

Facilities Management from A to Z



Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
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Business values are the core principles or standards that guide the way an organisation does business. They sum up what the business stands for and what makes it special. While business plans and strategies may change, the core values of a business remain the same. Every business is different and will have its own set of values - whether or not these are articulated.

One value that is increasingly mentioned is Kindness. This may seem an odd word to use in conjunction with business where attributes like ruthlessness, aggression and a killer instinct seem to be commonplace. However the Corporate Social Responsibility movement increasingly holds sway and is essentially about being nice.

Tom Peters, the author of 1982 best-selling book *In Search of Excellence* and many other best sellers is amongst the most respected management gurus. In a recent article for *The Financial Times* he declared that “kindness is free” and furthermore, is central to business profitability.

Peters makes a persuasive economic case for adding the kindness to the tool kit for business success. The idea is to proactively support kindness as a value in the workplace because it is a simple concept; too simple, on first impression, to provide a solution to the complex and serious challenges businesses are currently facing. It is precisely this simplicity, however, that gives this initiative the power to affect change at all levels, both with individuals and organisations.

In facilities management, kindness may manifest itself in the workplace in a host of ways, from the manner of interaction between clients and suppliers to the daily support given by facilities people to workplace occupants. The large workforce required to deliver facilities services is a strong driver towards these principles. Treating staff as human beings rather than resources and showing them the respect and care that a concept like kindness encompasses can pay dividends in increased productivity, morale and staff retention.

In her book *Capitalizing on Kindness*, Kristin Tilquist describes the concept of Kindness Capital which is leveraged through the power of reputation, reciprocity, gratitude, personality and networking. She argues that Kindness becomes the key business asset when a caring attitude toward others is coupled with a focus on achieving goals and that those who wish to succeed in the 21st century business climate which is characterized by intense competition, ever-evolving technologies, and escalating expectations, must make the conscious development of kindness their business imperative.

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