

2023

# FM TRAINING OUTLOOK SURVEY FINAL REPORT

ProFMI®

PROFESSIONAL  
FACILITY MANAGEMENT  
INSTITUTE

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*Special thanks to ProFMI's industry partners who helped disseminate the survey to facility management professionals around the globe.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2019, the Professional Facility Management Institute (ProFMI) and *Building Operating Management (BOM)* magazine have been conducting the Facility Management (FM) Training Outlook Survey to determine the need for facility management training and credentials from both the management and staff points of view. The latest survey was conducted in January through April of 2023 to identify top FM challenges and workforce trends, determine the current need for FM training and credentials, and gauge how sentiments may have shifted over time.

This study answered several key questions across the following four categories.

## 1 BUILDING AND RETAINING THE FM WORKFORCE

**What are the top challenges facing FMs today? How can organizations improve retention and overcome staffing pressures?**

- 66% of facility professionals identify staffing & retention as a top challenge for 2023.
- 54% of FM managers and staff have left or have considered leaving their job in the past year.
- The top 3 ways for organizations to retain facility professionals are to provide:
  1. Better work-life balance.
  2. Opportunities for professional development.
  3. Increased compensation or benefits.



★ **Organizational growth and attrition are driving the need for more FM staff. Providing an attractive work environment and employee development programs can help attract and retain talent.**

## 2 THE VALUE OF FM TRAINING



**Does an FM skills gap exist in most organizations? Do the benefits of training justify the investment in FM staff development?**

- 86% of FM employers say there's a gap between the knowledge and skills their team has and what they need to excel.
- Training can make an impact, with 81% of FM employers saying that FM training and credentials result in better job performance.
- 56% of FM employers are planning to implement FM training this year.

★ **FM managers see improved job performance, confidence, credibility, and job satisfaction as a result of FM training, yet access to training dollars and resources is lagging behind the need.**

*"In order for the facility industry to evolve and successfully exhibit value, it is incumbent upon us, as its beloved practitioners, to continually advance our skill sets and employ new knowledge within our organization, collectively raising the bar. As the saying states, 'a rising tide lifts all boats'; we must do our part to raise the tide."*



**John Rimer, CFM, ProFM,**  
President, FM360 Consulting



### 3 ADDRESSING THE FM SKILLS GAP

What knowledge and skills do FM managers and staff need? How do priorities differ?

- FM managers identify strategic planning, capital planning, leadership skills, project management, and sustainability as top training priorities for themselves.
- FM managers say their team's top training needs are environmental health & safety, communication, compliance & standards, leadership skills, and project management.
- FM staff say their top training needs are innovation, project management, strategic planning, capital planning, and compliance & standards.



- ★ The FM skill set is very broad and is constantly evolving. FM employers must start by identifying required skills, benchmarking existing skills, and setting a plan to address the gaps.

### 4 IMPORTANCE OF FM CREDENTIALS & QUALIFICATIONS



Are professional credentials and qualifications as important in FM as in other professions? What value do they provide for FM staff and employers?

- 62% of FM managers say that credentials and qualifications are more important in 2023 than in previous years.
- 86% of FM professionals would pursue an FM credential if their employer supported them financially.
- 81% of FM managers say a credential or qualification is an influential factor in hiring or promoting FM staff.
- 81% of FM staff say FM training and credentials result in better credibility within the organization and with clients.

- ★ Professional credentials and qualifications help define and deliver the skills and knowledge employers are seeking. They provide FM professionals with a quick, affordable, and practical way to elevate their careers.

### Looking Ahead

With fewer roadblocks and restrictions on business in 2023, organizations around the world are focused on growth. Workplaces are being retrofitted for optimal functionality and productivity, retail spaces are growing, and building technologies are advancing faster than ever.

This rapid growth is adding strain to already short-staffed FM departments. Competition for FM talent has never been greater. Employee development programs can help improve staff retention and eliminate skills gaps.

For FM professionals, training and credentials are an increasingly popular way to build skills, create job stability, and pave the way for new opportunities.

- ★ For further analysis and resources pertaining to the 2023 FM Training Outlook Survey, visit [www.ProFMi.org/2023-insights](http://www.ProFMi.org/2023-insights).

*"While 2023 presents a somewhat brighter picture of the work environment overall, we know the issue of retention and recruitment of FM professionals will be a pressing issue for the foreseeable future. Ensuring our existing workforce is highly skilled and credentialed will help offset the shortfall of professionals available in the external FM pipeline."*



**Stormy Friday, MPA,**  
Hon. FMA, IFMA Fellow  
President, The Friday Group  
ProFMi Commission Chair

# BUILDING AND RETAINING THE FM WORKFORCE

Staffing and retention continue to be at the forefront of facility managers' minds in 2023. With business growth coinciding with staff retirement and turnover, FM leaders are looking for individuals with technical and managerial skills who can make an immediate impact. The result is a competitive hiring landscape in an industry already financially strained by inflation and supply chain challenges.

Employers who can increase staff retention keep their knowledge in-house and reduce the time and cost associated with recruitment and onboarding.



## Staffing and Retention Top the List of FM Challenges.

**54%** 54% of FM managers and staff have left or have considered leaving their job in the past year.

**50%** 50% of FM leaders expect to have open FM-related positions in 2023.

Top 3 challenges facing facility professionals:

- 1 Staffing and retention
- 2 Budgeting/funding
- 3 Rising costs

## Organizational Growth Is Driving Staffing Pressures.

**64%** 64% of FM employers have had difficulty finding individuals with the required **technical skills**.

**36%** 36% of FM employers have had difficulty finding individuals with the required **management skills**.

Top 3 reasons for open positions:

- 1 Growth requires more staff
- 2 Lost staff to other employers
- 3 Retirement of senior staff

## Look Beyond Compensation to Improve Retention.

Facility professionals identified the top 3 factors that would influence them to stay at their current organization:

- 1 Better work-life balance
- 2 Development/training opportunities
- 3 Increased compensation/benefits

**50%** 50% of organizations offer flexible work schedules to FM staff.

**36%** 36% of organizations offer hybrid or remote work options to FM staff.

TAKE ACTION

When faced with retention challenges, increased compensation is a quick solution. However, the effects are short-lived and compensation packages can be easily matched by other organizations. Employers can increase job satisfaction and loyalty with creative work-life balance solutions and development opportunities.

# THE VALUE OF FM TRAINING

The facility management industry is not alone in its staffing and retention challenges. Similarly, employers across most professions are experiencing a rapidly growing skills gap.

Upskilling or reskilling existing staff is the preferred solution to the skills gap as training increases job performance, satisfaction, and confidence resulting in improved retention rates.



## Staff and Employers Identify an FM Skills Gap.

86%

86% of **FM managers** say there's a gap between the skills and knowledge their team has and what they need to excel.

78%

78% of **FM staff** say they could use more FM knowledge, skills, or training **to advance in their job or organization.**

58%

58% of employers have a formal definition of the FM knowledge and skills required for their FM team or department.

▲ Up 18% from 2022

## More Facility Managers Are Recognizing the Benefits of Training.

81%

81% of FM managers say FM training and credentials result in better job performance.  
▲ Up 9% from 2022

74%

74% of FM managers say FM training and credentials result in increased confidence.  
▲ Up 12% from 2022

According to FM managers, the top benefits of FM training and credentials are:



**Better job performance**



**Increased confidence**



**Increased credibility**



**Increased job satisfaction**

## Access to FM Training Lags Behind the Need.

50%

50% of FM managers say they have been encouraged by senior leadership to increase FM training for their staff.

56%

56% of employers are planning to implement FM training this year.

52%

52% of employers say they provide funding for staff to pursue external FM training or credentials/qualifications.

40%

40% of FM professionals who have considered leaving a position say that development opportunities would influence them to stay.

*"All FM companies will need to either train or hire-in the skills required for the future requirements of a new look FM due to the rapid advancements in AI, robotics, and adaptive reuse together with the decline in office usage."*



2023 Survey Participant

TAKE ACTION

Organizations with a skills gap must choose between upskilling and outsourcing. Employee development is an investment. It requires time and funding, but it can yield an exceptional return through increased competence, efficiencies, retention, and confidence.

# ADDRESSING THE FM SKILLS GAP

Facility managers require a much broader skill set than most professionals. From trades skills, to technical and soft skills, it can take an entire career to learn it all through experience. While some areas of FM change rapidly and need constant attention, such as technology, regulations, and standards, most skills have a long shelf life and are transferable across positions.

Understanding where skills gaps exist and investing in facility management training early will benefit individuals and employers for years to come.



## ► The Big Picture Goal Is Becoming Clearer.

80%

80% of FM managers say the 24 topics included in the ProFM Body of Knowledge cover all the knowledge and skills needed for their teams' success.

56%

56% of FM managers identified environmental health & safety as a training priority for their teams.

59%

59% of FM staff identified innovation as a top training priority for themselves.

## ► FM Managers and Staff Identify Different Priorities.

Managers were asked to identify areas where their teams could benefit from training and areas where they themselves needed training. Staff were asked to identify their own training needs. Here are their top priorities:

### Where FM Teams Need Training (According to Managers)

- Environmental Health & Safety
- Communication
- Compliance & Standards
- Leadership Skills
- Project Management
- Strategic Planning

### Where FM Staff Need Training (Self-Identified)

- Innovation
- Project Management
- Strategic Planning
- Capital Planning
- Compliance & Standards
- Collaboration

### Where FM Managers Need Training (Self-Identified)

- Strategic Planning
- Capital Planning
- Leadership Skills
- Project Management
- Sustainability
- Contract Management

*"Few other industries (besides FM) require that their staff have such a broad range of skills, from boiler and chiller plant operations, to energy management, to customer relations, to budgets and contract administration. In this field, you can't just be a jack-of-all-trades, you have to be a master of all."*



2023 Survey Participant

TAKE ACTION

Addressing an organization's FM skills gap starts with an understanding of existing skills and future needs. Individual and team self-assessments are a simple way to establish a benchmark for growth.



# IMPORTANCE OF FM CREDENTIALS & QUALIFICATIONS

The adoption of professional credentials and qualifications is increasing around the world and across industries. Focused on profession-specific skills, credential-based training programs give individuals the skills and knowledge employers are looking for.

For FM professionals, credentials offer a quick, affordable, and practical career stepping stone. For employers, credentialed staff signify expertise and trustworthiness to internal and external clients.



## ► Credentials & Qualifications Are Increasingly Important in FM.

73%

73% of FM professionals hold a credential or qualification in facility management or another field.

81%

81% of FM managers say a credential or qualification is an influential factor in hiring or promoting FM staff.

▲ Up 5% from 2022

*"The process of gaining a Facilities Management certification leads an individual to think differently about the job. Focus on the operation as a whole becomes important when people begin to understand how the business of Facilities Management can better support the goals and objectives of the company. This results in less unexpected downtime, better efficiency, and happier people that tend to stay longer because the business believes in and invests in them and their long term advancement and earning potential. This is a huge benefit to the company and the individual."*



**Steve Smith, CFM, CFMJ, MFE, DCEP, DCEP-IT**  
Director of Physical IT Network  
Arvest Bank Operations

## ► Credentials & Qualifications Deliver Real Value.

86%

86% of FM professionals would pursue an FM credential/qualification if their employer supported them financially.

FM professionals who have earned a credential/qualification say their credential has resulted in:

45%

Job opportunity with a new employer

41%

Internal advancement opportunity

41%

Job stability

27%

Pay raise/increased compensation

86%

86% of FM staff are willing to invest their own money in FM career development/training.

▲ Up 19% from 2022

81%

81% of FM staff say FM training and credentials result in better credibility within the organization and with clients.

TAKE ACTION

Recent years have seen a tremendous growth in FM credential/qualification interest and adoption. By delivering training and recognition, they play an important role in the lifelong learning journey of FM professionals. Employers can incorporate these programs into their development and benefits plans to attract, retain, and enhance the skills of their staff.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all the facility management professionals from around the globe who participated in this study. Your contributions helped identify current FM trends and will assist employers in making more informed training decisions.



# DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2023 FM Training Outlook Survey was conducted online between January and April 2023. The survey was distributed to contacts of ProFMI, McMorrow Reports, FMLink, National Facilities Management & Technology (NFMT), fnPrime, the Association for Facilities Engineering (AFE), and the Asociación Panameña de Facility Management (APAFAM). The following is a summary of participants' demographics.

## 2023 FM Training Outlook Survey Participants

### 191 Qualified Respondents

(lead or perform FM functions)

**85%** Manage one or more staff

**15%** Manage no staff

**50%** Within the USA

**50%** Outside the USA

**26** Countries

### Top Responding Countries

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> USA                 | <b>6</b> Canada               |
| <b>2</b> Nigeria             | <b>7</b> India                |
| <b>3</b> Saudi Arabia        | <b>8</b> South Africa         |
| <b>4</b> Egypt               | <b>9</b> United Arab Emirates |
| <b>5</b> Trinidad and Tobago | <b>10</b> United Kingdom      |

### Years in the FM Profession

**34%** Have 10 years or fewer

**66%** Have 11+ years

Years in FM	%
<2	4%
2-5	11%
6-10	18%
11-15	21%
16-20	18%
21+	27%

### FM Team Size

Team Size	%
0-1	7%
2-4	17%
5-9	18%
10-24	23%
25-49	14%
50-99	10%
100+	11%

### Primary Building Type

Building Type	%
Commercial	20%
Government	17%
Education	12%
Healthcare	11%
Retail	6%
Industrial	5%
Hospitality	5%
Other	23%