



Interview to:  
**Julie Kortens**  
*Chair of the British Institute of  
Facilities Management*



Today we interview Julie Kortens, Chair of the British Institute of Facilities Management. She will be one of the speakers at CIFMers 2016 and she shares with us her vision about Facility Management.

**1. In your opinion, how should an office be to promote creativity and collaboration?**

There is no doubt that the place where we work has a huge impact on our productivity and wellbeing, whether we work in a large corporate office, a small business or even work from home. It is becoming more and more important for property developers, occupiers, designers and FM teams to ensure that they provide the most appropriate environment for their respective organisation. Physical space is a tool to help drive collaboration and creativity, and it is important that, wherever practicable, we provide spaces where people are free to work in the way that makes them the most productive. Creative organisations thrive on sharing ideas, brainstorming and communicating across different departments. This is hampered when the space is restricted by enclosed offices, walls and unnecessary partitioning. A variety of zones which provide staff with the opportunity to share ideas, work collaboratively without barriers is essential. That said, variety is also important as is providing spaces where quiet work is possible when needed, even creatives need quiet time!

**2. How can Facility Managers enhance employees' engagement?**

FM staff are key to employee engagement. They are invariably the first point of contact for staff both in terms of office services but also as a general knowledge hub and source of useful information. Ensuring that staff know what is happening in their building and have an input into change processes goes a long way to improving employee engagement. If the FM team is managing the refurbishment of a suite of meeting rooms for example, ensuring that staff have an input to the process, feel like they have been consulted and understand what alternative arrangements have been put in place cannot be anything but a good thing. Ensuring there is comprehensive communication flow across all FM activities will make a significant contribution towards employee morale and employee engagement on a day to day basis.

**3. How can FM departments collaborate with Corporate Responsibility?**

I would suggest that in lots of organisations the FM can both collaborate and lead on corporate responsibility by providing expertise and focus on internally-facing initiatives. They are best placed to manage energy efficiency and carbon reduction initiatives and they can manage and facilitate recycling. The cleaning team is at the forefront of managing waste and encouraging them to take part and to share what they are doing is a great engagement tool. FM teams engage with staff at all levels and are a fantastic resource when it comes to assessing which initiatives will work and which won't. I have experience of organisations where the FM team organises "Grow your Own" vegetable and fruit competitions with staff and the catering team, they recycle cooking oil and organise other competitions of this kind. Great illustrations of the impact FM can have on CR.

**4. How do you think CIFMers 2016 can contribute with the sector?**

High profile conferences such as CIFMers 2016 are a great showcase for the FM profession and industry. They not only inspire people within the industry to progress and to develop by sharing expertise but also show the leaders of industry what an important contribution FM makes to business, economy and society.