

This was an assignment to promote a facilities management company in the Seattle area about a week after the Seahawks won the Super Bowl, thus that reference. The idea in my mind was to outline the advantages of a facilities management company at every level of the firm.

CONFIDENTIAL COPY

When to Run ~ When to Punt

how facilities management contributes to success

Joanne M. Anderson

Every commercial endeavor needs to provide an attractive, safe, clean environment to promote contentment and productivity among employees and a great first impression on customers. Whether you are a solo entrepreneur, middle manager, office supervisor, shopkeeper of a boutique store or executive vice president of a Fortune 500 corporation, you need to sort out which jobs you run with in-house and which ones you punt to a contractor.

The cliché “time is money” may be overused, but that does not make it overstated. Delegating comes into play when the work load is best divvied up among a few or many, akin to a football team. Each employee and contractor has different skills, experiences, positions and abilities, and when put together, the enterprise runs like a well-oiled machine or the Seattle Seahawks in Super Bowl XLVIII.

The savvy business owner or manager realizes that cleanliness, function and appearance of the exterior and interior rank at the top, but actually cleaning, repairing and maintaining the space is not a best use of time (aka money).

For employees

Studies have shown that a well-maintained work environment contributes to increased productivity, enthusiasm and commitment. Employees are motivated by many factors beyond wages, and those include challenging work and personal achievement, as well as being in a comfortable, safe, functional work place.

Having satisfied employees reduces turnover expenses and disruptive personnel management issues. On the other hand, staff morale is adversely affected when building systems fail or their work spaces are not sufficiently serviced. Time spent grumbling, looking for tools and trying to figure out a remedy is wasteful and frustrating.

For customers

The customer butters the bread, so to speak, and makes the proverbial bottom line a reality. There’s an adage in horse care that goes: No hoof, no horse (referring to regular foot care). In business jargon, it’s simply: No customer, no business.

Some first impressions are formed at the website ~ meaning, you need a professionally designed and maintained one ~ but just as many or more are

made at the front door. Someone walking in might not notice sparkling clean glass, non-slip rugs, working lights or comfortable climate control, but you can bet they will recognize dirty glass, a slippery floor, burned out lights and stuffy air. That's human nature.

Anything sloppy, dirty or poorly maintained instantly calls into question the quality of products and services. A company that doesn't put forth an effort to have the "front of the house" in good shape probably isn't doing much better in the "back of the house." The only one for whom you are doing a favor by cutting corners on maintenance and repair is your competitor.

For the company

Outsourcing facilities management is a strategic, cost-effective approach to assure optimum function and order. Unless you're in the vacuum cleaner or landscaping industry, it makes little sense to purchase equipment and associated supplies, study operation manuals, keep up with warranty terms, then assign someone to clean the rugs and trim the hedges. And what about plumbing, retrofitting space with new office configurations, HVAC maintenance and dirty windows on the 7th floor?

In a perfect world, you look for a facilities management company which cares about your business as much as you do, and this is where the rubber meets the road for IMS. Its corporate philosophy, which permeates every employee and every task on every job, is grounded in integrity and superior service.

Smart business leaders embrace the principles of best practices and a healthy, corporate culture, which includes contractors who share high standards of efficiency, quality and pride. IMS additionally embraces Christian values of compassion, fair-mindedness and a genuine commitment to serve.

For peace of mind

Credit Benjamin Franklin for the astute observation that an "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It holds as true today as in 1736. The benefits that come from a trustworthy, dedicated facilities management program are reflected not only in the bottom line, but also in the faces of employees and customers.

Operating a business is challenging, frustrating, rewarding, discouraging, demanding and stimulating all at once. There are moments of exhilaration and days of despair. Profit may seem elusive, and time slips away. Passing your space maintenance to a knowledgeable, highly skilled company composed of hands that willingly serve scores a peace of mind which frees management and staff to focus solely on what they do best ~ while IMS does precisely the same.

Joanne M. Anderson is a freelance writer and author in Blacksburg, Va.
www.jmawriter.com