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Facilities management: Part 1 of 2

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Organisations are beginning to recognise the strategic value of having well-managed facilities

THE role of operating, maintaining and managing the facilities and support services of organisations has many descriptions — among them corporate services, operations support services, workplace services and asset maintenance management — and they differ from organisation to organisation.

But the profession that probably best represents these functions is facilities management.

The value of facilities management

The practice of facilities management is beginning to be appreciated and recognised by organisations as a value-add and a business advantage.

Organisations are beginning to realise that the built-facilities and support services represent substantial investments that help to support their core business activities.

Facilities management is responsible for the bulk of an organisation's operating expenses; operating facilities systems such as air-conditioning, lighting and ventilation; and delivering services such as security, janitorial and maintenance activities.

Facilities management, therefore, has the potential to contribute to an organisation's bottom line by ensuring the uptime of all facilities, that the workplace is complying with mandatory requirements, and that the work environment is safe, comfortable and conducive for enhancing the productivity of the occupants.



Facilities management helps to ensure a workplace is conducive for enhancing the productivity of the occupants.

The practice of facilities management

The key value of facilities management is that it takes care of the non-core business functions, freeing organisations to focus on their core business.

Facilities management practices intertwine management and engineering, enabling the integration of the workplace with its occupants and their goals.

The organisation's demands are translated into expected service levels.

Facilities management provides the services that meet these key performance indicators that are agreed mutually between the organisation and the facilities management company.

By making a partnership possible, a facilities management company can contribute towards achieving the organisation's strategic objectives.

The demand for facilities management

With rapid advancements in technology and the increasing need to comply with regulatory requirements — such as workplace safety and health, and energy and water conservation in buildings — facilities management is capable of supporting organisations to keep pace with the changes and enhance their effectiveness and efficiency.

Facilities management also has an important role in supporting government initiatives towards going green, which involves reducing carbon footprints, promoting sustainability and other ways to protecting the environment.

Facilities management involves far more than just a maintenance function.

It is now valued as a potentially significant economic factor that adds value to organisations when their facilities are well managed.

Tomorrow: Careers in facilities management and how professionals can transit into the profession

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