

Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
published monthly in Facilities by Lexis Nexis between 2008 and 2016

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups of individuals who are involved in or affected by the activities of the organisation. The Facilities Management function often has a longer list of stakeholders than any other part of the organisation. FM stakeholders may include directly employed staff, product suppliers, and service providers, building occupants, senior managers, investors, neighbours, unions, landlords, auditors and regulatory bodies.

Understanding the needs and wants of stakeholders is key to the development and delivery of a successful facilities strategy. By analysing the rights and responsibilities of each stakeholder group and identifying their different expectations and perceptions an FM can establish any conflicting demands and improvement opportunities. The problem for the FM then is how to satisfy the different responsibilities they have to these different groups.

Identifying the “rights” of a stakeholder means establishing what an individual or a group of individuals might reasonably expect from the FM team. This would cover issues like comfort or workspace. Whereas “responsibilities” means the obligations that FM has to different groups or individuals who come into contact with them. What FM would be reasonably expected to provide to these groups or individuals. This covers compliance or contractual issues to do with safety and security.

The “needs” of a stakeholder are the things that they actually require in order to do their job. From an FM perspective this may be as simple as power, furniture or postal services. What a stakeholder “wants” can be far more complex bringing into play issues like service and proactive innovation. Expectations and perceptions are directly related to communication activities and need careful and sustained management focus.

Trying to meet all the rights, responsibilities, needs and wants of a large and complex stakeholder base is more than challenging. Many of these demands may be conflicting and sufficient resources are unlikely to be available. A process of prioritisation is required based on a consideration of influence and interest. This can then be used to inform and adapt service and communication strategies accordingly.

Brian Atkins book on “Total Quality Management” provides good advice on stakeholder management and is published by Wiley Blackwell ISBN 978-1-405-18659-9