

DEVELOPMENT
NEWS

The Netherlands can be our inspiration in FM

Pavel Iványi

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GERMANY



A visit to: WTO, Geneva Light and transparent

By Sandra Hoffmann

Last year, the World Trade Organization (WTO) moved into the newly built extension to their headquarters on the banks of Lake Geneva. Designed by the Stuttgart-based architecture firm Wittfoht, the new building – the first to have an all-glass facade – meets the Swiss energy standard “Minergie-P”. Lighting is also an important part of the energy concept.

At first glance, the building seems to hover above the ground. The new annex to the WTO headquarters in Geneva is a long transparent cube, which rests on an earthbound base. The new building blends in harmoniously with the surrounding parkland on the shores of Lake Geneva. It keeps a respectful distance from the main building, the Centre William Rappard, which was officially opened in 1926 and also features an adjoining conference centre from the year 1998. A glass footbridge connects the two buildings. The ground floor of the extension accommodates the lobby and a restaurant

with a terrace. The upper floors are used for offices and administration.

Measures to improve energy efficiency were instrumental in the planning of the building. Completed in 2012, the new construction is the first all-glass facade building which complies with the applicable Swiss energy standard “Minergie-P”. This was possible because Wittfoht Architekten developed a sophisticated energy concept which includes, e.g., making use of the lake water as an energy carrier and coupling it with an efficient building control system that also includes heat recovery.

The lighting concept implemented at the 300 office workplaces also contributes its part: The LED luminaires chosen by the Stuttgart-based architecture firm consume less energy than conventional lamps. A joint visit to a reference building of luminaire manufacturer Nimbus also contributed to the decision-making process. “Together with WTO representatives, in 2010 we visited the new Unilever Germany headquarters in Hamburg’s HafenCity – an even larger office building which Nimbus fitted with LED luminaires. It was especially the low power consumption of our LED lights that convinced them the most”, explains Nimbus Sales Director Stefan Huml, to which Jens Wittfoht adds: “Nimbus’ LED luminaires integrated perfectly into our plans, not only visually but also energetically.”

LEDs save energy

Nimbus delivered a total of 447 ceiling, wall, suspended and floor-standing luminaires. In particular, there are now 165 Office Air LED floor-standing luminaires with presence detectors and ambient light sensors (PDLs) installed in the building. According to the manufacturer, the potential energy savings are in the order of 80 percent compared to conventional workplace luminaires. “At 0.5 Watt, their stand-by

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Comment

Global Corporate Services – Making the simple complex or is the simple becoming complex?

Kenny McCrae FRICS

Chairman, Cluttons Global Facilities Management JLT Dubai



No matter where you manage the facilities of a building, the basic operating procedures and practices remain the same; although, all are subject to some degree on the quality, cost and risk requirements of the client and ultimately the cultural environment of the assets involved.

As the head of Cluttons expanding GFM business and being part of the Global Corporate facilities management industry for the past 10 years, I have had an in-depth insight into the behind the scenes activities of many large global corporate companies, with their varying requirements, demands, strengths and weaknesses. In addition, I have experienced how various real estate advisors and managers tackle these large complex and often over demanding clients.

It has been interesting to see the skill level and application of facilities management across the globe, with the one common factor being the professional pride and work ethic of the facility managers, no matter what

the role level of the individual is within the organization. At an operational global corporate facilities management level, there is a consistency of manager, whether they are in China, India, APAC, MEA or mainland Europe. The work undertaken by these tactical and on-site managers often accounts for the majority of the facilities management support to the client, no matter what main service provider holds the global contract.

Where the complexity comes in is the integration of the corporate real estate adviser, who more often than not, attempts to ‘wow’ the client with over sophisticated tools, processes and ‘intuitive’ software. These may well be great decision tools for portfolio analysis, acquisition and disposal but are often limited in many ways in adding value to the application of FM.

Good processes and appropriate technology are fundamental partners

to delivering an effective and efficient global facilities management service providing support to dedicated management teams. A fundamental part of the Facility Managers role is to walk their buildings, interact with their clients and control the environment, however more often than not they become slaves to reporting and tied to their laptops to meet global reporting mandates.

As strategic global corporate advisers, it is our number one role to find the balance between people, process and place, leaving the facility managers to do what they do best and that is to make the complex look simple whilst keeping our clients informed in an industry where the service is delivered by people.

CLUTTONS

Light and transparent

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consumption is below the requirements of the applicable Ecodesign directive”, says Huml. Control via the presence detector and ambient light sensor reduces consumption even further: the built-in ambient light sensor continuously measures the ambient light and makes ongoing adjustments to achieve a constant level of brightness. The presence detector switches the luminaire off just a few minutes after an employee leaves the workplace. Upon returning to the workplace, the light will automatically come on again. In addition to the floor-standing luminaires, Nimbus is to install 140 Modul Q 64 ceiling luminaires, 69 Air Maxx LED 250 wall luminaires, as well as 30 Modul R 256 XL, 17 Modul R 460 XL, 16 Modul R 120 XL and ten L 120 suspended luminaires: “These numbers make the WTO extension one of the largest office buildings in Switzerland lit by LED luminaires”, emphasizes Huml.

Transparency supports lighting concept

With regard to the interior of the building, the rooms exude a quiet, calm and open atmosphere. “The Nimbus LED luminaires contribute to the overall atmosphere. The aesthetics and light colour of the Nimbus luminaires fit in wonderfully with our concept. The response from the staff has also been very positive”, notes architect Wittfoht. In order to fill the space with as much natural light as possible in addition to the artificial light, the office interior has a transparent design. The interior structure is composed of all-glass structures which provide an view to the outdoor space. The All-Glass System 3400 from Strähle Raum-Systeme GmbH was used to create transparent spaces inside the building for office spaces, conference rooms and think tanks. With the low height of the floor and ceiling profiles, the large glass elements which are interconnected through silicone



Small splashes of colour add a touch of colourful creativity to the otherwise modest but delicate colour scheme.

Photo: Brigida González

joints alone, and the flush door elements with integrated side panels in Fineline oak, the Strähle solution met the desire of architects for formally restrained, homogeneous surfaces. The door leaf and the side panels were matched in such a way that the door elements are perceived as a unit within the glass wall. At the same time, according to the manufacturer, the system complies with the sound insulation value of $D_i > 35$ dB required in this project.

Furthermore, the door elements assume a central role in the office ventilation. The air from the office and conference spaces is extracted through passive overflow elements concealed within the door side panels. The interiors of the glass partition walls contain integrated curtains, which are in harmony with the carpets. Blinds are also provided if required.

New flexibility and openness

The office layout not only provides a variable mix of individual offices and open team areas – for easier communication and adaptation to future



Offices, conference rooms and room-in-room systems were implemented as transparent spaces inside the building. This helps support the open, clear optics.

Photo: Brigida González



View into a meeting cube: glass walls provide transparency; individual areas are fitted with curtains for privacy. The LED luminaires provide energy-efficient artificial lighting, if necessary.

Photo: Brigida González



Open-plan lounge areas and spiral staircases encourage internal communication.

Photo: Brigida González

requirements – but represents a radical change to WTO's strict tradition of having individual offices. At the same time, according to Strähle, it also allowed reducing the initially foreseen five floors down to four, which ultimately benefits the urban integration of the new building. The open-plan team areas arranged along the facades are designed for a maximum of 12 people. In between those areas there are individual offices and meeting rooms, which are separated by all-glass partition walls. The workspaces in the open-plan area are screened by cabinets. For longer telephone calls, a room-in-room “think tank” stands in the middle of each floor to be freely used as a small, bright retreat room. Moreover, the central area of the

building also houses the building's access spaces and all infrastructural facilities as well as open lounge areas. The latter, in addition to the spiral staircases connecting the floors, help to promote internal communication.

“The employees regard the transparency of the offices and the areas created specifically for communication very positively”, comments Thomas Kindsvater, the project manager at Wittfoht Architekten responsible for the expansion building. WTO is already convinced of the benefits of a flexible room concept. Initial adjustments required for organisational reasons could be carried out quickly and easily during normal working hours.

At a glance:

Client:	World Trade Organization, WTO, Geneva
Architect:	Wittfoht Architekten, Stuttgart
Luminaires:	Nimbus
Partition walls:	Strähle Raum Systeme GmbH



Odense's Planning and Building Department and its Eureka moment: "It has nothing to do with buildings!"

By Inger Ravn

A development project in Odense municipality started with its focus on optimization of the municipality's existing building stock. However, the process rapidly gathered speed and new direction to include the possibility of radical organizational changes. "We had serious aha-experiences," the people involved in Odense municipality say. The background is the surprising answers derived from a space management analysis. Among other things, the belief that the buildings should be the decisive feature of the optimization process came under serious challenge.

The first project

"In the first small limited project, we had a specific building area for which we wanted help to optimize the level of use of the area available. In other words, how we should locate our co-workers in the existing building stock to optimal effect," says Pia Bay, office manager for Odense municipality's Planning and Building Department.

The municipality rapidly realized that the process needed a neutral facilitator with special professional expertise to be able to manage the task, including tools to analyze and draw conclusions. The municipality therefore engaged Inger Ravn from Space Pro, which has specialized in the use of space management tools. The first task was small and limited, but gradually, as the results of the work emerged, the project developed, because the results of the analysis were clear: the reality looked somewhat different from the picture of the world that both the co-workers and the management had assumed.

Space management gave a 360-degree assessment

Johnny Boye Busch, office manager for Odense's Planning and Building Department, says, "We knew that space management was a good tool for practical organization and handling of the project. As the process developed, we recognized that it could also be used for a 360-degree assessment of the whole organization." The assessment, which included interviews with all co-workers, resulted in new insights into

the departmental management. The organization here had a self-image as an administration consisting of caseworkers who primarily worked one-on-one with citizens. It was therefore a considerable surprise when it turned out that 50% of the co-workers never had contact with a citizen and those co-workers who did meet citizens only did so for 10% of their time. The picture of the organization that emerged was therefore completely different from the self-image that co-workers and management had had.

"It was an eye-opener for us to get documentation showing that THIS is what everyday work and reality actually look like, contrasted with what we had imagined," says Johnny Boye Busch and continues: "Suddenly we saw how fragmented the world of the individual co-workers really is. How they function, act and use the rooms. We believed one thing, but the reality turned out to be something else.

It's nothing to do with the buildings

The new insights thereby turned the entire process on its head. Now the job was no longer about locating the co-workers in the existing building stock. Pia Bay says: "Suddenly it became crystal-clear to us: it's not got a thing to do with the buildings. It's about how we create an organization that is fit for tomorrow and so flexible that we are always in tune with developments. After that we can start to think about what that requires in terms of buildings."

The people behind the new projects point out that space management is not a goal in itself. They agree that space management should be used as an important tool in the task of creating a dynamic organization that can be developed in the desired direction.

New possibilities – new perspectives

The new pictures of reality form the future basis for a radical development process in Odense Municipality. An organizational development for which the municipality has just taken the first small steps. An organizational development where the essence is not how the building stock is used optimally but rather put the questions:

- What are our goals?
- What sort of organization do we want to be?
- How shall we achieve our goals?

Another cardinal point is how to create an everyday approach that supports the planned informal meeting. The claim is that planned informal meetings strengthen innovation and creative idea development. The meetings that the municipality has in mind are both internal meetings and meetings involving citizens and co-workers. In the same way, experience shows that these types of meetings can contribute to supporting the leadership role in a different way.

Never put a sofa where it isn't needed

Johnny Boye Busch says about the leadership basis in Odense municipality: "It rests on two pillars: social capital and management of effects. In everything that we do, we need to take account of the two parameters of equal value – because neither one works without the other." So when Odense municipality, like other municipalities and business in general, continually needs to optimize, it requires co-worker involvement. This means that when the municipality sets out to establish informal meeting places with groups of sofas and bar-stool arrangements, it needs to be on the basis of considerations that there really is a need for sofas and a bar stool. The counter-example is a case when the municipality tried to change the arrangement of office environments and set up sofa environments. The design was excellent and the photographers glowed with pleasure. But according to Johnny Boye Busch, success sadly proved elusive: "Many months later, we could see at a glance that the sofas still looked completely new, without wear. Why? Because we had introduced the changes without looking at how the co-workers actually worked and what their real needs were!" An elementary lesson in observation, which showed that

it is vitally important to include an organization, its working rhythm and its exact needs before changes are made.

New challenges provoke many managers

The current development projects have not gone far enough that concrete dilemmas have materialized. And yet, it does involve changing the wheel on a car while it's moving... And there have indeed already been strong reactions. The group behind the project have experienced how processes like this can show hitherto unsuspected sides of colleagues – good and bad. The strong reactions can be explained by the fact that when a process of change is under way, it means that there are also changes to the physical boundaries of the functional authority of the individual. The managers can feel challenged in their leadership – in their authority and their territory.

Need for courageous managers

This leads us on to what it takes to be a leader and stand at the forefront of radical organizational change. The current representatives from Odense municipality can quickly agree that it needs courage, strength, humility and respect to be a good leader in projects like these. This also means that as a manager one needs to lead one's co-workers and metaphorically have the courage to stand naked. In short, to put oneself and one's leadership at risk. Pia Bay says: "It is about having the courage to say: 'I don't have all the answers – but we must go and find them together'" and she continues: "One of our greatest tasks now is to create security in insecurity. One can do that by approaching the issue with humility, courage and respect". Many managers and co-workers seeking security in this kind of situation look for previously tested concepts and manuals on "How to do it". But they just do not exist in processes like this. Odense municipality needs to make the first steps in this virgin territory. Conversely, the project is an interesting and exciting challenge for creative and innovative co-workers.

Now this isn't about money...

Even though modernization and radical organizational change are the turning point in this discussion, it is no secret that the finances in the project are also of interest. Capitalizing on an organizational development process is difficult, if not impossible. On the other hand, it is possible to capitalize on the effect in the municipality's first project for one of the specialist administrations. Here, the calculations show the potential for a saving of 20-25% purely from the use of space. "This is fantastic news", says Johnny Boye Busch, continuing: "It gives us

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Odense's Planning and Building Department and its Eureka moment: "It has nothing to do with buildings!"

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the chance to achieve a substantial increase in quality in the building stock. We can now move from big and cozy to slick and professional – without extra investments." If one dares to extrapolate the calculation to cover the entire building stock in Odense municipality, where the cost of "residence" is estimated to be around DKK 1.2 billion, one reaches a financial saving of about DKK 200 million. And this is purely for the physical environment and core values.

Thus, there is a convincing financial benefit. The focus has changed during the development process from dealing with concrete savings to the

clear financial profit being used to invest in developing an innovative and different framework which again creates increased efficiency and more satisfied citizens and co-workers.

A profit with more value than dollars and cents

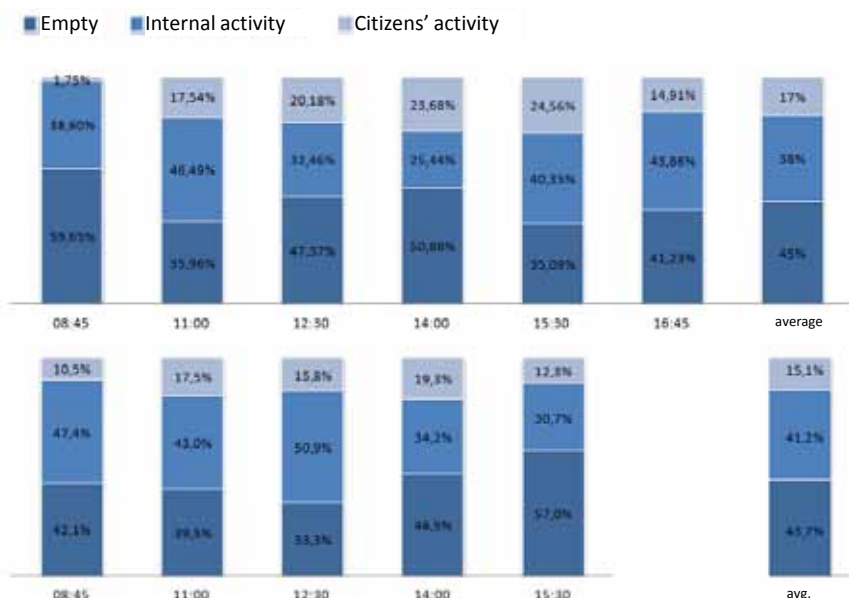
In the project, everyone agrees that the benefit from this process is that the municipality has achieved something quite different and much more than just a financial saving. The municipality gets the chance to use the existing resources to modernize the whole organization for the benefit of the citizens. A modernization that is said to give a good opportunity to

recruit and retain attractive staff. To achieve greater efficiency, happier co-workers with fewer sick days and a substantial financial benefit for the municipality at the same time.

Where does the drive come from?

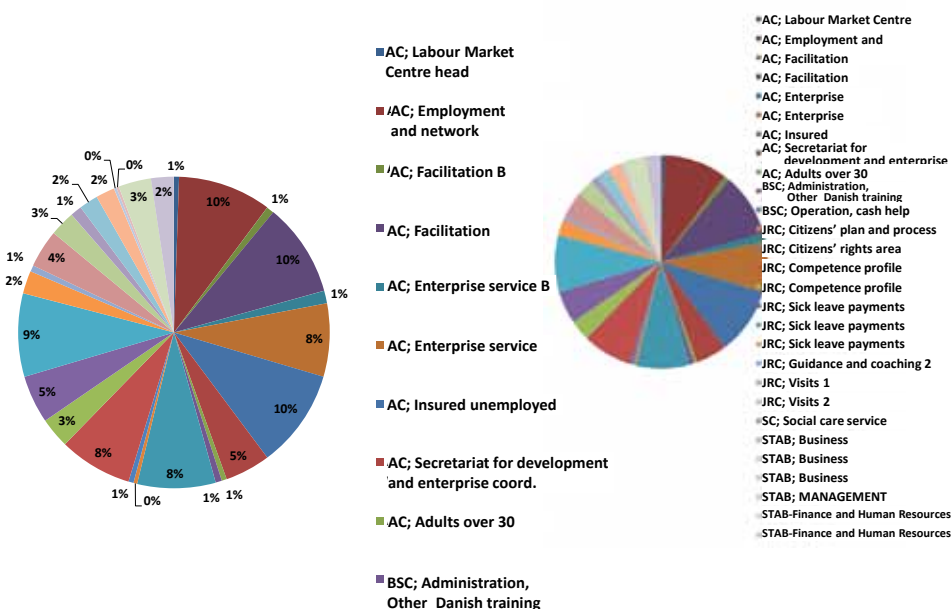
So what is the real impetus that makes this group drive the projects through? The answer comes swiftly. "When we get excited by working with this, it's because a modern property unit like ours in 2013 is an active part of the organizational development of the municipality. The process has not just been an aha-experience for the administrative units directly affected – it has been an aha-experience for us too. To see our new roles in the process and discover the unique opportunities to help create tomorrow's public administration, that's great," concludes Johnny Boye Busch.

Fact 1



Fact 2

Area: 6955.8 m2 with 28 different departments at one address



Fact 3

10 recommendations to the manager during radical organizational changes:

- Take the lead yourself – and set the framework
- Don't be frame of exposing yourself as a leader
- Show strength
- Show courage
- Show humility
- Admit that you don't have all the answers
- Respect that changes take time
- Use energy and resources for communication
- Create positive ambassadors
- Use an external facilitator

Fact 4

5 key features of SpacePro

- Established in 2008 by Inger Ravn, MAA architect, who is the owner and primary driver in the company.
- Solves problems across the country from the office in Carlsberg Town in Valby.
- Has carried out projects in recent years for a large number of private and public operations.
- Key competences relate to space management, development and optimization of space with advanced tools

The (business) thinking process is creative, empathetic and commercial with an element of holism.

Fact 5

Inger Ravn, SpacePro, on the project:

When the project in Odense started, we all agreed not to limit ourselves: we wanted to develop the project and see what it could bring in terms of new thinking about the way to look at buildings, square meters and the use of the rooms. I must say it gave us some inspiring experiences – I myself had some aha-moments during the process. The project group often saw things I hadn't seen myself but which we discovered by investigations and analyses. We drew on new methods – in particular the mapping of the organizational part gave insights and partial explanations of why the administration has organized and located itself as it has. I enjoyed the inspiration and the ambitious ideas which came back from the project group.

Facility managers can encourage healthy behavior among staff

By Peter Bekkering

Facility managers have various tools at their disposal to influence healthy behavior among the employees of an organization. This involves looking at both the outside and the inside of the building and at both hard and soft services. According to Mark Mobach, however, this must always be based on thorough research into actual behavior and usage.

As a facility manager, how can you encourage healthy behavior among employees? Before Mark Mobach, senior lecturer in Facility Management at the NoorderRuimte Centre of Applied Research and Innovation at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen, addresses that question, he first emphasizes that a building and its associated organization do not stand alone. I was speaking to him in the context of his forthcoming new book 'Healthy Cities'. "According to Healthy Cities, an organization is a subsystem of the city and operates within the city. At the same time, organizations have always been a key factor in determining the structure of the city. They are therefore closely interconnected." In addition, he distinguishes between the inside and the outside of a building. "The question of how to use the outside of the building to encourage healthy behavior is both fluid and viscous. Fluid because you have to think in terms of networks, and viscous because you can easily become bogged down in decision-making processes. Take exercise, for instance. You can promote exercise as an organization by offering discounts on gyms and by encouraging employees to come to work on their bikes instead of by car. In that case, however, you need the help of the government, which can influence people's choices through infrastructure: positively by creating cycle paths, or negatively by making car parking more difficult. You can see that large organizations are already giving this a lot of thought. For example, at the University Medical Center Groningen, where the hospital and the city council have been consciously looking at the desired flows of traffic and the consequences for cycle paths, bus routes and parking spaces."

'Make salads cheaper and chips more expensive'

Soft and hard services

In terms of using the inside of the building to encourage healthy behavior among employees, Mobach says there are currently two main themes in the literature. "Using FM services (soft services) to persuade people to choose healthy food, and using the building itself (hard services) to encourage exercise. The first one you can influence with pricing – by making salads cheaper and chips more expensive – but that's not enough in itself, because people have ingrained patterns of behavior. The challenge for facility managers with regard to catering is therefore to package healthy products in such a way that they have the same appeal as other products. In addition, people must learn to set boundaries for themselves: in terms of work (don't work yourself to death) and food (don't eat too many unhealthy products). Perhaps this needs to begin at school: if you teach children to set boundaries for themselves, they will do the same when they're adults."

In terms of hard services – the building – it is mainly a question of encouraging exercise. Mobach: "The World Health Organization makes a distinction between light exercise (walking, dancing, cycling) and intensive exercise (mountain hiking, playing sport)." But can employees do the latter type of exercise? Mobach: "If you want people to do that during working hours, you will first need to ensure that sports facilities are available during that time. In addition, you will have to address the prevailing culture in a company, given that the company will probably expect people to work during working hours and not play sport... that's understandable if employees work solidly from nine to five, but once you let go of fixed working hours you have to learn to adopt a different approach to how people spend their time. I expect it will be a long while before the current generation making the decisions comes around to



that way of thinking."

Encouraging people to take the stairs

One area in which there are definitely gains to be made is in encouraging people to walk up stairs and dissuading them from using the elevator. Mobach: "I believe in the magic of design. There are many design principles which can give the end user a nudge, as it were, towards doing the right thing. I mean, for example, positioning and sightlines, but also the use of materials, which can give a staircase a 'wow' factor."

The same applies to galleries. "On top of Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy there is a beautiful abbey church with galleries and an inner courtyard. Why can't we do the same in schools and university buildings? At the moment I spend my days walking down enclosed corridors. Why not put them on the outside of the building, and why not position the building in such a way that the wind generally blows from that side, so I can enjoy walking along there? And in such a way that I can get the full benefit of the daylight when I walk there?"

Mobach looks out of his window in the university building on the Groningen campus. "I wonder why there are no gardens here that we can enjoy. When I look out of the window right now I mainly see concrete and asphalt, but you could create some fantastic paths in this space that would allow people to enjoy the natural environment. Nature is right on our doorstep, but is not accessible. Why don't we create an environment that invites and encourages people to go for walks, i.e. to exercise? Facility managers have a role to play here – via park management – but so do local authorities, because they are responsible for infrastructure and public spaces. We shall be working on this shortly as part of the Zernike Campus Living Lab."

End user behavior and usage

But is that all you need to do? Mobach returns to the subject of stairs. "In 2007, research was carried out at the VU University in Amsterdam into the extent to which you can persuade people to take the stairs. The initial results were positive: the use of stairs seemed to increase if staircases were directly visible and if you

put up encouraging posters showing how many calories you could burn by taking the stairs. There was also a small positive difference in blood values."

Subsequent research, however, showed that in practice people were more stubborn: "It was apparent that it is really difficult to get people to exercise. I suspect this is because too little attention is paid in the design of a building to how people behave in a building and to the needs of the end user. Why do people take a particular route? There are opportunities to study this behavior, e.g. via RFID tokens or cell phones, even though you must, of course, take privacy concerns into account. This type of research can show how people move in a building. It may, for example, emerge that a specific area is not being used in the way in which it was intended in the design. In practice, however, this type of usage is seldom evaluated. This is because we still need to learn to involve end users in the design process and because we all too often use assumptions without testing them. My message to facility managers is this: when designing or renovating a building, talk to end users, look through their eyes, surprise yourself and learn from their experiences. And pay attention to the details! 'The devil is in the detail!'

The type of testing depends to a large extent on the user group. "Take the Martini Hospital in Groningen, for instance, where 'way finding' was an important issue. The students there gave patients a microphone and made an inventory of their experiences." Mobach considers it important that organizations should maintain a connection with the world of education: "We have set up the Facility Management Research Network The Netherlands (FM-ReNN), which represents all the LOOFD (National Facility Management Education Council) degree programs. Organizations need to enter into a long-term relationship with these programs, because the knowledge that is being developed there, and also through practical research, will be of benefit to them." Mobach cites an example. The Hanze University of Applied Sciences is currently carrying

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out research at an old people's home in Groningen, which involves measuring how many employees take the stairs and how many take the elevator. This study is looking into the suitability of the design, but also into the reasons why people choose the stairs or the elevator. "From the discussions with the people concerned, it is clear that employees often take the elevator because it is a moment of rest in a day in which they are constantly standing and walking. This is why it is so important that facility managers should look closely at the user group and the nature of the work, because, of course, the same reasoning would not apply to office staff." Mobach is currently working in conjunction with the departments of interior design and spatial arts. "I am really excited about it, because following our diagnosis they can take practical steps, e.g. in terms of the use of color. We can then take baseline measurements and use follow-up measurements to see to what extent these practical steps have actually influenced user behavior, so that it becomes a learning system."

Personality

To find the correct, 'healthy' match between an employee and their workplace, you can look at architectural measures, but you can also go one step further, according to Mobach: you can look at the personality of employees. "Take, for instance, the distinction between introverts and extroverts. Introverts like to close themselves away, enjoy peace and quiet and thus prefer a cellular office. Extroverts, on the other hand, like to communicate a lot and thus need places in which they can do that. The design must therefore be able to meet the needs of both groups while minimizing their impact on each other."

Research is currently being carried out in the UK into the effect of open-plan, dazzling, noisy, communicative office designs on introverts, given that these people thrive better in a quiet environment. This diversity of personalities requires a similar diversity in office workplaces. All too often, organizations draw up a blueprint and anyone who does not fit in is simply forced to adapt. These organizations, however, do not realize that this may be at the expense of employee performance. The follow-up question is even more interesting, says Mobach: "Do employees choose the type of workplace that is 'healthy' for them? We are studying that at the moment. What I find interesting about the whole discussion of new ways of working is that the focus is on productivity instead of on culture. 'Everything is new, everything is different', is something we hear all the time, but we then go on to measure labor productivity using a factor from the days of Taylorism and Fordism: production per



TNT head office. Architecture: Paul de Ruiter Architects. Photography: Alexander van Berge.

worker per unit of time."

Culture

According to Mobach, more emphasis should be placed on culture. "This is important because we still have entrenched ideas about what can and cannot be called 'working'. For example, middle management often finds it difficult to let go of the idea that 'being present equates to working'. But employees themselves often still have a very traditional work ethic. You can allow your work to impact on your private life, but not the other way round. People are often not yet 'feeling' the freedom promised by the new ways of working."

Moreover, in certain sectors it is difficult to measure the impact of an office environment on performance. Does R&D staff have better ideas in a new environment, or is that the result of other factors? Mobach: "The only things you can look at are process indicators such as structure, process and results." Mobach therefore advocates that in the new work culture the focus should be less on presence and more on results. This does lead, however, to new process issues, such as corporate identity. How important is it that results-driven employees with no fixed working hours or location should nonetheless feel part of an organization? Where does their loyalty lie, and how do you even measure that? A follow-up question is to what extent does a sense of belonging and a corporate identity lead to better results, quantitatively and qualitatively.

'We need to learn to involve end users in the design process'

Opinions continue to be relevant, says Mobach, but only in relation to actual behavior and usage. "Take waiting time, for instance. In reality, this might be five minutes, but it is interesting to see how you can influence the perception of waiting time by the way a room is furnished, e.g. reading materials, a table at which people can sit, the positioning of chairs etc. In the same way, you can also study employees: by observing

their actual behavior and establishing a link with their performance. Facility managers must compare actual behavior and usage with perceived behavior and satisfaction and then, based on the results, set up the context – i.e. the working environment – in such a way that people feel empowered."

All too often, the implementation of a good design idea is considered to be final step in the process. Mobach cites the example of the Alzheimer's Garden in the De Stelle nursing home in Oostburg in Zeelandic Flanders, which is equipped with leaning supports, seats, non-toxic plants and a vegetable garden. "It is beautiful and inspiring. But there is no data on who uses it (clients, visitors), when and how often. This is a missed opportunity, because with that information you could demonstrate that this is not just an inspiring idea, but that it actually works; it might even be copied on a national scale. Moreover, it would give the facility manager powerful evidence with which to justify the investment to management. This reasoning applies to a garden like this, but also, for example, to investment in workplaces and attractive staircases."

Healthy offices

In this context, it is also important that facility managers ensure that employees are provided with healthy offices. But what is the best way to approach that? Mobach: "Firstly by looking at whether the office matches the individual characteristics of the employees (the preferences associated with their personalities, their upbringing and their ability to do their job) and secondly by ensuring that it matches the nature of the work. In theory, providing a lot of daylight is a good thing, but it's pointless if it means that employees can't do their job. A good example of this is the work rooms of the painters at the Koninklijke Tichelaar porcelain company in Makkum. There they have deliberately chosen to have large windows facing north, so that they will always have daylight, but never direct sunlight. In general, however, there is still too little thought given to such considerations. The same also applies to the alignment

between people and departments. You very rarely see any thought being given to this in the layout of offices." He mentions a positive exception to this, Shell's Research & Technology Center in Amsterdam. "There they conducted a social network analysis, in which they looked into who, in practice, was the main source of information for colleagues and who maintained connections with other groups. They then designed the offices accordingly. The 'wicked problem' of changes in dynamics, e.g. the arrival of new people, is difficult or impossible to resolve by modifications to the design, as they can turn the layout completely upside down." To overcome this, Mobach advocates the use of side-bearing structures, for example, during construction and workplace design: "This gives you optimum flexibility in terms of your ability to change the layout."

Future working hours

But how many hours will employees actually spend in the workplace in the future? Mobach: "Assuming that you can work from anywhere, people will seek out the places where they feel most comfortable, unless they are constrained by social conventions. Personally, I sometimes resent that I can't buy a pair of jeans on a Thursday morning because I'm at work, while after a week of working from home I start to feel uncomfortable, because I want to see my colleagues. I suspect that conventions like these will become increasingly irrelevant for future generations, partly thanks to the rise of video conferencing." Mobach expects that employees will increasingly see the city as a workplace. "The third place is booming. And not so much the third place as a location offered by an external supplier (Seats2Meet etc.), but the third place in the sense that you can work anywhere." In addition, Mobach anticipates that the home workplace will become increasingly important and that the office workplace will continue to shrink. "At the same time, the city is not just becoming a workplace, the office workplace is also becoming increasingly like a city. A bustling, lively meeting place where employees like to go when they want to be inspired. Their use of this environment will depend to a large extent on their personality. Introverts will have less need of a vibrant office workplace and will probably work more from home. The challenge for facility managers then becomes to create a place in the office where introverted employees also feel at home, given that an organization needs both types of people." Mobach stresses that his reflections relate primarily to a small segment of the market. "A lot of organizations will continue to work in traditional cellular or group offices for the time being."

Mobach also foresees another development: as a result of employees avoiding rush hours and seeking greater harmony with their personal lives, people will be present in the workplace within

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Open plan offices – up for debate

Conferences Work organization methods are evolving. Those in charge of the work space realize it and are taking part by rethinking the layout to stay closer to the new expectations of management and collaborators. So, it is natural that this topic has been at the heart of no less than three conferences at Bureaux Expo 2014, conferences where the “edict” of open spaces was challenged

Are we witnessing an evolution in work organization, leading to a rethink on space planning? Or is it the office layout which is transforming the way employees collaborate? At the moment, it is difficult to say. The fact remains, over recent years, both aspects have greatly changed. “Open plan offices are ubiquitous,” states Chantal Waquant, member of ANDRH (French National Association of Human Resource Managers), and speaker at the inaugural Arseg conference at Bureaux Expo, entitled “New work methods: a trump

card for Work Environment Managers?” She recalls that “those in charge have, from the beginning, privileged open plan offices in order to maximize the area and minimize costs, but especially to improve communication among workers. An evolution all the more significant since working in a project-style manner is widespread”. However, the limits of these workplace prairies have long been known. Dominique Delattre, operations manager at the French telecommunications company SFR, warns “we wanted to develop



Facility managers can encourage healthy behavior among staff

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a compressed timeframe. “The majority of employees will predominantly come into work within a specific short period, e.g. from ten in the morning until three in the afternoon: after the morning rush hour and before the evening rush hour, home in time for tea with the kids. The key question then becomes: what do you do with the office between three o’clock in the afternoon and ten o’clock the following morning? This means that facility managers must look at security, but also at the multi-purpose usage of the office space by third parties during the off-peak hours.”

Role of HR

There is still a role for HR in this changing world with its different approaches to the workplace. Mobach: “Firstly, HR must maintain contact with the employee in terms of corporate identity and show an interest in the employee’s personal development and in the employee as a human being. In addition, there is the issue of responsibility for health and safety. Where does that stop, and where does it begin? For facility managers, this may mean becoming involved in home services. Facility managers might give employees a fixed sum for setting up a home office, but they might also work with preferred suppliers.”

In this changing world, HR has a major role to play in preventing employee burnout and work-related stress. “For example, by putting an end to employees being constantly online if people are

communication, yet we have sometimes created isolation instead. When we meet collaborators with headphones in their ears and working deep in silence, the company has a problem. Although we are currently undertaking a campaign of immurement on a case by case basis, this is onerous and does not send a positive message to the teams.” This is an experience shared by other work environment professionals who attended the conference.

Scientific studies

Use open plan offices to save on area while gaining productivity – is this creed nothing but a myth? After all, what are the scientific benefits of open spaces? The Office and Culture conference, under the heading “What do researchers say about open plan offices?” sought to respond to these questions. Sébastien Rocq, innovation and co-creation specialist presented the most important research results from the last four decades regarding open work spaces. At the beginning of the 1970s, research centered on organizations and work spaces of engineers and the impact on innovation. Tom Allen, researcher at Harvard University, had demonstrated that the employees who communicate the most with their colleagues were the ones who formed the most innovative

unable to set their own boundaries and are thus putting their work performance and even their health at risk. I am a great believer in HR having a duty of care with regard to the health of the employee.” This leads Mobach on to another responsibility of HR, change management. “Ultimately, HR will need to ensure that employees – but also middle management – start behaving differently at this point and that the culture changes.”

For the time being, there is still a long way to go, says Mobach: “We are in a transitional phase with regard to ways of working. Many organizations, however, do not realize that they have a responsibility for the health of their employees. Too many of them are still using money as the starting point, rather than the end user. I think you need to turn it around. Take the end user as the starting point, and the rest will fall into place automatically.”

ideas, and thus open spaces in such a context were conducive to productive communication. Nevertheless, in parallel to such research, several scientific studies arrived at different conclusions. In 1977, Robert Merabian noted the impact an open plan offices has on an individual varies considerably from one person to another and that, for some among us, the positive aspects of open spaces failed to compensate for its shortcomings. The nineties not only witnessed the propagation of open plan offices but also the publication of more than two hundred scientific studies into the effects of such spaces on the productivity and comfort of their inhabitants. In 1999, Michael Brill and Sue Weidemann pointed out a fundamental aspect of the work organization of American employees – even workers in project teams carry out the majority of their tasks alone, which is a priori poorly adapted to open spaces. Field research from Sun Microsystems would go on to show that such spaces are not used the most for communication support and are perceived by employees as unsuitable to their work. Finally, workers in recent years have particularly excoriated the comfort of these offices. Sébastien Rocq concluded, “If we are still looking for answers, scientific studies show in all cases that the hypothesis that open plan creates a more collaborative environment is mythical.” It does not appear to be a magic wand, but in the light of this research, Mr. Rocq recognizes two prerequisites for an efficient workplace plan: an in-depth investigation into the work situation of the company with the results shared among the teams and the adoption of a variety of spatial arrangements.

The Flex space question

The French telecommunications company Bouygues Telecom undertook a detailed study of its employees’ needs and offered them many new adapted office plans, during the company’s renovation of its two large sites in the Paris region at Meudon and Issy-les-Moulineaux. These refurbishments were financed thanks to the savings made in using Flex office space. This

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Learning to listen creates better managers

By Brady Mick

Communication is an art form and a complex one at that. Whether talking with a customer, family member or a colleague, communication among people boils down to three basic forms: telling, questioning and listening. Of these three, the most important skill for managers to acquire, develop and practice is listening. By understanding the invisible theoretical framework that underlies communication, managers can learn to become better listeners and adopt practices in their work behaviors that lead to more successful communication and fewer breakdowns.

Communication breakdowns

There are several kinds of communication breakdowns that can cause negative, harmful and adversarial interactions among people. These include:

- Societal, such as wars, genocides and extinctions;
- Communal, including issues like inequality, class systems and economic strife;
- Social, such as bullying, prejudice and hate crimes;
- Physical, examples of which include

violence, abuse and environmental damage;

- Psychological, such as mental illnesses and intellectual and emotional problems and
- Work, including issues like engagement deficiency, productivity loss and job changes.

In the workplace, it's important to understand the nature of these breakdowns because with knowledge, managers can gain insight into their employees' communication limitations. In other words, sometimes there are breakdowns in communication styles.

For example, communicators struggling to express themselves through body language or facial expressions could be misinterpreted as aggressive. There can also be breakdowns in thinking, such as when something intended as a suggestion is misinterpreted as a directive. Additionally, sometimes there are breakdowns in emotional intent, such as when what is interpreted as a tone of anger is really coming from a feeling of passion. Even more difficult to address are the challenges that come when the communication expressed means different things to different people.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Every individual has a unique set of needs and motivations, and these fundamentals impact communication. In 1943, a psychologist named Abraham Maslow presented a groundbreaking paper on the nature of human needs and motivations. Maslow's ideas are often presented as a pyramid, with the most basic needs for wellbeing representing the base of the pyramid, and the top level representing personal fulfillment (see Fig. 1). According to Maslow's theory, the most basic needs must be met before an individual will focus on or desire needs at a higher level. For example, if a person is not meeting his basic needs of food and water, he will not be focused on higher-level needs such as friendship or gaining the respect of others.

In daily practice, wellbeing is interdependent with all levels of needs. However, Maslow's hierarchy

of needs helps managers understand communication at a deeper level. It enables them to grasp not just what employees are communicating, but why. Employees may communicate about needs that relate to basic physiology (for example, that they are too hot or cold). Or they may voice concerns about safety by asking for extra lighting in the employee parking lot. If they express a desire to help plan a holiday party or team-building activity, employees are indicating their need for belonging. A desire for more office or work space could indicate a need for esteem or even self-actualization by seeking different kinds of spaces to expand creativity, spontaneity or problem solving. Instead of experiencing these requests as complaints or annoyances, managers can connect them to a basic need and understand that the employee is simply (and probably unknowingly) seeking to fulfill an essential need for their work wellbeing.

Communication psychology

Another important aspect of human communication that managers need to grasp relates to the forms of human understanding. The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung identified four ways humans think, feel and experience things:

- Sensation. Humans possess five senses with which they can engage and measure their external reality. These are the familiar senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.
- Thinking. This is the objective realm of intellect and is expressed as reason or the thought process.
- Feeling. Also known as "the language of the heart," feeling is expressed as emotion and focuses on value.
- Intuition. This is the "gut feeling." It's rooted in ideals of belief, truth, trust and possibility.

According to the theory, a well-rounded person operates in a combination of all four personality functions or types. However, no one develops all four functions equally. Every individual has one dominant type and at least one lesser-developed, or unconscious, type. By understanding how people experience their communication engagement, managers can recognize how employees perceive information and make decisions. For example, intuitive types may not have the same linear, organized and detailed work style as those employees with a stronger thinking type. The intuitive employee is more likely to "investigate" when speaking and approaches problems and projects from multiple angles. A logical, lineal thinker may become frustrated with such communication.

Communication styles

The third theoretical framework for managers to consider is styles of communication. These include:

- Words. As the most commonly understood form of communication, words have evolved into complex

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spatial arrangement is based on the principle of providing group working space at a capacity lower than the number of employees in the building; however, it has not been fully embraced by French companies. Nevertheless, it is presented as an answer to office layouts at a time when fewer people work in companies and where the difficult economic context means every square foot encumbers the business' accounts. For Bouygues Telecom, the disposal of individual office space has

allowed it to incorporate "the array of spatial arrangements" advocated by Sébastien Rocq. Is this solution a good compromise? This question was put forward by the speakers of the conference organized by Arseg Info at the Bureaux Expo last April, testimony to the support of Didier Molard, Manager for Studies and Arrangements at Bouygues Telecom. Several participants offered significant reservations. Françoise Brönnner of Think Tank Workrepublik, brandishing

a dozen computer cables pulled from her backpack, exclaimed "Flexibility, mobility, this is what they are! Let's stop the make believe that you can work anywhere. For example, on that work space, it's impossible to find a socket!" Olivier Charbonnier, Managing Director of the human resources advisory board Interface, and Nicole Turbé-Suetens, Director of the Distance Expert network and telecommuting specialist, also insist on the diverse profiles of employees, those more or less adapted to a Flex space both psychological terms and in terms of activities conducive to work nomadism. This opinion was shared by Nicolas Cugier, Facilities Management Director of the Thales group, who expressed "Some are more attached than others to their workplace which they consider as their personal sphere, a type of base". Should we give up the image of the traditional individual office with the obligatory family photo and potted plant? Is this the price to pay to open the doors to an efficient collection of work space? In any case, Flex space convinced the public at the conference. In fact, at its conclusion, the public were invited to give the thumbs up or down on this type of work space organization. Seventy-six percent gave it their approval.

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forms, both written and spoken.

- Gestures. Equal in importance to words, gestures have had equal study in communications between humans, as well as extending into the animal kingdom.
- Expressions. The nonverbal transference process in communication, expressions are dependent on the sensory form of understanding.
- Intonation. A deeper, more subtle and powerful expression of communication, intonation is based on the sound quality and intensity of words and gestures.
- Introspective. Autonomy is the venue of the highest forms of communication and becomes the “meaning” of the individual’s unconscious. It is the realm of the artist, the poet, the designer, the scientist and the philosopher.

Managers need to understand that every communication style is unique. Understanding the influence of the styles depends upon situation and often takes great effort. For example, a manager may hear the words of an employee expressing concerns over a complex work problem to be solved. If the manager’s expressions communicate primarily caring and consoling, this may erode the motivation and frustrate the employee. Why? The employee may have been trying to communicate his or her introspective struggle in a search for help instead of consultation. The misalignment was likely in the misinterpretation of the employee’s intonation.

Why breakdowns happen

The practical application of studying communication among people at work involves acknowledging the complexity of the conditions surrounding communication. First, what is the hierarchical purpose of the communication? Does it express a need, want, desire, goal, aspiration or any combination of these? Second, how is the understanding of the communication intended to travel from one person to another: is the delivery sensory, intellectual, emotive or intuitive (or a combination thereof), and through what function(s) is it absorbed? Third, what form of communication is used? Is the form word-based, physically gestured, symbolically expressed, emotively intoned, actualized via artistic extremes or some combination of forms?

Day-to-day tactics

Communication tactics can be learned. As managers answer the questions above, they can apply day-to-day practices focused around listening to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and experience of their communication with employees, peers, superiors and even clients. The following are six key behaviors that

managers can practice to improve listening skills:

- Expand expectations for solving business problems. Because it’s clear that communication is a very complex process, and not the straightforward, cut-and-dried activity often expected, the approach needs to change. Understand that some problems or situations will now take longer to resolve because certain types of communication have to take place as the complexity of business problems impacts people.
- Don’t be an order taker/giver. It is important for managers to listen before telling in order to communicate with team members and understand their insights. Most companies want engaged people, not servants. When a client says “Give me this on this date,” and a better solution is apparent, managers shouldn’t hesitate to consider ideas that make the problem easier to define and solutions of higher quality.
- Think creatively. Creative thinking requires the suspension of directive questioning and thrives when inquisitive questioning is followed by intensive listening. Managers who expand their thinking and do not rely solely on solutions of the past produce better results. With increased listening skills, it becomes possible to connect to an employee’s desire for esteem and self-actualization and achieve new and innovative business results.
- Be curious. Good managers ask questions that avoid a “yes or no” response. They seek stories first and, above all, seek to understand the meaning of the employee. When managers first seek to understand the meaning of the communication from an employee or customer, they will be better positioned to fill the need.
- Become proactive. Managers need to reverse the fire-drill model of communication. Instead of waiting for a frantic business problem or for a deadline with nowhere to turn, proactively check in with teammates periodically and listen to the insights and ideas.
- Redefine value. The value of communication is complex and requires time and commitment to attain high value and performance. Develop and use a higher quality of communication that is listening-based. Use all forms of communication consciously and often. Good communication takes time.

Implications for design

Often the space in which we work is limited in its ability to facilitate all forms of communication. While it’s ideal that workspaces are built with the vitality of listening-based communication in mind, there are ways to adapt spaces to meet the desired behaviors of listening. For example, reposition closed doors — not

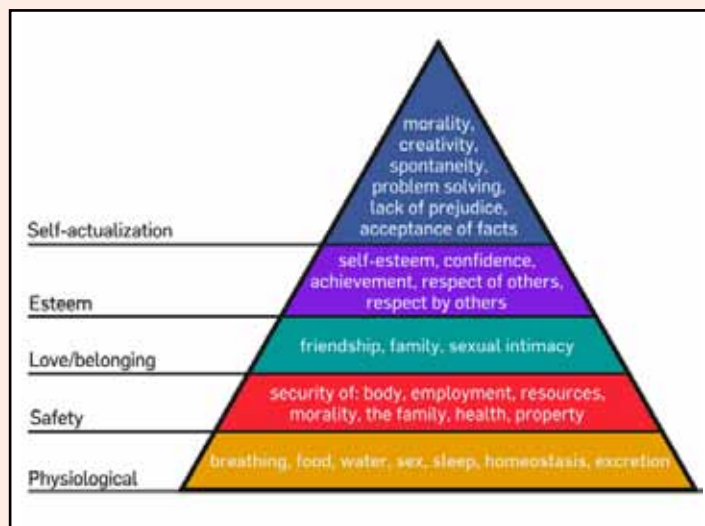


Figure 1

just physically, but metaphorically as well. While open doors can facilitate day-to-day communication, a closed door can meet an employee’s need for safety if they have a serious problem to discuss with a manager.

While it may not be possible to change the physical structure of the workplace, managers can create spaces that facilitate listening. Whatever form these take — conference rooms, alcoves in a cafeteria or even a room dedicated to teleconferences and webinar viewing — find spaces that allow an individual or group to listen with focus and intent to the communication of others.

Workplaces that create spaces that address Maslow’s hierarchy of needs have a distinct advantage. Even the bottom level of needs — food, air and water — can be addressed with an inviting community room. If people are communicating a desire for greater self-actualization in their work, seek white boards or shared screens to display ideas and encourage higher forms of communication.

Listen first to avoid communication breakdowns

How powerful is listening as a form of communication? The answer: so powerful it’s considered a tool in the fight against mental illness. A problem that many people experience today is anxiety disorders. When sufferers of chronic anxiety have a panic attack, their ability to listen and reason shuts down. Parents, spouses, coworkers or managers, wishing to help the victim through their struggles, may instinctively start telling the victim what to do. For example, they may say things like “Just calm down,” or other well-intended but ultimately harmful admonitions.

Alternatively, in a struggle to understand the victim’s condition, their instinct may be to ask him or her too many questions: “Why are you so upset?” “What’s wrong?” “Don’t you see you’re being silly?” What doctors have learned is that sufferers of anxiety disorders recover more quickly when friends, family and coworkers close their mouths and open their ears.

The Anxiety and Depression Association of America list several ways to help anxiety sufferers on their website (www.adaa.org) that drive home the point of listening. For example, their advice for parents of college-aged anxiety sufferers includes, “Be an active listener. Lend an open ear when your child is feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Listen to what he or she says, as well as to what isn’t said. (Is there any mention of friends or social activities?) Respect his or her feelings even if you don’t fully understand. This will encourage your child to start talking, which can serve as a source of comfort when feeling overwhelmed.”

Say less, listen more

If simply listening can be a powerful tool to aid those with mental illness, what can it do in an office environment in which the goal is simply to communicate well? Unfortunately, most management is built on telling, and in some cases the process of inquiry, i.e., to question. But where many fall short is in the area of listening. When professionals aren’t skilled listeners, the result is a breakdown in communication, resulting in a workplace that falls short of achieving the richness of results for people and their companies.



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Working apart together

By Juriaan van Meel and Rikke Brinkø

How much can corporate facilities managers learn from the cloud-based desk jockeys embracing co-working in the UK's big cities? Juriaan van Meel and Rikke Brinkø report on a growing movement.

Cowork offices are shared workplaces for freelancers and independent workers who find working from home too lonely.

Think of cheap yet funky workspaces where you can rent desks month to month, or even daily.

The idea is that people not only share office facilities, but also a sense of community, allowing for collaboration and synergies.

Coworking is still a bit of a subculture, very much focused at the creative and tech industries, but it is slowly slipping into the corporate mainstream. For FMs, the idea could be an interesting way to facilitate mobile and remote workers. Moreover, coworking could be a source of inspiration for how to create vibrant and user-friendly workplaces.

Coworking's origins

In the mid-1990s a Silicon Valley computer programmer named Brad Neuberg quit his job at a large corporation to pursue a freelance career. Although he was happy to escape from the corporate world, he missed the company of others and the structure of working at an office.

This triggered him to create the

'Spiral Muse coworking community', generally considered to be the first formal cowork initiative. It consisted of a small number of desks, some sofas and a kitchenette in a women's centre in San Francisco.

The desks were available to self-employed workers for \$100 a month. The promotional website for the space asked: "Do you work for yourself from home? Do you miss community and structure? Join Spiral Muse and Brad Neuberg in creating a new kind of work environment for free spirits!"

Neuberg aimed to create a more utopian work community where members would not only share office facilities, but also have lunch together, go on hikes, and even share after-work hours.

But the Spiral Muse Coworking Community closed within a year. Neuberg had wanted it to be a bit hippie-like (with "yoga and stuff"), but it didn't work. But the idea, and its idealistic objectives, survived. Other freelancers in the San Francisco area opened new coworking spaces, and the idea rapidly spread across the US and around the globe. Today, there are more than 2,500 coworkspaces worldwide, with cities like London,

New York and Berlin having more than 60 coworking sites each.

Home, office, cafe

The main explanation for the rise of cowork spaces such as Republikken lies in the growth of the number of freelancers. In the past 20 years, companies have been reducing their numbers of permanent staffers and started to use more freelancers and project-based workers.

At the same time, a significant number of people have chosen to be self-employed and start their own small businesses, away from the pressures of ordinary corporate life.

The obvious choice for this growing group of independent workers (sometimes also referred to as 'indie workers' or 'microentrepreneurs') would be to work from home because it is cheap and flexible. But working from home can present difficulties. It can be lonely and it can be a challenge to manage the borders between work and private life (as an ad for an American coworkspace reads: "Working at home sucks").

Some independents try working in cafes because of the liveliness and the atmosphere, but the trouble is that cafes can be noisy and impractical (think for example of going to the loo, wondering whether you take your laptop with you or not). So, cafes are OK for quick tasks, but not as a structural solution.

Renting a small office, or a desk at a serviced office, is also an option, but this tends to be expensive and the spaces tend to be rather traditional, not doing much to stimulate interaction between people. And this is where coworking comes in; it is a casual, shared workplace, where one works

along like-minded people. Ideally, coworkspaces offer the best of the options mentioned before: the low costs and flexibility from working at home, the professional facilities and structure of a serviced office, and the vibe and social atmosphere of a café.

"Disownership is the new ownership"

The social aspect of coworking is considered to be one of its most defining features. According to Wikipedia, coworking is "the social gathering of a group of people, who are still working independently, but who share values, and who are interested in the synergy that can happen from working with talented people in the same space".

Coworkers are expected not only to share workspace, but also to participate in the life of the community and share their ideas with other inhabitants. In that sense the idea has an explicit idealistic touch to it. Proponents of coworking even talk about it as a "movement" with four common values: collaboration, openness, community and sustainability. They link the idea to that of the "shared economy" – an economy where access trumps ownership. The catchphrase is "disownership is the new ownership".

So coworking tends to attract a different type of user from conventional offices and office hotels. Coworkspaces are generally populated by people who can be labelled as "urban creatives", working in media, design and tech. In terms of fashion stereotypes it is less suit and tie, more skinny jeans and designer glasses. This creative nature of the coworking movement is clearly reflected in the spatial design of coworkspaces. Whereas serviced offices tend to be arranged in office-like neat spaces, with acoustic ceilings, grey carpets and office partitions, coworkspaces tend to have a grungy feel. As in the case of Republikken, coworkspaces tend to look like a cross between a trendy coffee house, artist's studio and start-up office. Think of bare concrete ceilings, exposed ducting and cabling, and cheap furnishings. This look is the result of low budgets and a DIY attitude, but also a deliberate bid to express that coworkspaces are different from conventional offices.

It should also be said, however, that in terms of volume coworking is still a rather marginal phenomenon.

The total number of people making use of coworkspaces is estimated at 110,000 – very few when compared with the total number of office workers.

Having said that, it should also be pointed out that the idea is likely to become more mainstream in the coming years as work becomes more mobile and flexible. Already, the idea has caught the attention of



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large corporations, and some cowork offices have started to offer corporate memberships.

For corporations, such memberships can be interesting for facilitating their mobile employees. Employees who travel frequently may find it more pleasant to work at a cowork office than at a hotel room or their client's office. Likewise, it can be an interesting option for workers who live far away from their company's office or project teams and are in a sudden and temporary need for team space.

Another, more strategic reason for corporate coworking is that these cowork venues can be seen as an entry point to a vibrant network of young talent and start-up companies. This is the reason why companies such as Twitter and AT&T have placed some employees and project teams at cowork venues that are specifically targeted at tech entrepreneurs.

For the same reason Google even created its own cowork venue Campus in London, which offers cheap space and mentoring for start-ups and tech entrepreneurs.

For mainstream organisations that would probably be a step too far, but it could still be a good idea to create small cowork-like spaces for students, freelancers and specialist companies. It would allow for easy collaboration and access to talent. And it could be a smart strategy to make use of the surplus of office space that many companies currently have.

Cowork and FM

To the average facilities manager, coworking may seem too alternative, too trendy and too small scale. Yet, from a practical point of view, FM and coworking are basically the same: the provision of physical space where people can work, interact, and be productive. From that perspective coworking may be an interesting source of inspiration to corporate FM.

It is interesting to see how cowork sites manage to create attractive workplaces with rather low budgets. To keep the space affordable for their members, coworksites are often in old, slightly rundown buildings, with inexpensive fit-outs. Finishes are raw, the facilities basic, and the furniture secondhand. Much of it is DIY. This type of design may not be appropriate for large corporations, but it does show that there are alternatives to the expensive and bland fit-outs often seen in corporate offices.

Also interesting is the role of the so called 'hosts' in coworking offices. In many ways cowork hosts have the same responsibilities as FMs, taking care of practical things such as rental contracts, Wi-Fi, coffee beans and printers. But hosts also play an important social role. Their task is to



turn a dead office into a lively idea space, making sure that newcomers feel at home, that people connect, and that things are happening – such as organising lunches, afternoon drinks, lectures, workshops and exhibitions. All of this is focused on building a community where people know each other and easily share ideas – an idea that is also critical to large corporations.

The most important quality of cowork sites probably lies in their strong customer focus. Unlike corporate facilities managers, the operators of cowork offices work in a highly competitive environment; if they do not provide value for money and listen to the needs of their users, people will simply decide to work somewhere else.

This type of competition is not present in corporate facilities management. FM is traditionally a world of compulsive sourcing – users go the office because they have to. They will show up because they are employed there, regardless of the quality of the facilities provided. This is not to imply that FMs do not care about user satisfaction, but they lack the competitive incentive that coworkspaces are driven by.

But this is slowly changing. It is common knowledge that corporate workplaces are only used 40 per cent of the time they are available. Slowly but surely, corporate employees are becoming more mobile, getting more freedom to choose where they want to work, as long as they are productive. This freedom will push organisations, and their facilities managers, to think harder about the attractiveness of the work environment they have on offer –

assuming they see the value of creating offices that are lively and busy. Just as in coworking, the challenge will be to create spaces that are not only efficient but also hospitable, supportive places where people go because they want to, not because they have to.

As a thought experiment, facilities managers should try to consider themselves as the hosts or operators of a coworkspace. If they were, would their buildings still be filled with people? Would people even be willing to pay for working there? Or would staff rather work from home, a café, another coworkspace, or elsewhere? Because if that would be the case, it is time for change.

The movement in Europe: coworking in Denmark

Denmark has been slow to pick up the trend, but there are currently several cowork spaces, mostly in Copenhagen and Aarhus. Prices range between DK2,000 to DK4000 (£220-£440) a desk a month. One of the best-known and earliest examples is Republikken, which calls itself an "arbejdsfælleskab" (Danish for "work community"). It is based in an old building on Vesterbrogade, a busy street in a central part of Copenhagen that is slightly run down yet rapidly gentrifying.

In Republikken's workspaces you see casually dressed people working behind large computer screens. Most are independent creatives, such as designers, architects, photographers and copywriters. The workspaces are large and studio-like with high ceilings and old wooden floors. The initiative for Republikken came from a group of freelancers in need of workspace, but

it has grown into a professionally run workplace with more than 75 desks. Recently, Republikken expanded and also created an 'office hotel' for small businesses, teaching spaces for courses, a workshop with a laser cutter, and even a street café. Most of it was designed and furnished by the members of Republikken.

Coworking websites and apps: searching for space

The rise of co-work has led to the development of a variety of websites and apps that help people to find co-workplaces across the world. Websites such as www.sharedesk.net and www.deskwanted.com are good examples.

One of the most advanced tools is 'worksnug' (see www.worksnug.com), which is a smartphone app that tells you where nearby workplace are, including not only co-work spaces, but also cafes and libraries. It shows the ratings of other users for each location, looking at items such as the quality of the coffee, the noise level, the availability of power sockets and Wi-Fi, and also the community feel and 'coolness' of the venue. In that way it captures the essential qualities of a contemporary workplace.

For corporate FM, it would be interesting to have a similar app that would allow corporate staff to rate the quality of their premises, providing direct feedback about the quality of the FM services. The same app could be used to report complaints, or check the availability of meeting rooms.

Juriaan van Meel is co-founder of workplace consultancy ICOP and Rikke Brinko is studying FM at the Technical University of Denmark.

Not just spending, but new ideas

By Mariantonietta Lisena

Not only does Public Administration have the scope to embrace FM, but it also has opportunities to carry out large projects that could have positive effects on the entire economy. Unfortunately, cultural block is preventing this change from taking place, as Claudio Levorato, President of Manutencoop Facility Management, tells us here.

Can Facility Management really be put to use in Public Administration?

Yes. If it has not yet been done, it is solely down to the lack of genuine will and suitable tools. And this is despite the fact that it would be very beneficial for PA; it would allow a more flexible approach in relation to many of its enormous costs, paving the way for the permanent cutting of expenses over time. Each Administration could, in fact, follow different economic cycles, quickly adapting to climates that perhaps, like the current climate, force us to achieve greater cost savings. And this could be done without necessarily having to deal with fixed costs, in a much less traumatic way.

So what is it then that is preventing this change?

It is similar to what can often be seen in the private sector; there is a preference for roles to be handled internally because they are incorrectly considered to be confidential, and for fear of giving too much power to the FM company employed. It boils down to cultural laziness. The roles that would be disposed of are not confidential. Those who currently carry them out wish to keep them purely for the purposes of prestige and power.

We therefore have a huge structural and organizational issue. For example, let's consider PA real estate: you can take actions to ensure space is better utilized, but in the end, such actions have little effect since there is no unified vision and management of real estate. There is too much fragmentation and there is a clear division between those who have to manage the assets and those who actually use them. And this leads to paradoxical situations with PAs that find themselves having to pay rent while publicly owned real estate remains completely unused.

These are the types of issues that are preventing changes to PA and that are causing us to lag far behind the rest of Europe in this field.

Better management of spaces, in your view, could therefore bring great benefits.

We carried out an analysis of the

public assets managed within the context of the Consip agreement [Ed. Consip is an Italian State owned public listed company which aims to make public resource uses more efficient]. This involves 3,600,000 square meters of offices, half for state administration and the other half for local. In 50% of this space we noted an efficiency index lower than 40% and a presence index of almost 100 sq. m per employee. In our company, by way of example, it is 20 sq. m per person and even this is above average (Ed. based on IFMA Italia benchmarking data, in terms of work area, the average value is 10.78 sq. m).

It is clear that there is huge room for improvement in terms of utilization of space, with all the savings that this might entail.

What can be done to deal with this waste?

Lots, if there is a will to do so. If PA entrusted the management of individual workspaces, together with the myriad of services connected to them, to facility operators, this alone could take a huge weight off their shoulders. We even presented a project to Consip in a similar vein. With such a formula, Public Administrations would simply need to indicate to the selected service manager the number of people in need of a workspace and then it would be up to said manager to take care of the rest, from finding the right space, to making it suitable, to managing it over time. And, above all, the PA would pay only for the locations actually needed in each case, maximizing the flexibility we talked about before.

Also because the workspace includes virtually all services required for the operation of an organization.

Exactly. To say, as often happens in the public sector, that an employee costs 35,000 euros per year is a rough estimate, which only takes into account salaries, whereas in reality each worker costs any business a lot more than that. Also, just making back those 35,000 euros is costly.

A project in the style of that proposed by us, in terms of how it is conceived, also has positive effects

that go well beyond PA, because it also involves many external companies and stimulates their growth.

Much could also be done simply in terms of improving the energy efficiency of public assets.

In this regard, we recently estimated that 20 billion euros worth of interventions over 85 million square meters of schools and offices could generate annual savings of 630 million. This is a significant investment, clearly, but it doesn't have to be funded with public money. Private companies could fund it. This, among other things, would immediately bring about a GDP increase of more than 1%, which over the years would decrease maybe to 0.4%, but we are talking about an effect that would last at least a decade. So it will also have a positive impact on the national economy. It would be private companies then, clearly, who would benefit from the 630 million of savings, but it would also have considerable implications for the community as a whole: an efficient public real estate from an energy point of view and 630 million euros less in investments abroad to buy energy that could be replaced with activities involving high levels of work carried out in Italy. An extremely positive impact, therefore, in terms of savings and employment, which would, among other things, have a lasting effect. A project of this kind implemented by PA would then be the driving force and would be copied by many other real estate asset managers, to a greater or lesser extent.

However, an investment of 20 billion needs a return far greater than 630 million per year to be considered attractive.

Of course. It would need at least double that. But there are lots of possibilities for achieving this. The 1% GDP increase mentioned earlier would boost State coffers by around 0.5% of GDP in the form of taxes and contributions. And this income would be absolutely free, because the PA would not have to do any work or make any investment to generate it. This amount could therefore be used for compensatory measures of a fiscal nature to ensure the private company a satisfactory return on its initial investment of 20 billion.

In short, what is required is a scenario in which really everyone wins. A slightly different operation to those implemented so far, which have weighed down on the economy.

Some might say that the Government has tried to act as you would with a company in crisis, with the first thought being to "make money" and then thinking of measures to regain competitiveness.

Yes, but we are not talking about a company, but an entire State, which among other things, finds itself in a context of global crisis. It is counterproductive to insist simply

on reducing costs and increasing revenue, measures that merely serve to deduct part of the wealth available for consumption and investment. These last two factors show a sharp fall in the last few years. This has created a negative spiral which I can't see ending: less money for consumption and investment, which leads to a decline in industrial production, which in turn leads to less employment and therefore even less money for consumption and investment. A way out would be to find an outlet in international trade, but this route is also currently blocked, given the global economic climate and the lack of a local currency to devalue to make exports easier.

What are your thoughts on Consip?

It has not kept its promise. Visco did not originally intend for it to be simply a contracting authority, as it is now, but for it to also provide accurate and detailed monitoring activities, supporting the PA along the way in its purchases of services. It should have developed industry and therefore served as a stimulus to the economy and private companies, and in particular for the FM sector. And it was the right approach, because Facility Management is a sector which, by its nature, is not able to really shine if it fails to come fully to the public. And a State's task should also be to stimulate the growth of industry, not to haggle with it to obtain a more attractive price per se, which may be the task of a basic contracting authority.

In this way, Consip has betrayed the idea from which it was born. And I'm not even sure that it has effectively managed to achieve basic savings for Administrations.

Why is that?

Because Consip ensures a discount of a certain percentage on a price list, but the PA that purchases the service on the basis of the Consip agreement has no guarantee of actually making savings compared with before. There is no historical record of costs that would suggest this.

Ultimately, what should the PA do to put itself in a position to really embrace FM?

As already said, cultural change is needed. It must rely, without hesitation and unnecessary fears, on the market, agreeing to maintain just one control function internally for certain essential parameters, and not, for example, for the whole process which for most services is an unnecessary waste of resources. It must then invest in projects and fully rethink its internal organization, making it truly efficient, introducing the figure of the Facility Manager and eliminating the many other roles that simply reduce the FM company's scope of action and unnecessarily complicate each process.

The Netherlands can be our inspiration in FM

By Pavel Iványi

Facility management is a relatively young field of business in our country even though it covers and co-ordinates very traditional activities that mainly apply to management and the maintenance of buildings.

One of the companies that have been offering services of integrated facility management for years is AB Facility, a.s., a member of the Penta Group. As of last autumn, Pavel Iványi (51) was managing director of AB Facility. He has dual nationality. Since 1976, he has lived in Amsterdam for 26 years and studied at college and the Faculty of Law at the University of Amsterdam. He gained his MBA title at Rotterdam School of Management – Erasmus University. In the past he has worked at the airline company KLM, ABN AMRO Bank and Van Gansewinkel. Prior to joining AB Facility, he ran the Czech branch of G4S. His wife is from the Netherlands and he also speaks Dutch with his daughters.

What is your experience of the Netherlands?

The Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries and Great Britain are very advanced in the outsourcing areas, which is after all the term that is often used instead of FM in many countries. The reason for that is not just that many companies are trying to hold onto their 'core business' but also because the state administration understands that there are other specialists for some areas and that it is better to leave professional activities to them instead of getting into it themselves. They have a different approach to FM in the Netherlands. I think you can study FM at a Bachelor's level at six universities and at two or three for a Master's Degree. It is a well recognized profession. When you mention FM, everyone knows what you're talking about and you don't need to explain anything.

How are facility managers seen in general?

Outsourced facility managers have their position in companies and are respected as professionals. When college students are looking for employment, they can discover what a facility manager is and how versatile and attractive are his or her activities. All this makes an environment that is different to ours. On the other hand, when you look at the level of integration of FM services, the situation is not as if we really lagged behind within Europe. We offer integrated services to many, mostly network customers, who know the environment of those more advanced countries – and that is what they require from us. We are certainly capable of

providing them with integrated services.

In which areas is the Czech Republic comparable to them?

Development in our country lags behind with regards to how many companies require such services. We certainly have examples where we provide integrated FM services on the same level as in more advanced countries. We know how to do it but to a smaller extent. And that is why it is also very important to meet within the IFMA at events where different companies present what they can do. The subconscious of FM is simply fundamentally different. Some services are traditional in particular countries and are seen differently within the area of facility services. Different services from the area of information technologies, for instance, come under facility management in the Netherlands. We don't yet do that in the Czech Republic. Other areas, on the other hand, are included within integrated FM here, such as the maintenance of green and indoor areas, which are secured by specialized companies in other countries and are not included within an integrated FM.

At what phase is the consolidation of AB Facility and their current activities abroad?

Consolidation of AB Facility is not complete yet. The company is stabilized and has had new management since the beginning of the year. The financing of all our companies in the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Poland is also stabilized. Those are also the three main markets we focus on and also have strong support there from our holding company Penta. At the moment we don't offer a comprehensive portfolio of services in these countries. Two years ago, we purchased a company that only dealt with cleaning in Poland. Now we are also expanding the portfolio with security and mainly technical facility management, which is doing well. Our aim will be to complement this portfolio with a form of acquisition in countries where we already operate. We don't want to expand any further without due consideration; we must be sure about the consolidation of services and their level in the countries where we operate. We are certainly a sufficiently large trans-national and reliable partner for companies in Central Europe, which organize tenders for technical facility management, cleaning and security.



A. Wagner / photo: L. Hausenblas

And current plans?

What is now the most important issue for our company is to staff it with people on the professional level of facility managers. I am convinced that that is an issue for the whole sector and not just for us. If we were saying that this field can be studied in the Netherlands at particular levels, here we must rely on people who either studied abroad or have gained practical experience. It is not enough for a facility manager to be a specialist in technical facility management; he/she must have the ability to distribute security or to service some facilities. He/she must predominantly be communicative, identify himself/herself with the client's frame of mind and be able to offer to the client proposals for some changes. He/she must also approach it from an economic point of view and manage people. It is very demanding and there are not many of those who can do it. We found several of those amongst our employees and are also looking externally. We train them and invest in their education in order to be able to offer such people to our key clients.

Why doesn't the state support training within this particular field of business?

Our educational system is in a very difficult situation. Demand here, unfortunately, is not always adequate to supply. State administration wants to deal with things their own way. They have a concept that they can be the specialists in security, cleaning or facility management themselves. We can only hope that the State administration will be able to employ and pay capable and competent facility managers.

What is the practical experience from FM within the State sector in the Netherlands?

The outsourcing level is much bigger than in the Czech Republic and there is not the desire to deal with things in their own way. An expert deals with a specialized activity, so the world there is a little different. Take the example of prisons – the State has the executive power and can hold prisoners but is also aware of the fact that the operation of a prison doesn't differ that much from the operation of a hotel. The difference being the equipment and the bars in the windows; there are companies that can manage such establishments better. Here is another example: How much time do the police lose when

they arrest somebody or take them into custody and must deal with paperwork? In Great Britain, all this is outsourced to private companies. This is not work done by the police but by a private company. Co-operation with the public sector is paralyzed in our country by rules of complicated tenders, appeals and complaints that are examined and investigated by the Office for the Protection of Competition.

What projects do you prefer?

The large projects that we are preparing are interesting and expand our portfolio. One such area is the preventive and operational maintenance of production facilities. Companies where we traditionally dealt with the maintenance of the building etc. want us also to start maintaining their machinery equipment. This area is exceptionally interesting for us: it expands the possibilities for our operation and also strengthens our relations with the client. If we know how to set a maintenance program – preventive and corrective on which production depends more than on our traditional services – the client really appreciates that.

What is the difference in viewing clients since you have been under Penta?

Penta belongs to leading and financially stable investors from within the market. AB Facility belongs amongst very successful projects such as Dr. Max, Fortuna, regional hospitals. Penta's ambition is to build large companies with an equity value of €20 million that are market leaders. We are now facing the period when we are to see whether we are to belong promisingly amongst the large ones and remain permanently within Penta's portfolio or whether we are not able to fulfil this ambition. It is naturally a significant challenge for us.

Are you planning for AB Facility to move to Penta?

Penta Real Estate is developing a site under the Waltrovka project. It will provide an administrative building next year into which we will move. We are excited to be in a modern building that meets our requirements: flexibility, health, and having both the LEED and BREEAM certificates. We will secure management of the complex and would like to present a clear demonstration of our quality services. Just as it is at Florentinum whose complex we manage with integrated facility services.

Chairman's report Chairman's report after the EFMC 2014 in Berlin, with a look forward to the EuroFM members meeting in London, 29th - 31st October 2014, hosted by RICS

Prof. Ron van der Weerd
Chair EuroFM



As I stated before in FM Insight and will continue to state:

"EuroFM is at its roots a network organization where members are in charge and

where members by meeting each other in formal, informal and social ways arrive at new ideas, projects and new FM developments. It is a community of people who want to bring FM forward in the world and professionalize the profession even more.

Building bridges is a central task for the EuroFM organization and board. We learned that in Prague with the historical Karl's bridge as a symbol for

that. We learned that in Helsinki, home country of Nokia: "connecting people". And now we have brought the international FM community to Berlin. FM is all about transcending borders. It is all about bringing down walls that have been there for decades or even centuries.

FM is about the optimal way of combining space and infra-structure on one side and people and organizations on the other.

Bringing down walls, building up again and integrating and innovating is then the challenge.

I think Berlin is one of the best places in the world to be inspired by that.

I have the feeling that we all have experienced that feeling attending the EFMC 2014 in Berlin.



Together with that we all see now that Real Estate fits FM like a glove. Thinking about finances, design, construction, usage, and maintenance is increasingly a combined interest, for investors, users, buyers and the environment. In short, for a better and more sustainable world.

I would like to thank GEFMA again for their excellent hosting, for the wonderful venues they offered us for the welcome reception, the conference and the Gala dinner.

They were all unforgettable.

Speaking of Real Estate and FM, RICS is hosting the next members meeting of EuroFM from 29th-31st October in the heart of London, UK.

For that I would like to express my thanks to Johnny Dunfort of RICS once again.

The day before our members meeting, there will be a European FM leaders meeting. A meeting initiated by FMN Netherlands (a member of EuroFM) to bring together national FM associations and IFMA chapters so as to be able to talk to each other and learn from each other without any "political" burden of being a member of whatever overlying organization.

I think that is a very good thing. Join together, talk and let us all bring FM forward in the world.

Ron van der Weerd, Chair of EuroFM



EuroFM Reports

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Practice Network Group

Karin Schaad, Chair



As previously announced by Susanna Caravatti-Felchlin, I was elected as the new practice network group

chair by the EuroFM General Meeting. I would like to thank Susanna for her hard work and very successful networking, which went a long way towards promoting FM in general and the practice network group in particular.

I will do my best to be worthy of the trust placed in me and will try to carry on what Susanna has initiated. I am very much looking forward to meeting a lot of practitioners from all over Europe in the near future. Please feel free to contact me if there are any topics or issues you would like to discuss at our next member meetings.

At the PNG meeting at the EFMC in Berlin, practitioners learned about this year's host association GEFMA. There were good inputs and discussions about the transformation of the European FM Norm CEN 15221 into an ISO Standard. Among others, important topics on the



agenda of the PNG meeting were benchmarking in organisations and a survey about a framework for service charge payments.

Of course, during the EFMC conference itself, many topics such as smart working solutions, life cycle costing, as well as BIM and the sustainability of FM processes were of great interest for practitioners.

There are equally interesting topics in the pipeline for the coming member meeting in London, which will take place just after the European FM leaders conference. Findings from those workshops as well as other issues such as International Property Measurement Standards proposed by a coalition of organisations from all over the world and the challenges and benefits of using the EN 15221 Norm in practice will be discussed.

The next Winterschool will be organized by The Hague University in the Netherlands from 9 till 13 February 2015 together with the EuroFM Membersmeeting. The theme will be 'Sustainability' and 25 to 30 students can participate with a maximum of 3 students per university. In October 2014 during the ENG meeting in London there will be a presentation of The Hague University.

All universities are asked to think about the opportunity to be the host of the Winterschool in 2016.

The next ENG meeting will be held in London during the EuroFM Members meeting at Thursday October 30th from 13.00 till 16.00 and at Friday October 31st from 09.00 till 11.00.

Education Network Group

A.J.M. Otto, Chair



The current chairman of the ENG will leave the Board of EuroFM at the end of 2014.

During the EuroFM members meeting end October 2014 in London there will be the election of the new chairman. In the last meeting of the Education Network Group in Berlin Pekka Matvejeff from The Laurea University in Espoo, Finland is seen by many in the group as a competent successor.

Research Network Group

Keith Alexander, Chair



At the end of October, the EuroFM Autumn meeting will be held in London where a new chair of the RNG will be elected to take

over responsibility for the new year. Although I retain responsibility for the overall organization of the 14th Research Symposium at EFMC in Glasgow in June 2015, this report provides an opportunity to summarize progress over the past two years under my lead.

RNG has continued to grow as a community of interest, with a database of 85 active FM researchers from 45 research organisations. Over 130 participants attended EuroFM Research Workshops in Berlin at HTW University of Applied Sciences. Discussion of the research findings and work currently in progress are vital elements for the development of the research network.

RNG will seek to broaden the network of researchers and is planning its own research workshops at the meetings in London and in The Hague in February, which will appeal to practitioners, educationalists and researchers from related disciplines.

RNG makes a leading contribution to the mission of 'advancing knowledge in FM'. Three active working groups, on core themes of added value, sustainability and innovation, take forward the objective to strengthen the quality of collaborative research. A new research project on Service Excellence in FM has been seed-funded by EuroFM and brings together research groups

from four different countries.

The open call for papers covers the activities of working groups for the year. It also includes a call for papers which take a retrospective view of past research in EuroFM and papers for the next research symposium. The overall theme of 'People make Facilities Management' has been set for the 14th symposium which marks EuroFM's 25th anniversary.

EuroFM Research Papers were published for the first time in May 2014 and meet the need for the publication of scientific papers. The papers are available online, initially through the EuroFM website.

Routledge, a leading scientific publishing house, have agreed to publish a series of EuroFM books, starting with an edited collection of papers developed from three research symposia (the Prague, Berlin and Glasgow events). The book will provide a comprehensive overview of the level of knowledge regarding FM in Europe.

Improving communications in and beyond the network is the greatest challenge for the network. Internally, the flow of ideas and the information about research activities have been improved through regular exchange at network group meetings. Co-ordination of other mechanisms for informing EuroFM members and the broader FM community through European FM insight promises to ensure more open access to the work of RNG. Recent structural changes to the EuroFM website and RNG web pages need further work to create an effective working platform.

To promote improvement and recognize research quality, RNG now presents three EuroFM awards annually - European Researcher of the Year, Masters Students Poster competition and a Best Paper Award. In addition, a leading contribution to research is a key criterion for the award of the EuroFM Fellowship.

