

Briefing

Agency is the capacity that an organisation develops to spot, prioritise and make the most of opportunities for action on climate change that it regards as meaningful.

Examples of timely action, planned well in advance are: new power stations keeping options open for retrofitting carbon capture and storage technology; manufacturers investing in waste-to-energy plants that save on landfill tax and generate income by selling excess to the grid, and the UK Government's Schools for the Future programme which encourages construction techniques such as green roofs and walls to combat increased summer heat.

Why is it important? Research shows that people resist increasing awareness unless they think they will be able to act in a way that they see as meaningful – i.e. unless they have 'agency'. People normally have far greater opportunities to respond to climate change at work than as individuals yet unless organisations explore and extend the space they have to take action, nothing will change.

What we can learn. By focussing on this pathway we can help you to see where you might have more scope for action on climate change.

Examples from you. Do you have a list of actions or changes that your organisation can realistically take on climate change which will be beneficial or might even make a significant difference to either carbon reduction or resilience to climate impacts?

Identify three examples to tell us about:

- Explain what level of priority these are and why
- How are these actions meaningful for the organisation?
- How might a current project lead to something even more ambitious?
- What would you like to be doing several years from now?
- What may be getting in the way of what you'd like to be doing?
- To what extent are investment decisions geared towards action on climate change?

(If possible discuss the response level each example represents with the reviewee.)