive in itself, which could include prizes to get employees to participate in a one-off rideshare day.

A one-off rideshare promotion can be held as part of the planned activities within your travel plan. If appropriate, the promotion could also utilise regional, national or global themes, such as Earth Day.

In order to get a good response to a trial promotion, it should be fairly active in terms of seeking participants. Some ideas to consider include:

- Offering a more substantial incentive as employees are likely to have concerns about the effectiveness and ease of ridesharing.
- Setting up a registration point in a place where most employees pass by, such as a lunch room, the reception area, or near the entry to the office or staff car park. In a smaller organisation, promotion of the event can also be done by going desk to desk and asking people to participate.
- Food is always a great incentive - putting on an event with food tends to attract a lot of hungry staff. Employees should have the opportunity to register at this event.
- Providing an information packet to the employees who have registered is a good way of communicating the benefits of your scheme.
- Follow up is important as employees would be more receptive to trying it for a bit longer if they are asked.

A trial period can help reassure employees that there is no obligation for participating or required long term commitment to continue. Organised rideshare group meetings will also enable potential participants to get to know each other and feel more comfortable with ridesharing long term.

### Priority Parking

One of the most effective incentives for rideshare schemes is access to priority parking. By proactively managing the supply and demand for your organisation's parking facilities you can create a valuable incentive for ridesharing. Priority parking spaces are typically the most convenient spaces sought after by employees, such as those next to a major building entrance or in a parking garage.



Priority parking is a strong incentive where the general parking supply is limited, or where huge car parks create long walking distances for some drivers. In small parking lots, the convenience of priority parking might only be a small incentive – however, the signage used to identify the spaces can raise the visibility of your rideshare scheme.

The dedicated car parks should be marked to let all staff know where they are and that it is a real, long term incentive. Your organisation can either establish a fixed number of car parks that are dedicated, or they can be flexible and increase the number of car parks as the number of ridesharing groups increase. In reality, this might mean that there are a number of empty car parks as there are not enough groups at all times, or it could mean that someone will have to give up their park when a new dedicated rideshare car park is added. While there is an urge to free up a free dedicated car park as soon as it's vacant, an under utilised dedicated car park is a great promotion for the programme as it tends to be noticed by staff.

While it sounds like a simple incentive to implement, it can be difficult because it needs careful planning, ongoing management and enforcement. Implementation steps for setting up a priority parking programme at your workplace include:

1. Assessing the parking situation
  - > Number of employees who park at work
  - > Number of employees who don't use parking due to using alternative modes
  - > Number of parking spaces available for employee parking
  - > How much you pay for parking spaces
2. Setting up the guidelines and policies
  - > What are the eligibility requirements?
  - > What approach will be taken to manage the priority parking?
  - > How will it be enforced?
3. Administering and managing the priority parking
  - > Assign a primary point of contact to administer the incentive
  - > Market the availability of the priority parking to employees
  - > Mark out priority parking spaces
  - > Get employees to register and verify their eligibility
  - > Issue parking permits

#### 4. Monitoring and ongoing enforcement

Another option is to provide subsidised car parks off site, such as a nearby parking building. This could be an expense that needs to be considered carefully as the organisation needs to be able to cope with this incentive in the long term.

### **Parking Cash Out**

Unless other incentives are implemented, it is difficult to convince employees not to drive alone when parking is free and available. Parking cash out is an arrangement in which your organisation offers employees who do not drive the value of a parking space as cash. This offers a financial incentive to employees not to drive, and can be an incentive to reduce the demand for parking at your workplace. Parking cash out programmes are often easier to implement than charging for parking because employees are used to parking for free. The effectiveness of cash out program depends on the availability of alternative modes, and, conversely, the availability of free and unregulated parking in the area (which allows employees to take the cash but still drive and park somewhere).

A parking cash out programme involves:

1. Assessing the parking situation
  - > Number of employees who park at work
  - > Number of employees who don't use parking due to using alternative modes
  - > Number of parking spaces available for employee parking
  - > How much you pay for parking spaces
2. Determining payment and procedures
3. Determining administrative needs
4. Developing supporting incentives
  - > Offering Guaranteed Ride Home programme
  - > Use of pool vehicles for meetings, personal use during the day

### **Rideshare Matching**

One of the most important needs in setting up a rideshare scheme is matching potential rideshare partners. Some rideshare matching organizations have moved to online rideshare matching. There are many different methods of achieving this, each relying on different levels of HR and IT support, such as developing or purchasing rideshare matching software, using spreadsheets and databases or even a register or notice board. Ride matching methods can vary by the size of the employer, budget and technical support, but they all rely on the following basic employee information:

- > Home location (i.e. street address, nearest intersection)
- > Work location
- > Work schedule (i.e. days, times and flexibility)
- > Driving preferences (i.e. driver, passenger, or both)
- > Other preferences (i.e. gender, non-smoker)

The most common types of ride matching tools are described below:

#### ***Bulletin Board***

This is a simple matching system that can be put in place immediately, has low set up and administration costs, and is effective in a smaller workplace. This is a self-service method in that potential drivers and passengers place notices on a bulletin board outlining what they seek in a potential rideshare partner. As a variation they can use pushpins to attach a small piece of paper with their name and phone number to their home location on a large map. Interested parties then contact each other to discuss possible arrangements.

An advantage to bulletin board matching is that potential drivers, who can be difficult to convince to register for a rideshare, can keep an eye on the board and watch for potential passengers without feeling a sense of “commitment” that often comes from a more formal registration. A downside is the possible lack of credibility, and there is no automated way of monitoring performance or effectiveness.

#### ***Corporate Intranet***

Like the bulletin board method, this is a simple ride matching system that can be put in place immediately, has low set up and administration costs, and is effective in any workplace. Potential drivers and passengers place notices similar to “classified ads” on the company intranet stating what they seek in a potential rideshare partner. Interested parties then contact each other to discuss possible arrangements. This is a bit more credible as intranet activity is monitored and there are rules associated with a company intranet. Again a downside to this approach is that there is no automated way of monitoring performance or effectiveness the scheme.

### ***Spreadsheets and Database***

This approach provides a more formalized alternative to the bulletin board method and intranet classified listing that yields greater control while maintaining relatively low costs. Prospective ridesharers record key information on a paper or online registration form. The rideshare coordinator maintains details for each participant in a spreadsheet or database. Then the coordinator identifies potential matches manually and distributes “match lists” of potential rideshare partners to each registrant.

This manual method can become cumbersome and hard to manage if multiple matching criteria are required or if the number of registrants is high. Standard spreadsheets or database software can be used to sort registrants by multiple prioritized criteria. This approach requires a coordinator to manage the spreadsheet and ensure reliable matches, thus is staff-intensive.

### ***Matching Software***

A popular matching tool is the use of automated ride matching software to generate possible matches for participants. The software is usually installed on the organisation’s computer network or accessible online through the internet or company intranet. Staff register in the rideshare software and their information is recorded. Potential ride matches are automatically generated based on matching criteria such as starting location, destination, work schedule, and preferences. Staff then decide who to contact and make arrangements to rideshare.

This approach generally provides greater security, ensuring privacy for participants and enhanced matching facilities, including sophisticated ‘along route’ matching. This approach has higher costs than those schemes using more manual rudimentary approaches. Rideshare software is more appropriate for larger organisations with over 1000 employees (with the right characteristics) or high density areas where several organisations decide to create a rideshare scheme jointly.

## **Flexible Working Hours**

A lack of matching schedules among your employees can be a major barrier to ridesharing. Employees who rideshare together need to arrive and depart at the same time, or the rideshare arrangement will fail and it just becomes “too hard”. Policies permitting flexible working hours can help to remove barriers to the use of ridesharing and other commuter options. This arrangement gives employees flexibility on when they arrive to work, take lunch and leave work, all the while working the required number of hours each day. This means that:

- Employees can travel outside the hours of peak traffic congestion,
- Employees have more flexibility for personal and work time,
- Managers support that ridesharers need to honour ridesharing commitments,
- Employees can increase the number of potential rideshare matches with others from different departments or locations.

### Financial Incentives

- Offer cash incentives to staff for participating in your rideshare scheme, for example a daily payment for travelling to work in a rideshare group (or other sustainable mode such as cycling, walking or use of passenger transport).
- Offer rewards in the form of vouchers and discounts that could include:
  - > Free or discounted parking fees for ridesharers, while non-ridesharers pay, or pay more.
  - > Gift vouchers or discounts at local restaurants, gyms, beauty salons, etc. (e.g. rideshare miles scheme) for those joining the scheme.

### Prize Draws & Giveaways

Prizes and giveaways could be anything from small items such as pens, mugs, and hats; to services and entertainment such as movie tickets, massages, spa treatments, restaurant vouchers, shopping sprees, to holiday packages. Your organisation can also provide your own goods and services as a giveaway, such as some time off during a working day or extra annual leave.

Keep in mind that providing prizes related to your organisation may not be appropriate if these goods and services are easily accessed by staff already.

The trick to prizes is to know your audience. Keep in mind that some prizes and giveaways are valued by some and not by others. The best giveaways should have some value to your employees and it does not necessarily need to be monetary. For example, season tickets to rugby might be very appealing to some and not particularly to others. One way to get around this is to offer a choice of equivalent value, or a number of prizes that are interchangeable amongst the winners.



### Point Schemes

In a point scheme rideshare participants earn points that can be traded in for merchandise, services or product certificates. This type of incentive rewards rideshare usage by keeping track of the number of times someone rideshared in a specific period or point of time. Having a point scheme could mean that there is a variety of rewards that can be claimed that will take into account the difference in preferences amongst employees.

### Events

Another incentive is to have events exclusively for rideshare participants. They could be morning teas, lunches, dinners or even entertainment outings such as concerts.

These types of events are fun and let participants socialise and perhaps do something they would not normally do. An event would also allow your organisation to communicate your appreciation for their participation in your rideshare scheme.

### **Awards**

Personal recognition can also be a powerful incentive to some, but keep in mind it might make others uncomfortable. An outstanding participant could be recognised for their achievements, such as being the “rideshare participant of the year”. Awards can also be handed out to all participants to highlight their contributions to the scheme, but the award should be relevant and meaningful.

### **Pool Vehicles**

Another incentive for your scheme is providing the use of pool vehicles to rideshare participants. This could be for day time work related travel or even for personal use during the day for a limited period of time. This could be a very powerful incentive particularly in areas where other forms of sustainable transport may be difficult. Not having the convenience of a personal car during or after the working day can be a barrier if it prevents staff from doing the types of activities that they normally need to do, like running errands, going to the gym or shopping.

The pool vehicles themselves could be used for rideshare commuting as well if there is not a great deal of use for the vehicles after hours. This can be a preferred option for some organisations that have difficulties with night time vehicle security onsite. Some organisations specify that pool vehicles can be used if the rideshare group/ participant will guarantee off road parking for the vehicle at night.