

# Facilities Management from A to Z



Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard  
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## **T**ransformation

The term “transformation” is frequently used to describe the successful results of a change programme in Facility operations. However, the word has implications of an instant effect, a conjuring trick whereby all the old black & white problems disappear and a new Technicolor world opens up like Dorothy arriving in the Land of Oz. Sadly such instant transformations are rarely achieved. However, study of successful facilities operations suggests that sustainable transformation can be achieved over time and by degree as a result of structured and tenacious effort.

The transforming Facility Manager needs a thorough understanding of the organisation’s drivers, demands and strategies. They must understand the complexities and criticalities of change management in a corporate environment. Most importantly they must possess the vital competencies of leadership, communication and continuous improvement.

The transforming Facility Manager is a visionary leader who understands that innovation and creativity are tools that can be utilised to bring about real change but only through hard work and not with instant solutions. Case studies illustrate the importance of measuring not only the FM operation but its actual contribution to organisational success. A balanced scorecard approach can be used as a tool to support the transformation process and to benchmark best practice.

Writers and consultants who specialise in change usually focus most of their attention on the one-off step changes that have dramatic impact and cause big upheavals in the workplace. Relocation, downsizing, take-overs, outsourcing; these are all big events that need careful managing under strong leadership. The facilities manager has a crucial role to play here and can make good use of tools such as Blanchard’s “Who moved my Cheese” or William Bridges’ excellent work on “Managing Transition”.

However, delivering one of these singular events does not guarantee a sustainable level of change nor do the skills necessary to deliver such an event translate readily into the levels of management competency required to deliver a change as a continuous activity.

Organisations seeking a serious contribution from their facility management are interested in a level of continued and guaranteed improvement over time. Performance improvements in terms of customer satisfaction, quality of service and, of course, bottom line cost are highly desirable for all organisations in today’s commercial environment.

Removal of the barriers to change is akin to Bridges’ Transition Ending Zone. The objective is to “unfreeze the way things are done around here”. To create an understanding of the need for change, a commitment to some basic steps, a vision of the future and a tally of the cost of change both for individuals and the organisation. This process is depicted in the Gleicher formula:  $K \times D \times V > C$  where K is the Knowledge of first practical steps, D is Dissatisfaction with the status quo, V is a desirable Vision of the future and C is the Cost of doing something

*William Bridges has written a number of excellent books on transformational change management. One of the most useful is ‘Managing Transition’ published by Nicholas Brealey ISBN-10: 1857885414*