

## Module 1 Classroom Activity

### Participant Directions

This activity consists of three parts. Your instructor will lead the group in a brainstorming exercise and in organizing the resulting ideas into an affinity diagram. You will:

- Read the scenario below.
- Make suggestions for improving the situation (Part 1).
- Participate in organizing the ideas into categories (Part 2).
- Participate in a large-group discussion to determine the best course of action (Part 3).

### ProFM Content References:

- **Brainstorming**  
(Module 1, Section 6, Topic 3)
- **Affinity diagrams**  
(Module 1, Section 5, Topic 2)

### Scenario

Assume that facility management at an organization has the following issues:

- **Hierarchical control.** Control over decisions is hierarchical, and decision makers like seeing proof.
- **Penalized for failure but innovation demanded.** The facility manager has been penalized for failure when trying to innovate but is also criticized if there is not enough innovation.
- **Naysayers.** Many ideas are blocked or disparaged by naysayers from the first time they are discussed.
- **Odd hours needed.** There are many times when repair or maintenance work would be too disruptive, so late hours or weekends are often needed, and overtime is straining FM staff and an already tight budget.
- **Deferred capital renewals.** Several key systems are past the point at which they should have been replaced. There has been some limited replacement of targeted subcomponents of systems, such as compressors, motors, and bearings on a DX HVAC rooftop unit.
- **Reactionary maintenance.** Most maintenance is reactionary, and breakdown maintenance is the largest part of the maintenance budget. The FM department seems to have endless complaints and emergencies.

## Part 1: Idea Generation

*(Time: approximately 10 minutes)*

In the first part of this activity, you will participate in a brainstorming session for improving all or parts of this situation.

- Your instructor will hand out Post-it Notes® and markers/pens for you to record your ideas. (If these are not available, a flip chart or a whiteboard with markers could be used.)
- Brainstorming rules for the idea-generation phase are as follows:
  - Make as many suggestions as possible in the time period, writing them on Post-it Notes (or an alternative).
  - When you have a completed note, bring it to the front, put it on the wall, and read it aloud to the group. This will reduce redundancy of ideas.
  - No one is allowed to criticize or comment on these ideas yet.
- You are encouraged to share as many new ideas as possible during this step, especially innovative ones, even if, for example, they might be hard to do.

## Part 2: Affinity Diagramming

*(Time: approximately 10 minutes)*

In the second part of this activity, the instructor will lead you in a large-group discussion to create an affinity diagram using the Post-it Notes. Affinity diagram rules are as follows:

- Discuss the suggestions and create several categories for grouping them.
- Once the categories are created, move the Post-it Notes to the appropriate category.

## Part 3: Constructive Criticism and Decision Making

*(Time: approximately 10 minutes)*

In the last part of this activity, you will participate in the final phase of brainstorming:

- Narrow the ideas down to a suggested course of action in each of the major categories created in Part 2.
- Discuss ideas and elaborate on good ideas, present risks, or consider likely costs relative to benefits.
- Highlight ideas that seem especially innovative.
- Discard ideas that the group feels should not be pursued.
- Record the final ideas and determine what would need to be done in what order to maximize the chances for success or approval.