

INDUSTRY EVENT

FMs lack contract management skills

Cathy Hayward

Many facilities managers fail to manage contracts properly and are often not given the correct skills to look after the outsourcing process, according to Patrick Jongbloet, (pictured right) a director at eager-4-excellence. Speaking at a seminar at the FM Expo event in October, Jongbloet will tell delegates that time and again inhouse FMs face contract management problems during their first outsourcing experience when they are trying to adapt from managing the inhouse operation to monitoring the performance of the external supplier.

"A different set of skills and competencies is necessary but the FM is just expected to make that transition without any kind of personal development or training input," he will argue. Quality monitoring and performance review skills; a knowledge of contract law; employment law; and potentially skills for negotiation and dispute resolution are all essential.

But other issues including the facilities team feeling that, once the tender negotiations are completed and the contract awarded, it will take care of itself also cause problems. "Nothing could be further away from reality as a solid



working partnership needs a lot of hard work from both sides," says Jongbloet. "It is necessary to build trust and understanding, achieve a joint buy-in into a win-win philosophy and foster a combined drive and a determination to achieve joint agreed objectives."

The concept of partnering is simple, he will say. Clients and suppliers can achieve more by co-operating rather than being adversarial, and most of the time the latter is found to be at the heart of the problem when relationships are at breaking point.

Jongbloet will be giving out further contract management tips at the Effective Contract Management module organised by BIFM Training (session A4 on 13 October from 2pm-5pm).

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