THE CLIENT
The national headquarters of a global company that provides audit, consulting, financial advisory, risk management and tax services for its clients, based in downtown Toronto. Sodexo provides conference services, and food services which includes catering for their in-house training facility, Starbucks and a dining room for over 4000 staff.

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE: STRATEGIC FOOD WASTE PREVENTION
Through our Better Tomorrow 2025 corporate responsibility roadmap, we have committed to eliminating avoidable waste globally by 2025. The WasteWatch powered by Leanpath program provides Sodexo teams with food waste data and insights, allowing them to implement targeted operational and behavioral changes to help end avoidable food waste, whether food waste generated in the kitchen or consumer food waste.

BACKGROUND
The client is committed to driving societal change and promoting environmental sustainability. It actively measures their environmental performance across its global network and is always looking for opportunities for improvement.

When we were awarded the contract in December of 2018, we proposed WasteWatch powered by Leanpath as part of the proposal requirements around the use of innovative technology and sustainability. We started training on the program in August 2019, then established the baseline data in September and October, and are now actively tracking the data.

CHALLENGES
Cost is always something that the client considers, and this site was no different. I think that you need to develop some sort of Return on Investment formula to demonstrate how this is going to work and what we’re hoping to accomplish. Talk to them about the positive effect on their carbon footprint by explaining how much waste will be reduced, as well as discussing the financial implications by explaining how it will pay for itself within a certain timeframe.
SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION

SUCCESSES
We must work together to drive solutions. Yes, we brought this technology into the site and we’re the ones providing that expertise, but when it comes to results we’ve got to work together, and the client has to buy-in to the adjustments in order for real change to happen.

Some success we have seen at this site include:

• Staff on site can decide between using a plate or can choose disposable containers for takeaway
• All disposable containers, cutlery and napkins are compostable
• Water hydration stations are set up throughout the building
• We are now actively tracking the data and just presented our first results to the client

IMPACT/BENEFITS
From a financial standpoint, we’ve saved money by eliminating plastic straws from the site and we’re still The client is driven by data. They are interested in this program gathering intel and providing them with real-time information to understand where the waste is coming from and how we can work together to meet the waste reduction goals based on that new knowledge.

We recently presented the baseline data for the food waste project at our monthly meeting. We were able to show how much money in raw product costs was wasted and what percentage is coming from each area or space. We know that some spaces are more cost effective than others, so we can take that into account, but it allows us to figure out how to work together to impact the goals based on the space and the parameters we’ve got.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT YOU COULD MAKE SO THAT OTHER PEOPLE COULD LEARN FROM YOUR EXAMPLE:
It is very important to get an on-site program champion – or several – in each area of the business. This is crucial to the success of this program.

In this operation we have so many things to do, and so many different programs that we need to run and sometimes things just fall off the radar in terms of priority, so it’s important to be serious about who’s going to be your champion, and to have that champion take ownership and follow through on what it means to have that program, manage it and report on it.