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# The Facility Management Talent Pipeline

## California Statewide Plan

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### **Background**

Research in 2016 identified 3,200 Facility Manager job openings annually in four Southern California counties versus an estimated 30 individuals completing a recognized entry-level Facility Management program in that region. Anecdotal evidence suggests high probability that a similar supply/demand gap exists statewide.

Thus, the International Facility Management Association (IFMA), the IFMA Foundation and the California Community Colleges (Colleges) signed an agreement to develop a statewide Facility Management Talent Pipeline in California. At the same time, the parties signed a statewide license agreement for IFMA's Essentials of Facility Management (EoFM) for use by colleges statewide.

These agreements establish a statewide advisory council comprised of major employers and IFMA chapter leadership to guide the Colleges' development of the FM Talent Pipeline. Regional advisory councils engage key employers and provide tactical guidance and support for participating colleges. Employees of the Colleges' *Doing What MATTERS* framework will facilitate development and sustained operation of the regional advisory councils.

### **The Pipeline Program**

IFMA's eleven core competencies provide the framework for the FM Talent Pipeline. These competencies are at the core of the Associates in Science (AS) Degree in Business, which is the Colleges' primary channel for creating and sustaining the FM Talent Pipeline. This channel is a rich source of talent, with approximately 15,000 California Community College students earning an A.S. Degree in Business every year.

Integrating EoFM into an existing Business Degree course sequence yields a program that builds competencies for entry into an FM career. A typical program (example below) enables the student to earn an A.S. Degree and a certificate in Facility Management.

Financial Accounting  
Introduction to Business  
Business Ethics  
Business Communications  
Business Law 1

Introduction to Management  
Introduction to Human Relations  
Essentials of Facility Management  
Internships in Business  
Introduction to Project Management

This program, which includes a paid internship in an FM-related assignment, is combined with General Education courses to create the A.S. in Business Degree which is transferable to a Bachelor's Degree Program.

The program design is for students to be considered as preferred candidates for entry into an FM career, with the internship serving employers as a "120-hour interview".



Accompanying the A.S. in Business Degree program, the FM Talent Pipeline also addresses the training needs for incumbent workers who aspire to FM careers and early career Facility Managers who need additional competencies. These incumbent worker programs are customizable by the Colleges to meet the specific needs of employers who sponsor their workers in these programs. The 2016 research showed this aspect of FM Talent Pipeline to be especially important, as most employers prefer to promote internal candidates into FM positions but lack the ability to train them.

### **Regional Advisory Council Role**

An employer-led regional advisory council is essential to success for the FM Talent Pipeline. Key functions of the advisory council are as follows:

- Selecting appropriate colleges for the Pipeline
- Informing educational programs to address regional priorities of employers
- Aligning employer support for students, internships, and job placement
- Supporting initiatives to enroll students
- Providing student insights into the FM profession (site visits, guest speakers, etc.)
- Assuring student exposure to FM professionals via IFMA Chapter memberships
- Infusing funds as appropriate for scholarships or to augment College funding
- Hiring students into paid internship programs
- Participating in FM Talent Pipeline job placement campaigns

According to terms of the IFMA agreement with the Colleges, regional advisory councils will develop and execute an annual program plan with the following elements:

- Goals for hiring students earning Facility Management credentials, including internships and employment
- Goals for the number of incumbent workers earning Facility Management credentials
- Goals for the number of students earning Facility Management credentials
- A plan to assure that IFMA credentials earned through the Talent Pipeline are given substantial weight, value, and preference by employers in hiring students and promoting incumbent workers who earn them
- An enrollment plan for incumbent workers into credential programs
- An outreach and marketing plan to enroll students at the Colleges and participating high schools into credentials programs
- Composition of certificate and degree programs to meet regional employment needs
- Refinement of course offerings to meet regional priorities as required
- Metrics that track the success of regional programs
- An annual report that captures metrics, highlights accomplishments, and recommends refinements to the regional program plan

*Doing What MATTERS* employees will facilitate periodic meetings of the advisory council in collaboration with an industry representative(s) designated by the local IFMA Chapter(s).

### **How the Pipeline Works**

Supply/Demand Analysis: The regional advisory council in collaboration with the *Doing What MATTERS* leadership will quantify the need for entry-level candidates to FM positions.

College Selection: The *Doing What MATTERS* leadership will recommend Colleges to the regional advisory council for approval as part of the FM Talent Pipeline to meet the demand for entry-level FM candidates.

Educational Program Development: The selected Colleges' faculty will develop FM Talent Pipeline course sequences plus related certificates and degrees in direct response to the inputs of the regional advisory council, subject to the curriculum approval requirements within the California Community College System.

Student Enrollment: The primary method is to recruit students within the Business Degree program, typically with outreach and information events in the semester prior to offering the next FM program course sequence. *Doing What MATTERS* leadership will assist faculty in facilitating outreach and information events. Employer participation in these events is recommended to make a compelling case to students. Additionally, the regional advisory council will play a major role in determining students qualified for the certificate program. Incumbent worker training can be done at any time based on employer requirements and not tied to the academic class schedule.

The Program Sequence: Typically, the FM certificate program will occur over two semesters, subject to the College's academic schedule. Most students will enter the program as Sophomores, having demonstrated commitment to completing an A.S. in Business Degree program.

Internships: Student internships can happen at any time deemed feasible by employers. The standard approach is for an internship following the second semester, but depending on the student's competency development and timing of the employer's opening, the internship could occur at any time during the certificate program. It's possible that a new student cohort could be offered at a College each semester, providing the opportunity for an internship in the summer after the students complete their first semester in the Spring.

Work-Readiness: Education and internships may not be sufficient to prepare students for entry into FM careers. The Colleges offer a variety of student services that can assist with presentation skills, interpersonal skills, writing skills, adaptability, etc. As required, these services can be brought into the mix to better prepare individual students for the workplace.

Assimilation: An important element is to create opportunities for students to begin assimilating into FM careers. The IFMA Chapter and major employers are expected to support this assimilation process through site visits, Chapter meetings, guest speakers, project assignments, etc.

Marketing to Employers: Students are expected to create profiles and resumes that enable employers to determine the most appropriate internships and jobs, and identify students most qualified for those assignments. Preparation of these profiles and resumes should occur no later than the beginning of the second semester of the certificate program. Employer interviews and job fairs offer opportunities for marketing these students.

The Employment Process: Employing new Facility Managers requires a multi-level strategy that engages regional advisory council members, HR departments at participating firms, and hiring managers. If the FM Talent Pipeline is to become a preferred source for FM candidates across all levels of the employment process, this strategy needs to link individual students to specific job and internship opportunities at appropriate times. Key to this process is a strong match between student qualifications and job requirements, supported by employer processes that are aligned with the FM Talent Pipeline.

*Job Placement Services:* Facility Management outsourcing companies provide a channel to place many students in positions with their client companies. The regional advisory council should include these companies to assure robust placement efforts through this channel.

*Target Jobs:* Becoming a fully-competent Facility Manager is typically a 10-year cycle. Students exiting the FM Talent Pipeline are best suited for early-stage positions that offer opportunities for further development of the eleven core competencies as an on-ramp into FM jobs. Ideally, these are positions in Finance, Purchasing, Contracts, Business Operations, Technical Services, etc. that have ongoing interaction with Facility Managers that enables growth into an FM role.

## **Summary**

The California Facility Management Talent Pipeline is currently supported by the IFMA Foundation, multiple IFMA Chapters, several dozen major employers, and the statewide *Doing What MATTERS* team. Significant momentum has been developed over a series of five workshops in Southern and Northern California. The California Community Colleges are grateful for the industry support in launching this Pipeline and are committed to its sustained success. Additionally, early efforts by Chaffey and De Anza Colleges enabled the statewide advisory council to evaluate best practices in developing this statewide plan.

## **Submitted by**

Jim Caldwell  
Statewide Director and Sector Navigator  
Energy, Construction, & Utilities



Website: [www.ECUsectorDWM.com](http://www.ECUsectorDWM.com)  
Mobile: (925) 899-2665  
Email: [jcaldwell@workforceincubator.org](mailto:jcaldwell@workforceincubator.org)  
Main Office: 1141 Catalina Drive, Suite 272, Livermore, CA 94550

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