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**Abstract Title: Peer Learning: The Strategic Energy Management Classroom**

Abstract Text:

Forming groups to deliver foundational energy efficiency knowledge has become standard practice in utility funded Strategic Energy Management programs, driven primarily as a means to cost effectively reach smaller businesses with more modest savings potential. Beyond merely an economic means of imparting needed foundational knowledge, these groups have proven to be a rich environment where the interactions of participants can foster unexpected benefits. Much has been done to define, utilize, and advance peer learning as it relates to individuals in academic settings, but the interactions of individuals and organizations advancing through cohort based energy efficiency is a novel arena that warrants further examination. Our work using a group approach to implement utility Strategic Energy Management programs has demonstrated that through facilitating peer dialogue in group settings spurs project implementation, sharing of best practices, and ultimately results in lasting behavioral and organizational changes. There are also considerations around group size and makeup that need to be taken into account to ensure free exchange of ideas. In particular, the heterogeneity or homogeneity of group members can be viewed through a number of lenses and the right approach varies by intended market. This paper will delve into the benefits, tactics, and potential pitfalls of implementing peer learning groups as behavioral change opportunities, including leveraging the experience of diverse organizations, reconciling divergent engagement levels, and methods for fostering the open exchange of ideas.