

- BIFM TRAINING'S FLAGSHIP COURSE 'UNDERSTANDING FM' HAS BEEN EDUCATING ENTRANTS TO THE SECTOR FOR TWENTY YEARS
- WE ASKED JOHN NAHAR TO KEEP A DIARY IN ORDER TO MAKE THOSE THINKING OF SENDING DELEGATES AWARE OF WHAT'S TAUGHT

Back in June, *FM World's* John Nahar toughed out the sector's pre-eminent introduction course. Here's his report.

STRONG FOUNDATIONS



Anne Lennox-Martin in action

DAY 1 SESSION ONE
THE IMPORTANCE OF FM
MARTIN DAVIES

DIRECTOR OF TRAINING
Martin Davies began by introducing the group to the course and each another. We were from a diverse range of organisations, including the Home Office, British Board of Film Classification and TV shopping channel QVC. I noticed a good gender balance, and attendees came from as far as Qatar.

After an overview of the sector's history, Davies gave us a simplified version of a facilities manager's role – no easy task, since, as we know, the role is ever-expanding. He explained the business-critical nature of FM.

SESSION TWO
UNDERSTANDING BUILDINGS
ROBERT FERNANDEZ

CONSULTANT
For this session, we were split into smaller groups and asked to brainstorm a list of considerations for a given building area. My group was given car parks, for which we listed security passes, pedestrian safety, access routes and deliveries.

As a group, we went on to discuss building structures, columns, beams, slabs, cladding and how, in the design process, it's important to consider the cost implications of the building in use, for example, in terms of cleaning. (*Sounds familiar — Ed.*)

Fernandez stressed the

importance of keeping records of fire drills and tests, and of equipment maintenance, as when things go wrong a lack of records can have legal implications.

SESSION THREE
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
ROBERT FERNANDEZ

CONSULTANT
After laying these solid foundations, we moved on to consider property management, looking at the pros and cons of owning and leasing a property. We discussed the key legislation involved and the importance of taking ownership of the issue to ensure that everything is legally compliant and not left to chance

SESSION FOUR
PRACTICAL SPACE MANAGEMENT
WES MCGREGOR

DIRECTOR, ADVANCED WORKPLACE ASSOCIATES
Space planning is not simply placing people into a building, but rather ensuring that they perform to the best of their ability, explained Wes McGregor. We learned the importance of balancing a business' long term needs with its day-to-day operations - high quality workplace versus low cost operation was the issue that needed balancing.

A practical workshop finished the day, in which we were given a space budget for a fictitious company and an empty stack plan to complete. This meant placing each department of a company on to certain floors of the building, while considering departmental relationships, office size and future growth of the business.

DAY 2 SESSION ONE
RELOCATION MANAGEMENT
ROBERT FERNANDEZ

CONSULTANT
Fernandez opened the day with a relocation/move management quiz. Going through the answers as a group was very valuable - we had to basically put together a checklist of everything an FM needs to do when moving office. This covered choosing the right removal company, internal liasing and external communication (fire services, cleaners, utility companies), through to guiding the employees through a smooth transfer.

SESSION TWO
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
COLIN ASHFORD

CONSULTANT
Our next session leader, Colin Ashford, began by talking us through the basics of global warming. He highlighted the



John Nahar
(third from
right) at the
course

widescale global impact and emphasised the need to monitor our energy consumption and output.

We looked at energy use in buildings and the tools we can use to monitor and subsequently manage energy usage. We also considered the challenges involved in compliance with legislation such as the carbon reduction commitment.

In an absorbing session on sustainability, we brainstormed energy saving measures in FM-related areas, for example, in terms of office lighting.

SESSION THREE **MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT**

ROBERT FERNANDEZ

CONSULTANT

In this session, we were asked a simple question: why should we maintain buildings? After the obvious answers (cost, legal implications, cosmetic appearance), we moved on to more complex situations. In one interesting example a company had to fix a broken window – tricky, when the only way to access the window was by ripping a wall down... to the tune of £40,000.

Through this and other examples, we were shown how developing a maintenance plan and arranging a building

condition survey can nip potential problems in the bud. This led to a discussion on the benefits of using of CAFM software.

SESSION FOUR **LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE**

ROBERT FERNANDEZ

CONSULTANT

Taking a break from the world of bricks and mortar, we zoomed in on the microscopic world of bacterium – the prevention and control of the dreaded Legionella. We looked at how the bacteria manifests, why it is dangerous and what effects it can have on the human body. We examined the legal aspects and the preventative measures that can be used to minimise the spread of the disease.

SESSION FIVE **SOURCING STRATEGIES AND** **SERVICE CONTRACTS**

LUCY JEYNES

DIRECTOR, LARCH

CONSULTING

Lucy Jaynes took us through the variety of ways an FM might



develop a contracting strategy. In a useful exercise, a series of FM tasks were passed to us as flashcards and we were asked to bundle them into various categories to outsource to a contractor. Each group had a different outlook on whom to pass the work, but we learned to adopt a systematic approach – a skill we could take straight into the workplace.

The task brought up the concepts of outsourcing and in-sourcing. From here we went on to discuss service level agreements, stressing the importance of getting the most out of a contract.

SITE VISIT

It was time to leave our desks for the eagerly awaited site visit, which had been arranged internally at the Holiday Inn, Kensington. Martin O'Connor, chief engineer, took us behind the scenes at what we learnt was the largest IHG hotel in the world. We heard how the original boilers had been dropped into place during construction with the boiler room built around them. 50 years later, when the boilers were in need of replacement, O'Connor explained how he had to re-route piping and wiring through a new, huge hole in the wall.

The presence of guests complicated matters since any interruption to service would almost certainly have financial repercussions. As a result, replacement temporary boilers had to be sourced from Europe.

It was left to a neat metaphor to wrap up the second day of our training: like the sprinkler system, the role of an FM in the hotel is gigantic, but from the outside it goes unnoticed.

DAY 3 (WORLD FM DAY) **SESSION ONE** **HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR FMS**

LIZ SKELTON

SENIOR CONSULTANT, SYSTEM
CONCEPTS

Liz Skelton began our last training

day with a discussion about health and safety. She covered our responsibilities as a health and safety manager and how legal requirements have an impact on our job, with particular attention to fire, asbestos and flooding.

A risk assessment exercise left us with a workplace-ready checklist for when we faced situations in the real world.

In lieu of World FM Day, BIFM Training had decided to celebrate with a champagne raffle draw. The lucky winner was Christopher Granville of Surrey and Borders NHS Foundation Trust.

SESSION TWO **CUSTOMER-CENTRIC FM**

ANNE LENNOX-MARTIN

CONSULTANT

Anne Lennox-Martin started our last session with an introduction to the basics of customer service. We discussed important techniques – eye contact, manners, smiling, empathy – with an emphasis on the need to respond to each individual differently.

We looked at customer expectations and how to deliver them, spending a lot of time considering the emotions that a customer might go through, as well as how we should expect to be treated as a customer.

This wrapped up our three days of informative and challenging training. We left the course brimming with confidence and keen to test our skills in the real world. **FM**

MORE INFO

The 'Understanding FM' course is suitable for FMs with less than three years' experience. Delegates can use the course as part of the ILM Level 3 qualifications in FM. Full details of BIFM's qualification map can be found here: <http://bit.ly/oQoc7O>