# Addressing labour shortages in facilities management through innovative training solutions



Chronic labour shortages and high employee turnover are significant issues plaguing the facilities industry, complicating the ongoing challenges of recruitment and retention. When employers struggle to find and keep talent, the quality of work inevitably declines, fostering a cycle characterised by inefficiency, reduced productivity, and declining morale within organisations.

One strategy emphasised by industry leaders to combat this cycle is investing in ongoing training. According to research, companies that implement comprehensive training and development programmes witness retention rates that are 34% higher compared to those that lack such a commitment. Furthermore, organisations with a strong culture of learning are reportedly 92% more likely to develop innovative products and processes, 52% more productive, and 17% more profitable than their counterparts.

High-quality training platforms, particularly those tailored to engage younger maintenance engineers, allow employers to expedite the onboarding process for new hires, even those without prior experience. For more tenured employees, these platforms enable skill elevation and cross-training, thus opening avenues for career advancement.

The modern workforce is seeking personalised and engaging learning experiences that offer flexibility in training schedules. Traditional learning approaches, while still valuable, do not align well with current workflows or the evolving expectations of employees. Therefore, employers must find effective training solutions that match their company’s growth stages and address various employee learning journeys.

Contemporary online training solutions facilitate career development by customising learning paths to meet individual needs, irrespective of role or experience level. Digital tools such as AI-based mentors, virtual reality, and 3D simulations empower organisations to onboard new engineers efficiently while also assisting seasoned employees in upskilling.

Each employee possesses a distinct background and learning style, and a tailored training approach often proves to be more effective. Workers tend to engage more positively and master skills more rapidly when provided with personalised training experiences accessible through various formats.

Newer training platforms feature the adaptability to cater to multiple learning styles and paces. For example, auditory or kinaesthetic learners may find traditional methods challenging, but they often excel with immersive tools like virtual reality or hands-on simulations, allowing them to rehearse lessons, revisit concepts, and gain extensive practice.

This form of immersive training, set within a simulated ‘real world’ environment, also fosters critical thinking, enhances analytical skills, and improves long-term retention of information. By creating a secure, simulated space for skill practice, organisations can nurture existing skills while also introducing new competencies. This immersive learning format is particularly appealing to younger employees, who are accustomed to engaging with advanced technology in both educational and entertainment contexts.

To further bolster employee development, effective skills assessments provide organisations with valuable insights into individual strengths and skill gaps—which often only surface on the job. Digital training tools facilitate objective skill assessments, enabling businesses to monitor progress and transform weaknesses into strengths.

For those employees who may be underperforming, tailored training opportunities can refresh their foundational knowledge and reinforce key skills. Supervisors have the capacity to construct professional development pathways, providing avenues for current employees to advance their careers within the company—a feature that can significantly enhance a firm's attractiveness to potential recruits.

The ongoing recruitment, training, and retention of top maintenance engineers remains a priority within the facilities industry. A reluctance to modernise training methods can have far-reaching consequences in today's competitive landscape. By leveraging immersive and personalised technology-driven training solutions, organisations stand to break the cycle of employee turnover, ultimately cultivating a stable maintenance workforce poised for success and growth.

Dan Clapper, the commercial HVAC and facilities maintenance market director at Interplay Learning, highlights the importance of adapting training strategies to fit the needs of today's workforce. With over 25 years of extensive experience in HVAC service, installation, wholesale sales and distribution, as well as manufacturer training, Clapper's insights shed light on the critical intersection between effective training and employee retention in the facilities sector.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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