



# UNIT-2

## Operations and Maintenance

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

## Unit 2

### Facility Operations

#### Human Resources Management

It's becoming the norm for the facility manager to oversee a workforce comprising blue-collar, white-collar, and now green-collar employees, in an organisational setting often oriented towards white-collar professionals. Complicating matters further, a sizeable proportion of the "staff" operating under a facility manager are third-party consultants, contractors and so on. This has a tendency to result in organisational staff in a facilities management setting being somewhat overlooked and under-appreciated. For the proactive facility manager, ensuring the human resources department has a good understanding of the department's employee needs and its general management environment can be particularly challenging. Those who work in HR may understand the business, but may have little to no familiarity with the facility management department. Hence, it is up to you as a facility manager to ensure HR understands the diverse and unique needs of your department.

#### Communications

Considering all of the above, it becomes clear that the facility manager needs to demonstrate a strong awareness of general public relations and the importance of marketing their department and its services. In facilities management, successful marketing is reliant on the establishment of viable objectives.

Examples of which may include the following:

1. Increase the awareness of facility services.
2. Decrease the resistance to a particular service or set of policies and procedures.
3. Improve the image of the facility organization as a service provider.
4. Enhance customers' knowledge about facility services.
5. Disclose specific qualifications about facility services.

Marketing activities in facilities management are carried out to enhance service awareness, qualifications and knowledge, while minimising resistance to the procedures and policies of the facility department.

There are various tools available that can improve the effectiveness of your marketing and public relations activities. It is also highly advisable to ensure you produce and work in accordance with an annual public relations plan. The plan should be kept simple at first, defining which target groups you intend to reach and in which order (top management, visitors, specific employee departments -

whatever fits the company). After which, you can move on to the development of one or more simple activities that will ensure the objectives you established are reached.

In a working example, you may decide that the department's image needs to be improved, which could be achieved by providing additional training for reception staff and enhancing custodial maintenance of entrances and reception areas.

The next step - develop a customer profile for each of the department's client groups and its leader.

## Outsourcing of services or in-house staff?

### Reasons to outsource services

The prospect of outsourcing should never be considered lightly, given that shifting responsibilities off-site typically means reducing your requirements for on-site staff. Roughly translated, the livelihoods of your workers could be on the line. However, you also need to consider the bigger picture - i.e. the performance and prosperity of the entire organisation.

If you are thinking about outsourcing, the final decision must be made in accordance with the following key considerations:

- Does the service work; if it isn't broken, don't fix it!
- Does the service fit the requirements of the site?
- Is the service financially sound, or does it need a new financial model?
- Is there a sound reason for change?

Far too many businesses are guilty of implementing change simply for the sake of it. Nevertheless, you could also argue that if you don't try something new, you'll never know whether or not it works. This is precisely why outsourcing must be approached in a strategic and mindful manner, rather than going at things Gung-Ho.

### If it isn't broken, don't fix it!

If you already have members of staff handling the responsibilities you intend to outsource, it's important to first consider the benefits of keeping things as they are. Think carefully about the potential for outsourcing to improve efficiency and output, along with any potential consequences that may accompany third-party involvement.

You must also bear in mind that upon implementing an outsourcing strategy of any kind, you could radically alter the internal politics of your department. When members of the workforce suspect their

jobs could be on the line, or are considered less important than boosting the efficiency of certain operations, motivation, commitment and general output tend to suffer significantly.

### **Does the service fit the requirements of the site?**

The goal of any outsourcing initiative should be to facilitate the provision of the best possible service for the site as a whole. As such, facilities managers must have the most comprehensive knowledge of their sites, in order to make such decisions. If you genuinely believe that to outsource would have wide-reaching benefits for the site, it could be the way to go.

All businesses have a natural desire to change for the better. After all, change enables growth and development. In order to facilitate the evolution of the organization, you may need to consider services, tasks and personnel that weren't previously required. For example, your business may be required by law to improve its recycling or waste disposal practices, which may mean hiring one or more people to take care of it.

Across the board, the service assessments you carry out when considering outsourcing should be logical and fact-based. It's never advisable to make such important decisions on the basis of assumptions.

### **Is the service financially sound?**

Working as a facilities manager means constantly having to cope with a finite and often restrictive budget. Once again, therefore, the decisions you make must be based on the numbers. You can't accurately predict the future, but you should be able to make accurate financial projections and judgments accordingly. It will be up to you to determine whether the approach you take (or otherwise) is financially sound.

That said, the financial aspect of the decision must also be considered in the context of the potential benefit to the company. For example, you could save money by cutting corners on litter-picking, cleaning external areas and so on, but doing so could have a detrimental effect on the image of the business.

## Facilities operations

Facility operations includes these areas:

- Plant operations
- Energy management
- Hazardous waste management
- Recycling
- Indoor air quality
- Inventory management
- Communications and wire management
- Alterations management
- Relocation and move management
- Furniture installation
- Disaster recovery
- Maintenance and repair
- Security
- Fire and life safety

## Plant Operations

The following systems all fall under the header of plant in a typical working environment:

1. Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC)
2. Mechanical and electrical vertical and horizontal transportation
3. Major electrical
4. Emergency power
5. Plumbing

## General administrative services

### Energy Management

Acknowledgement of the importance of strategic energy management has grown exponentially over recent years. Businesses are now fundamentally aware of the criticality of both limiting their energy consumption where possible and carefully monitoring their energy usage. This serves two important purposes - one of which being to reduce operational costs, the other being to minimize the organization's carbon footprint. It's also why so many businesses worldwide are making concerted efforts to switch to 'greener' and renewable energy sources where possible.

Hence, the facility manager must play a decisive role in the development and implementation of a viable energy management program for the organization. Key elements such a programme should contain include the following:

1. The success of an energy management program will be determined by the capabilities and input of the parties involved therein:
  - Appoint an energy manager responsible to the facility manager.
  - Have two levels of committees: a steering committee chaired by a senior manager with membership of the budget director, the facility manager, and two or three line managers, and a technical committee chaired by the facility manager.
  - Appoint the senior administrative person in each department responsible for user-dependent energy management matters (for example, turning off the lights) in that department.
2. All policy is developed by the technical committee, approved by the steering committee, and signed by the CEO. In order for an energy management program to succeed, it should be viewed as an all-round management programme, rather than a facilities program.
3. Each utility should have a specific energy consumption baseline attached to it. These figures are then used to track energy consumption and record important data.
4. A hierarchy of energy management measures is implemented:
  - Capital intensive (payback less than seven years suggested).
  - Moderate cost (can be budgeted in annual budgets with no significant effect).
  - Low cost or no cost.
5. Energy management is incorporated into all designs, and all new designs are reviewed from an energy management perspective.

## Hazardous Waste Management

Hazardous waste management responsibilities incorporate several major challenges within the business environment. Examples of which include the disposal of contaminated medical waste, eliminating asbestos and safely disposing of potentially hazardous materials.

In the case of an asbestos abatement program, the following steps should be taken to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency:

1. An abatement operations and maintenance manager should be appointed, while the crew who will carry out the job must be provided with the required training.
2. It is usually deemed preferable to hire a reputable contractor, rather than establishing an in-house abatement team.
3. Hiring an environmental hygiene company to carry out independent testing.
4. Maintaining an abatement file that contains the following information:
  - Historical record of all abatement efforts.
  - Air quality reports following each abatement effort provided by the hygienist hired by the contractor to do testing.
  - Record of procedures on each abatement site.
  - Disposal record from the disposal contractor.
5. Enactment of an internal relations program for staff that is both general and site specific

## Recycling

Businesses of all shapes and sizes are now required by law to recycle as much waste as possible. Recycling is a key responsibility for the facilities manager and is only likely to continue growing in importance indefinitely.

The recycling process involves separating waste materials and ensuring they are passed on to the relevant processing centres. Waste materials suitable for recycling are typically separated into the following 10 categories:

1. Paper (newspaper, white paper, all other)
2. Aluminium cans
3. Glass bottles and jars (clear, green, brown)
4. Scrap metal
5. Styrofoam
6. Computers and electronic equipment
7. Paint cartridges
8. Clothing
9. Waste oil
10. All other

## Indoor Air Quality

The quality of the air in any facility will have a marked impact on the health, wellbeing and general performance of the workforce. In order to ensure sufficient air quality at all times, facilities managers must oversee the cleanliness and general maintenance of HVAC systems across the organisation. Ducts filled with dirt, dust, fungi and allergens are among the most serious threats to worker health and safety.

## Inventory Management

There are two reasons why it is important for the facility manager to maintain an accurate inventory. First of all, facility managers find it convenient to have an accurate and up to date count of what they manage. Secondly, it is important to know what furnishings and equipment of what vintage are on the books, in order to allow for proper depreciation.

More often than not, inventory management rules and policies will not be drawn up within the facility department. Instead, those who oversee procurement and purchasing will implement business-wide policies and procedures.

## Communications and Wire Management

In years gone by, communications and wire management in the field of facility management typically meant little more than paying a phone bill. Today, it's among the most dynamic responsibilities for the facility manager, due to the computerisation of businesses and digitalisation of communication systems in general.

There's a remarkable communication revolution going on right now, which is transforming the way the world does business. To such an extent that millions of workers who would previously be required to work on-site are now carrying out key functions from remote locations. The growing complexity of communications and wire management in the workplace is increasing the pressure on facilities managers and their departments.

## Alterations Management

One of the most common and satisfying functions within facilities management is general alterations management. To such an extent that around 55% of facility managers say they're working on alterations on a continuous basis. The reason being that an office facelift is always welcome, as is an upgraded workspace or a freshly renovated cafeteria.

Effective alterations management is governed by several standards, which ensure the alterations are well managed and benefit the organisation in general:

1. Space, so you don't move walls six inches to suit someone's ego.
2. Materials, so you don't use mahogany panelling where drywall will do.
3. Construction practice, so that you don't build in bookshelves where a free-standing bookshelf will suffice.
4. Layout, so you're not reconfiguring an office because someone wants his back to the door.
5. Engineering, so that you are not providing eight electrical outlets in a room but are providing proper access to electrical and data outlets.

### Relocation and Move Management

One of the most challenging responsibilities that falls within the field of facility management is relocation and move management. In fact, it has a tendency to be one of the biggest challenges any business can face. Nevertheless, businesses often have little choice but to relocate, when for any reason an existing space becomes unfit for purpose.

In the event of relocation, large and small businesses alike will hire specialist moving companies (and workers accordingly) to handle the physical transportations of furniture and other assets. This important function will be overseen by the facility manager from start to finish.

Managing a successful move involves the following:

1. Major inter- and intrabuilding move
2. Moves to support the alterations program
3. Moves to relocate facilities stock
4. Service-order moves
5. Delivery of supplies within the institution
6. Fixed moving commitments (e.g., two movers to the loading dock, one mover delivering copy paper)

### Procedures

There are three important principles that must be remembered at all stages when managing a move or relocation project:

1. The chaos of relocation can significantly compromise security, calling for extra precautions.
2. Do your best to plan and execute a calm and smooth move, to minimize stress and anxiety.
3. For all critical parts of the move, have a backup plan in mind in case things go wrong.

Ensuring a smooth and successful move means ensuring the right members of staff and third-parties are involved in the project. That said, the success of the project will ultimately be determined by the quality and consistency of the supervision you provide. Leave nothing to chance, instead planning everything in the most meticulous detail possible.

## Furniture Installation

When one or more pieces of furniture have been installed in a workplace, they become important building elements like all others. This means they also need to be inspected and assessed on a regular basis, as part of a wider programme of preventative maintenance. From cleaning to repairs to replacements where necessary, care and attention should be taken to keep furniture in good working order.

In addition, it's also a good idea to plan for both replacement and any maintenance jobs that cannot be performed in house. For example, professional upholstery cleaning may call for the services of outside help, who you should already have on file to bring in as needed.

### Further Reading: