

Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
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Joint Objectives

The chances of successfully outsourcing facilities services can be greatly enhanced by the adoption of a collaborative working style between client and supplier and between the multiple disciplines within the FM remit. This enables the integration of a variety of facilities services that lies at the heart of the facilities management function.

Each party involved in a collaborative relationship must understand their own strategic objectives for doing so. In many cases the failure of such relationships can be attributed to organisations failing to understand or define their own direction. It is only when there is a clear understanding of what an organisation hopes to accomplish that relevant objectives for collaborative relationships can be set.

However while each party has to be clear about their own objectives, successful collaborative relationships also develop another set of objectives which are shared with the other parties involved. There should always be a recognition and focus on how through collaborative working the relationship can achieve more. This will help during the establishment of the relationship and once in contract it will give common focus.

At the earliest possible stage it helps to establish what the shared common objectives for the collaborative organisation might be. If there are no obvious mutual benefits then a collaborative working model may not be the right solution. With new partners the objectives should initially be based on those of the first party and attempts made to understand the requirements of the others to identify where aspirations overlap and common goals can be achieved.

The process for developing Joint Objectives is for each party to identify their own objectives and to explain the rationale behind them to the other party, then establish any of these which are common. Of the remainder establish those which can be achieved without conflict. If there are any conflicts a management plan should be established. Finally the joint objectives should be agreed and documented and a measurement protocol established to track progress towards their achievement.

During the relationship progress towards the achievement of all objectives including the joint goals must be regularly monitored to enable remedial action if the desired outcomes are not being realised. At regular points during the relationship lifecycle it is good practice to repeat the objective development process in order to capture any changes in need that may have occurred over time.

The British Standards Institute publication 'Collaborative business relationships. Guide to implementing BS 11000-1' contains guidance on the development and use of Joint Objectives and is available from their bookshop www.shop.bsigroup.com