



INTERNATIONAL FACILITY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

continued from page 1

sign a contract respond in writing to the contractors who didn't win the bid. By doing this you show them that you realize their time is valuable. The way to keep good contractors coming back is to treat them the way you expect to be treated. Too many times building managers feel all the onus is on the vendor. If you want people to respond to requests for proposals in the future you need to treat them professionally in the present.

The other principle that will keep a good contractor coming back is your diligence in paying the invoices as soon as it is appropriate. It is the best way to send a message that you value their work. Conversely, when a job is not going well make sure you inform the owner in person and follow up in writing. There shouldn't be any doubt when a job is not being done to specification. Avoiding a difficult discussion only increases the likelihood that the professional relationship will become adversarial. Due to changes in the economy, attrition and changes in ownership a vendor may not perform to the level you expect. All is not lost. Once you notice issues of concerns, begin to document the problems. While it's often difficult to find the time to document the problems you are at a distinct disadvantage should you need to terminate the contract and are unable to be specific with issues and dates.

Ultimately, the decision on hiring and maintaining your relationship with a vendor will lie on your experience and instinct. By taking some of these steps, you may find that you'll keep the better vendors around longer and avoid the bad ones.

Richard Christiano is the Director of Facilities and Mark Norton is a Facilities and Administration Manager at Harvard Business School Publishing in Watertown, MA. They deal with building contractors everyday. Like all of us they prefer a happy, successful, and fair relationship with their vendors.

continued from page 3

indoctrinate into the Chapter and provide answers to any questions they may have. If you are a newer member, I encourage you to attend and meet some of the Chapter leaders.

The Museum of Fine Arts is in the midst of major renovation and expansion and will be hosting us on May 16th for a Program on their Master Plan. I am very excited about this event and hope to see you there. Sign up soon as it is selling fast.

Our annual Awards Night and Chapter Celebration will be held at Regis College in Weston, MA this year on June 5th. If you have a project, system, procedure or process that is a best practice or an outstanding achievement this past year, why not consider it for an IFMA award. If you do not submit for an award, please think about coming out and celebrating with us.

Golf season is upon us. Join us for our annual Golf Outing on June 17 at Stowe Acres. It is always a terrific event.

As you can see, although my time as President is coming to an end on June 30, the upcoming activities for you are significant. I hope to see you at one or all of them.



Spring 2003
www.ifmaboston.org

The Facilitator

News from the Boston Chapter of IFMA
The International Facility Management Association

Construction Contractors: How to Manage the Vendor Relationship

By Richard Christiano and Mark Norton

We all need them. How do we keep the good ones and avoid the bad ones? Where do you start your search and how do you do a proper evaluation? Even after all the hard work, how do you handle a bad relationship?

We're talking about contractors. The good ones make us look like geniuses. The bad ones make life miserable! Many of us aren't fortunate enough to have a team of qualified carpenters, plumbers, and HVAC mechanics at our disposal. The simple fact is that most of us depend on a fleet of contractors to keep our facilities running smoothly. The following points will help avoid some of the common pitfalls.

When hiring a contractor, we all know that price isn't everything. In reality, if the price is too low, you may face a bigger predicament down the road. Shoddy work and delayed schedules are just two of the consequences of a deal that is "too good to be true". When considering a contractor, for any work in your facility, look at the bigger picture. Take the time to check their references. If for no other reason security in these uncertain times is reason enough to make sure the individual(s) you are about to allow in your facility are trustworthy. In addition to the references you receive try to check the references the contractor doesn't give you. Put the word out that you are considering a particular company among your peers in the IFMA network. Find out what other people have to say. Ask the hard questions. As the old adage says: "An ounce of prevention...."

Second in importance to carefully checking references is the need to have a clear, binding contract. A properly executed contract between your organization and the contractor is crucial. Make sure that you state the specific terms of the proposal, the timeline, and the stipulated price. Take the time to write a statement of General Conditions, otherwise known as the fine print. If you feel that the contractor's proposal doesn't take all of your needs into account,

have them rewrite the proposal so that all of your concerns are covered. Simply signing a proposal from the contractor protects them not your company. Issue your own contract based on the information from the proposal and make sure you get back a copy with a signature from the contractor and make sure they get a copy with your signature. Before anyone sets foot on the property make absolutely sure that you have a current certificate of insurance with sufficient liability coverage. The certificate of insurance should be sent to you directly from the insurance agent. This will eliminate the possibility of the document being altered (trust me, you wouldn't be the first company to have a certificate of insurance that had the dates changed)

In this business we often need the work done yesterday. When time is of the essence you run the risk of hiring someone without the proper background information. Try to have a stable of different vendors at your disposal.

It's much easier than starting from scratch. If it is a contractor that will do smaller jobs on an as need basis try to agree to a blanket contract (along with the certificate of insurance) with a not to exceed amount. Should a specific project exceed the value of the blanket contract, a specific contract can always be written. When bidding larger jobs avoid having vendors visit your facility individually, have the contractors all come in at the same time. This will not only save you time, but it also gives the vendors an even playing field. More times than not, a contractor may point out issues that you haven't considered. Rather than going back to the other contractors with an enhanced specification, you can answer the question there, and avoid confusion with the other vendors. If you establish a timeline, stick to it. If you promise to respond to a vendor at a given time make sure you do so even if it's to tell them that you need more time to make a decision or the project is on hold. By establishing your punctuality, you are telling your contractor that you expect the same treatment. After you have agreed to a proposal and

continued on back cover

Sick Building Syndrome

By Seema Pandya



Information provided is directly from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Website at www.epa.gov. It has been edited for simplicity. Please reference the website for more detailed information.

The term "sick building syndrome" (SBS) is used to describe situations in which building occupants experience acute health and comfort effects that appear to be linked to time spent in a building, but no specific illness or cause can be identified.

Indicators of SBS include:

- Building occupants complain of symptoms associated with acute discomfort, e.g., headache; eye, nose, or throat irritation; dry cough; dry or itchy skin; dizziness and nausea; difficulty in concentrating; fatigue; and sensitivity to odors.
- The cause of the symptoms is not known.
- Most of the complainants report relief soon after leaving the building.

Causes of Sick Building Syndrome:

- **Inadequate ventilation:** reduced outdoor air ventilation. Inadequate ventilation, which may also occur if heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems do not effectively distribute air to people in the building
- **Chemical contaminants from indoor sources:** Most indoor air pollution comes from sources inside the building.
- **Chemical contaminants from outdoor sources:** The outdoor air that enters a building can be a source of indoor air pollution.
- **Biological contaminants:** Bacteria, molds, pollen, and viruses are types of biological contaminants.

Building Investigation Procedures

The goal of a building investigation is to identify and solve indoor air quality complaints in a way that prevents them from recurring and which avoids the creation of other problems.

An indoor air quality investigation procedure is best characterized as a cycle of information gathering, hypothesis formation, and hypothesis testing. It generally begins with a walk-through inspection of the problem area to provide information about the four basic factors that influence indoor air quality:

The occupants, the HVAC system, possible pollutant pathways, and possible contaminant sources.

Preparation for a walkthrough should include documenting easily obtainable information about the history of the building and of the complaints; identifying known HVAC zones and complaint areas; notifying occupants of the upcoming investi-

continued on page 4

Is It Time to Update the Fire Code?

by Frank Murphy, Facilitator Editor

We all deal with public places of assembly. If you work in a hotel certainly there are weddings and business conferences to arrange. At universities there are lecture halls and ball games. And in the corporate world there are annual meetings and trade shows.



In light of the recent tragedies in Warwick, RI and Chicago nightclubs, it is time to take a fresh look at building fire codes?

There are simple things we can do like pointing out to the audience where all the fire exits are located. They do this in airplanes and movie theaters; why not at nightclubs and rock concerts? Do you know that most people in an emergency instinctively try to leave a facility via the door they came in? There are more costly items such as requiring a fire sprinkler system in any place of public assembly that accommodates more than 100 people.

One item that has not been frankly addressed regarding the dual tragedies in Warwick, RI and Chicago is: was alcohol or drug impairment a factor? Both these events occurred in poorly lit venues after those in attendance had hours in which to consume alcohol. Can there really be an orderly escape with this type of crowd?

It's clear to me that one obvious solution is the installation of a fire sprinkler system in nightclubs with a capacity exceeding 100 people. If the authorities decide not to go this route, how about the old fashioned fire hose cabinet attached to a jockey pump? What happened to these devices anyway?

Conventional doorways are another problem at times of emergency and panic. In both Warwick, RI and Chicago, people became wedged in the entry door like so many fish trying to swim out of a bottle. Is it time for something new? Such as a whole section of wall that would release outward via magnetic latches tied into the fire alarm system?

Clearly, it is time for a fresh look at fire codes and life safety.

The Facilitator

The Facilitator is the newsletter of IFMA Boston and published quarterly.

Frank Murphy/Gloucester Builders Inc., Editor
Tiffany Hatt/Workplace Management Solutions, Assistant Editor
Seema Pandya/Catharsis Corporation, Health Editor

Submittals should be mailed to:

IFMA Newsletter
Boston Chapter/IFMA
Lakeside Office Park
591 North Avenue, Suite 3-2
Wakefield, MA 01880-1617

Electronic submittals can be sent to Frank Murphy: fmurphy47@aol.com

© 2003, Boston Chapter of IFMA

Board of Directors

President

Michael P. Kearns (Mike)
Liberty Mutual Group 617/654-3995

President-elect

Edward O'Rourke (Ed)
Environmental Health & Engineering, Inc.
617/964-8550

Vice Pres./Activities

Lori Stewart Coletti
Fox Relocation Management 617/946-2400

Vice Pres./Information

Karie Morrison-Logan
Design Management Corporation 508/650-1891

Vice Pres./Education

John J. Gioioso, CFM
Fresenius Medical Care 781/402-9000 x 5280

Treasurer

John S. Murphy (Sean)
CRESA Partners 617/742-8832

Past President/Sponsorships

Scott S. Tibbo, CFM
Expense Management Solutions, Inc. 508/460-7014

Community Projects

Samantha Herrle
Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates 617/520-9218

CFM - testing (pre exam)

Suzanne Kennedy, CFM
Wentworth Institute of Technology 617/989-4049

CFM - maintenance (post exam)

James Downey III, CFM
Stride Rite 617/824/6110

Industry Council Liaison

Elizabeth Karp, AIA (Liz)
Gensler 617/292-4400

Membership Co-chairs

Aurora Cammarata
R F Walsh Co., Inc. 617/269-5600 x 131
Joseph R. McDonald (JR)
Cushman & Wakefield of MA, Inc. 617/204-4121

Newsletter

Frank Murphy, MBA
Gloucester Builders 617/241-5513

Programs Co chairs

John J. Philomena (Jay)
Griswold, Heckel & Kelly Associates, Inc.
617/723-2180
Kathryn Thibeault, CFM (Kate)
Pearson Education 617/848-6010

Public Relations

Ana Cristina Côrrea
FM Consultant 781/641-6030

Awards

Judylynn Monaco
Diversified Project Management 617/243-3888

Special Events

Alicia Dernier, CFM
TKT 617/613-4391

Student Liaison

Kevin P. Duval
Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. 617/654-3653

Much of the success of IFMA and the Boston Chapter is achieved through volunteers. Many of the volunteer opportunities require a significant contribution of time and energy. One such position is the Newsletter Editor. We have been lucky over the last two years to have Frank Murphy of Gloucester Builders as our Newsletter Editor.

Frank has been the driving force behind The Facilitator. He has brought a lot of creativity to the job. Under his watch, the Facilitator has contained many relevant articles and pieces that covered many aspects of facility management from terrorism preparedness, to move management to many environmental topics. He has also recruited many reporters and article writers and engaged dozens of Member contributors while producing the Facilitator. Unfortunately for us, Frank will not be continuing in that role.

His tireless efforts and donation of time and energy are greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU FRANK!!

The IFMA Year.

It is hard to believe that this will be my last "President's Column" in the Facilitator. It feels like the IFMA year just started. Reflecting on what has been accomplished is 2002-2003 shows me that we did a lot.

The year has been full of excellent programs. The Programs Committee has again done an outstanding job of bringing the Membership quality, relevant programs. If you haven't attended one this year, I strongly encourage you to do so. Next year's Programs look to be just as good.

Our Local Networks are getting stronger all the time. If you are interested in specific industry or business sector groups, one of the Local Networks may be the thing for you. Please check our website, www.ifmaboston.org, under Networks for a schedule of upcoming meetings.

Membership totals have been holding steady. Although we have shrunk from the mid 700's in total Members of a couple of years ago, we have stabilized at about 700. I feel this is a good sign that even in such a poor economy, our Membership recognizes the value of their IFMA Membership. Our Membership Committee has been revamped and is full of energy and ideas for 2003 - 2004. Watch out for them.

Again, our Holiday Gala was a smashing success. Anyone who attended can attest to the fun had by all. We also raised the significant sum of \$10,000, which we donated again to the Children's AIDS Program (CAP).

The Chapter also participated in the annual Jimmy Fund Boston Marathon Walk to benefit cancer research and treatment. Many of us staffed a water station at mile 12. A few of us participated in the Walk. We found the event incredibly rewarding.

That sums up the past events. What about the rest of the year? We've got a lot planned. Check out the website for schedules on everything but let me highlight a few of the upcoming events for you.

On April 30th we will hold one of our bi-annual Member Breakfasts targeted at newer members to provide support, help them

continued on page 4

2003 Program & Events Calendar

April 30, 2003, Wednesday, 7:30 – 9:30 am

Spring Membership Breakfast.

Host: Key Office Interiors. Current members of the Boston Chapter who would like to learn more about the Chapter's activities and how they can "activate" their memberships are invited to this free event.

May 16, 2003, Friday, 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Master Planning for the Masters - A Case Study of Change Management at the Museum of Fine Arts During Expansion. The MFA is in the midst of a major renovation and expansion, a perfect location for this topic.

June 5, 2003, Thursday, 6:00 – 10:00 pm

Annual Awards and Chapter Celebration

Great networking, great food - a wonderful time for all who attend.

June 17, 2003, Tuesday

9th Annual Golf Outing

A must for FM industry golfers, both serious and otherwise.

July 17, 2003, Thursday, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Networking Cruise on the Charles

Location: Charles River. Get together with your IFMA colleagues on a summer evening for networking and a presentation on networking.

Go to www.ifmaboston.org for details on these events.

HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

continued from page 2

gation; and, identifying key individuals needed for information and access.

The initial walkthrough should allow the investigator to develop some possible explanations for the complaint.

Although air sampling for contaminants might seem to be the logical response to occupant complaints, it seldom provides information about possible causes.

Solutions to Sick Building Syndrome

Pollutant source removal or modification is an effective approach to resolving an indoor air quality problem when sources are known and control is feasible. **Increasing ventilation** rates and air distribution often can be a cost effective means of reducing indoor pollutant levels.

Air cleaning can be a useful adjunct to source control and ventilation but has certain limitations

Education and communication are important elements in both remedial and preventive indoor air quality management programs.

Additional helpful reference material can be found on the following web sites: www.iaqcouncil.org and www.iaqa.org. Both of these sites list qualified contractors in this field.

Seema Pandya is the executive director of Catharsis Corporation. She is a licensed physical therapist specializing in orthopedic injuries.

IFMA

Events



Attending our "New Building Codes" program are Sean Murphy (Cresa Partners), Kerie Morrison-Logan, and Anthony Nardella (Key Office Interiors), Membership Co-chair



Program co-ordinators for "Ergonomics" program: r to l: Eric Corbin, Archoustics and Tom Smart, First Choice Office Solutions



The lovely Tracy Hayes, Workplace Management Solutions, being serenaded by the Tufts University Choir at the Holiday Gala



Jay Philomena, now of Stubbins Assoc., with Herman Faigenbaum at the "Elasticity of Space" program