



Innovation in Supplier Relationships

Winner

Property Team, Direct Line Group



The Direct Line Group (DLG) Property Team realigned the way it works with FM service provider partners. It chose smaller FM firms Mainstay Group (soft services) and Ascot Services (hard services), based on previous work it had done with them, and set the challenge of finding the perfect FM team.

The focus was on individual delivery contracts between DLG and its two supply partners, as well as committing (non-contractually) to all work together to ensure shared success. Important points to remember include:

- Own the problem until it's resolved;
- Honesty matters and pointing out an issue requires collective solutions;
- Success or failure happens together;
- Transparency and trust are essential;
- Contract reporting focuses on what is going to happen not what has happened; and
- Reducing energy consumption through energy use data, utilisation data and BEMS systems.

Methodologies include:

- Shared and live access to CAFM, open jobs, quotes, CAD, and project plans
- Continuous measurement of information, its value and contribution
- Creating bespoke processes where necessary
- Co-creating a bespoke CAFM system in collaboration with supply partners
- Using DLG's Building Energy Management System (BEMS), which can remotely access systems from within its energy centre and monitor pre-set alarms in line with agreed SLAs

- Employing the IRISYS heat mapping system to assess occupancy levels and timings, as well as utilisation statistics of live building user data to adjust HVAC strategies

Results

Site ownership has improved through a shared vision and improved collaboration. Tied to that is the growth of the concierge-style front of house team that triages calls to completion with site-based colleagues.

There's more time to focus on priority areas such as becoming plastic free, CSR activities, innovating the workplace through heat-mapping sensors for cleaning regimes, and cutting energy use.

Communication is now better, with all parties understanding that they are members of one team, not members of a component part of a bigger team. Part of this is recognising that there isn't a standout party that has done more than any other.

But perhaps most telling is that after a year with the initiative in place, the DLG Property Team has succeeded in its new approach to the client-supplier relationship. Indeed, the procurement team is using the property team's model for brokering future supplier contracts as the benchmark for best practice within the business.

Best practice

Shift from working with big-name providers to partnering with dynamic and enthusiastic SMEs.

Integration of the DLG Property Services Team within the broader DLG business to be a strategic function to achieve business goals.

A weekly call between the three partners of the team to discuss challenges and recognise successes of the previous week – it also means less email traffic and fewer additional calls.

Creation of a central service desk that operates day and night all year round.