



Book Review Editor: Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., CEFP, AIA

**Is there a textbook or reference** that addresses all types of facility management? Not just higher education facilities but commercial, residential, office, and industrial? This column attempts to find the answer, but unfortunately the subject is too large to cover all of those areas.

In a slightly different approach, both books will be reviewed simultaneously.

### A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

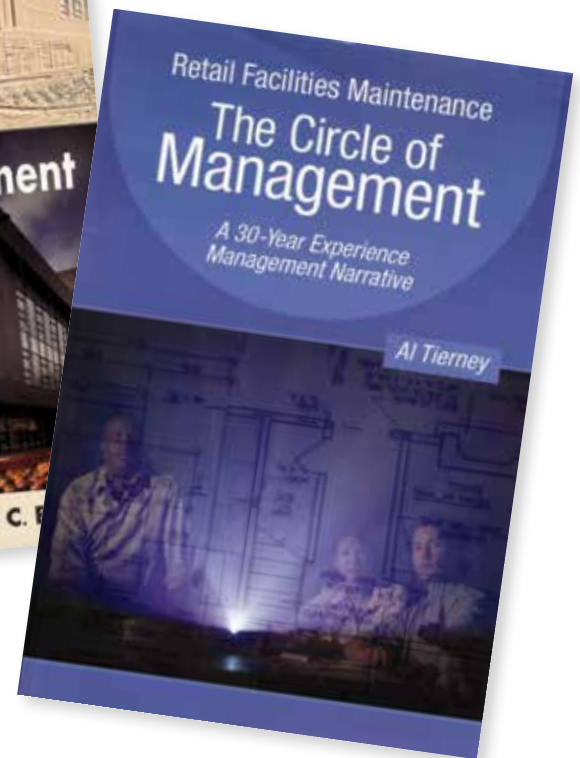
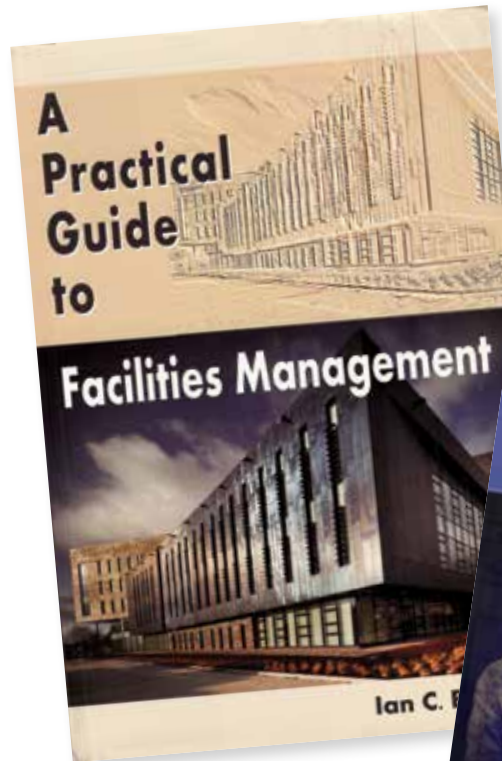
By Ian Barker, Whittles Publishing, Dunbeath, Scotland, 2013, 288 pages, \$89.95 softcover.

### RETAIL FACILITIES MAINTENANCE, THE CIRCLE OF MANAGEMENT: A 30-YEAR EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT NARRATIVE

By Al Tierney, West Bow Press, Bloomington, IN, 2013, 175 pages, \$14.99, softcover.

As I looked for a suitable textbook to teach facilities management to construction engineering students, I happened across *A Practical Guide to Facilities Management*. My goal was to provide a general, introductory textbook that would embody the elements of facility management while avoiding a specific client base. I didn't want the book focused solely on higher education despite being the second largest owner-industry group in the U.S. after the government. However, market presence says a lot to the publishing community.

Of all the FM books I've read, the largest number of authors come from the U.K., and probably for good reason. They manage facilities much older than those found in North America, so



they're doing something right to keep these buildings functional. There are differences in terminology, which is a minor issue for the life-long professional, but may be confusing for a student new to the field. But it's hard to ignore the knowledge base coming from the U.K. with respect to facilities.

Then I found out about *Retail Facilities Maintenance, The Circle of Management*, which addressed two areas of concern and written from a U.S. perspective and focused on commercial (retail) facilities, not education. However, *Retail Facilities Maintenance* appears more like a memoir and much less like

a textbook. That doesn't mean it can't be used in a classroom setting, it just requires different techniques.

Barker's book is organized like a textbook without the end-of-chapter problems or questions. Instead, there are several insets labeled "Notes to self," "Warning," "Theory and information slot," "bright ideas," and "Aide Memoire" that emphasize points and/or provide additional information. I also appreciated a summary of several acronyms at the beginning of the text, which helped with the colloquial differences in English.

Barker also goes into significant detail on subjects of personnel management and

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policies/procedures, which makes sense for those focused on managing a large facility. Techniques discussed include many of the tools presented in APPA U—Maslow’s hierarchy, SWOT analysis, and dashboards—but there are also several other concepts discussed including: Herzberg’s Motivational Theory; McGregor – Theory X and Theory Y; and Golden Thread. I appreciated seeing these additional management tools.

Tierney’s book addresses the same topics, but in a much more personal and narrative fashion based solely on the author’s experience. There is a good discussion about preventive maintenance vs. the “fix it when it breaks” approach to maintenance, and a balance between the two methods. As facility managers we are always challenged with the value of preventive maintenance vs. responding to the problems as they arrive based on the notion that doing things in advance are more expensive. Tierney provides a thoughtful discussion with a focus on customer service.

Due to the business (profit) focus on Tierney’s experiences and his customers’ ability to choose a different facility provider, there are good discussion about how facility management works in to improve customer service and addressing the value proposition of facilities. This difference between FM’s for owners with “captured” customers, and how to respond to their needs vs. customers who have the option to choose who provides their facility and facility management is instructive.

While I have a preference for Barker’s book over Tierney’s (due to the amount of detail and style), I find both books

useful and instructive. Given the opportunity to teach a course in facility management I would use both books to “cover all the bases.”

For FM professionals, both books can provide valuable reference information. Choosing one over the other really depends on personal preference. ☺

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