

Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
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Training is the activity of providing an employee with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform her or his current job. This differs from development which is about helping people to realise their potential. Both are desirable management activities which FM's should embrace and encourage in their directly employed teams and in those of their service providers. Where budgets have been allocated to training the facility manager should ensure that such provision is not wasted but utilise it to ensure the performance of the team. This includes provisional sums allocated within outsourcing contracts.

The development of an effective training plan begins with a training needs analysis (TNA). This can be carried out for an individual, a team or the whole organisation. A TNA should begin with a careful assessment of the role in question. The job descriptions and associated people specifications should provide information on the activities to be performed and the competences required to carry them out.

An assessment of the skills of the individual or team concerned can then be compared with the required competences to highlight any skills gaps or learning requirements. This assessment can be carried out by observation or self assessment or may involve an element of testing against an agreed standard. The involvement of the individuals concerned and the opinions of their line managers or supervisors greatly improves the accuracy of such exercises.

Once training needs have been identified it is important that a plan be developed to resolve the issue. Without this the performance of the team or individual will undoubtedly fail to achieve the desired standard with consequences for all involved. No performance management action can be taken if a training need has been identified but no action taken to resolve it. Should poor performance lead to an accident or health and safety incident then the employer could be found to be negligent and face prosecution.

Learning needs can be addressed in a wide variety of ways that do not necessarily require attendance at formal training courses. On the job training, mentoring, coaching, self study or observation of role models are all highly effective learning methodologies that can be carried out for minimal expense other than the time of those involved.

Commercial training courses for facilities management are available as open courses where delegates benefit from the experience of meeting with people from other organisations. Most training providers also provide the opportunity to run such courses in house which is more cost effective and provides the opportunity to tailor the material to suit the particular needs of the organisation.

Leading training organisations in the FM sector include BIFM Training www.bifm-training.org.uk, The Asset Faculty www.theassetfaculty.com and The FM Tutor www.fmtutor.co.uk