

Membership Matters

Why Perform an FMEP?

by David A. Cain, Ph.D.

The FMEP can stimulate institutions to improve quality and productivity, and produce pride by recognizing organizational achievement.

—Jack Hug
APPA Past President and Member Emeritus

We are extremely pleased with the team's professionalism and effort. We especially appreciate the recommendations that we can immediately begin to use to improve the level of facilities management.

—Brian S. White, Superintendent,
Plant Operations & Maintenance,
The Ohio State University/
Mansfield and North Central
State College.

Strategic Assessment Model [SAM] is incorporated)

- To change direction or culture
- To assist its journey toward continuous improvement and show customers its commitment to this improvement
- To activate involvement and participation
- To conduct an external check-up prior to an accreditation review
- To ensure high-quality performance and customer satisfaction
- To improve internally before others make them
- To allow current facilities management leadership to take a fresh look at its performance

- To start new facilities management leadership out on the right foot
- To face the challenges and opportunities first hand and avoid potential outsourcing.

Who Makes the Decision for an FMEP?

In many cases the request for an FMEP comes from the leadership of the facilities management department (executive director or directors), but not always. Sometimes the request comes from the institution's administration providing oversight to the facilities agency (vice presidents, chief financial officers, president, or chancellor). In any case, the rationale for an FMEP is motivated by the need to:

One of the most successful and beneficial programs provided by APPA is the Facilities Management Evaluation Program or FMEP. An FMEP is simply an evaluation of the capital asset and facilities management program at your institution. The FMEP program is sponsored and coordinated by APPA but is conducted by peer institutional members. Its sole purpose is to assess your organization's current performance and provide you with practical to tactical information, ideas, and strategies for continuous improvement.

Why Do an FMEP?

Institutions conduct FMEPs for various reasons, such as:

- To establish performance indicators/benchmarks (note that APPA's

David Cain is assistant vice president for administration at Northern Arizona University. He can be reached at david.cain@nau.edu.

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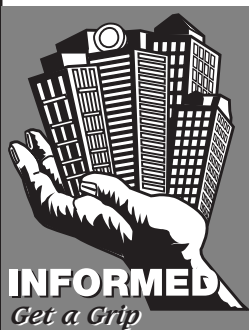
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- Review current practices;
- Make adjustments/changes for overall effectiveness and improvement; and
- Make sure the department is using its resources effectively and efficiently.

Accurate Reviews and Knowledge Evaluators

Having a formal FMEP is much like going for your annual physical examination—you know that it is good for

you, but you fear that the results may discover something unpleasant. Therefore, you want to be sure that your doctor is experienced, competent, thorough, and professional. Likewise, the individuals entrusted to evaluate your facilities program must also be respected, knowledgeable, and have all the virtues you expect.

For this reason, the FMEP uses a peer-review process. FMEP team members are seasoned facilities pro-

professionals who understand the operations and practice of the facilities management environment. Each FMEP team member is selected by the team leader and approved by the institution. For example, an FMEP team for a community college would provide members from other community colleges. Likewise, if an institution has a medical center or hospital, the FMEP team would have peer members from similar environments. The commitment to customize FMEP teams ensures a high-level evaluation and a thorough and balanced review.

What is the FMEP Process?

The FMEP process can take approximately 10 to 12 weeks or longer from the initial site visit to final printed reports. Institutions work closely with the APPA office and the team leader to determine the schedule based on the specific needs and requirements of the institution. The basic critical path for the FMEP process is outlined below.

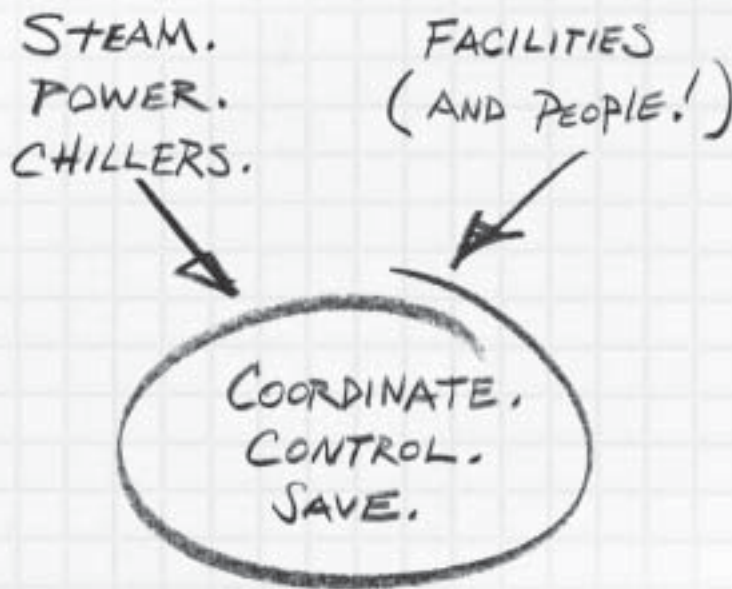


Is an FMEP Right for My Institution?

Whether you are trying to baseline your facilities management profile, assess where you currently are, measure the performance of a well-established operation, prepare for an administrative review or institutional accreditation, or just want to find out how your operation fits with the mission and vision of the institution, an FMEP may be right for your needs. The objective of every FMEP is to achieve the following:

- Assess facilities operations performance in relationship to your institutional and departmental mission, goals, and objectives.
- Enhance the continuous improvement process.
- Strengthen the ability of your institution to serve the customer's needs.

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Top 10 FMEP Benefits

The benefits of having an FMEP at your facility are that it will allow your department to

1. Receive a customized evaluation report with recommendations for each performance category.
2. Receive a review by peers who understand your resources, constraints, and issues.
3. Show leadership and vision by requesting the evaluation.
4. Obtain a first-hand understanding of the relevant issues facing your department.
5. Obtain credible data to make and monitor necessary changes.
6. Evaluate information to become the buy-in catalyst for the department.
7. Engage your stakeholders in your continuous improvement process through evaluation knowledge.
8. Illustrate to your senior administration the willingness to improve, change, and align with the mission.
9. Understand and serve your customer better.
10. Show that in-house resources can be utilized effectively, therefore avoiding outsourcing.

- Assist in developing a planning tool for strategic and long-range purposes.
- Emphasize department staff participation to create immense buy-in to change.
- Focus on the most important, cogent issues.
- Develop a menu of realistic recommendations for improvement.
- Improve the understanding for facilities management issues in your department and throughout the institution.
- Obtain conclusions based on data.
- Provide an FMEP team to tailor specific needs to the facilities management department.

Recent FMEP Improvements

In 2003, a task force commissioned by APPA aligned the annual Award for Excellence criteria with the FMEP criteria. The group was composed of

Val Peterson, Doug Christensen, Rich Bowen, Ron Hicks, Jim Christenson, Jack Hug, Ward Simpson, and myself and we met several times in Phoenix to align the FMEP criteria to the new APPA standards. This task force had experience in conducting over 40 total FMEPs.

Currently, under the leadership of Alan Bigger, APPA's Vice President for Professional Affairs, this committee is developing and refining an electronic

FMEP manual to be used to train APPA members who are willing to become FMEP team members. The first APPA training of future FMEP members is scheduled to take place during the Forum this July, in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned for your opportunity to get involved. 🏢

