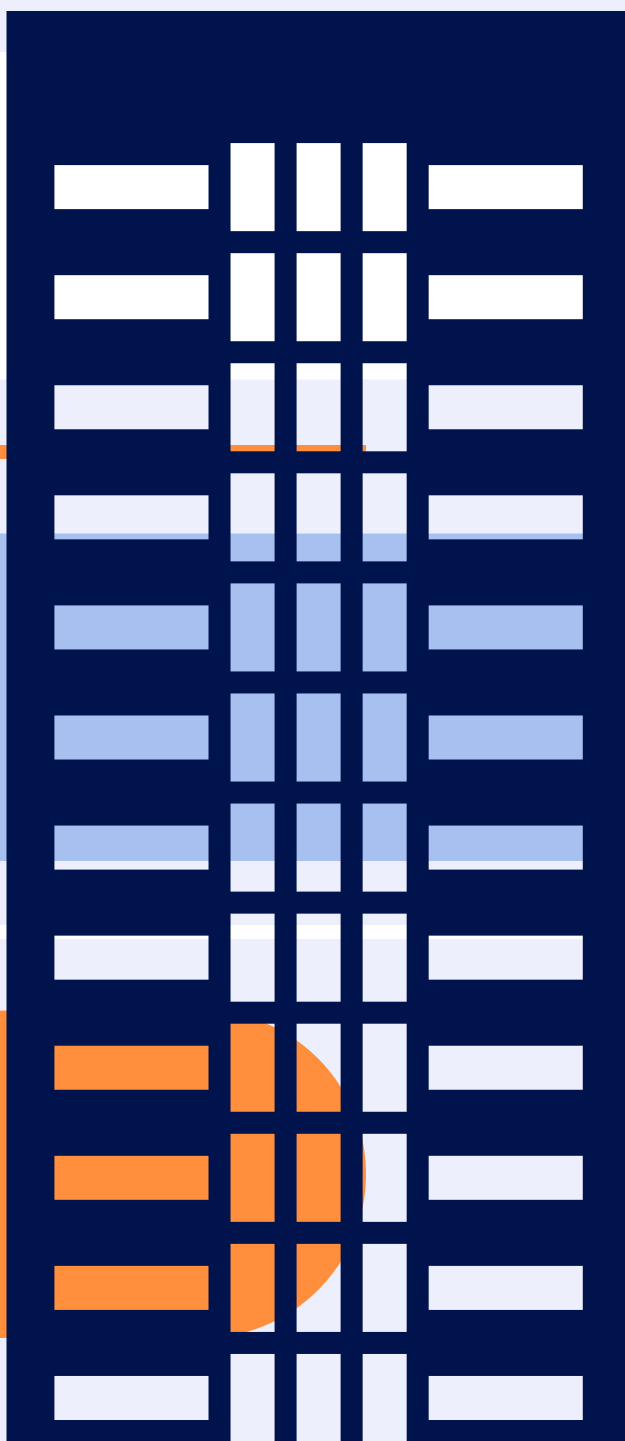


HOW TO IMPROVE TENANT SATISFACTION



A guide by
Defigo

As a property manager, you will know all too well that tenant satisfaction is a fundamental part of your position.

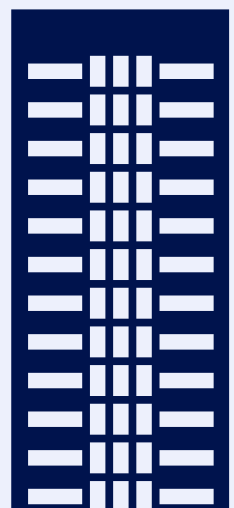
If you are looking to improve the satisfaction of tenants in your property, there are a number of actions that you can take both big and small to make an impact.

In this guide, we will explore some of the ways that you can improve tenant satisfaction.

Why is tenant satisfaction so important?

Tenant satisfaction gives you an indication of how well your property is meeting the needs of your tenants — from the condition of the property to how responsive you are to their requests.

Put plainly, tenant satisfaction should be a crucial metric to you because, among other things, it means a reduction in your costs. If a tenant is satisfied with where they live, they will complain less, be reliable with rent payments, and will share their satisfaction with their network which could help with filling vacancies if a tenant moves out.



How to know whether your tenants are satisfied

If you want to understand how satisfied your tenants are in your property right now, there are a few ways to go about it. One of the most common methods is to issue a **Tenant Satisfaction Survey**.

In this survey, you will want to ask questions that will give you concrete data and statistics.

This way you will have data that you can review regularly to see the progress you have made, and what else you still need to work on.

Example Survey Questions:

How satisfied are you with your experience living in this property?

How satisfied are you with the communication from us regarding your property?

How safe do you feel in the property and its surroundings?

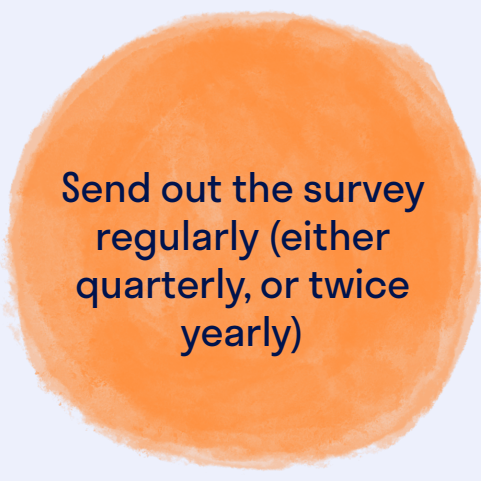
How satisfied are you with the responses you have received from your maintenance requests?

How satisfied are you with the amenities and facilities provided on the property? e.g. the gym, parking, common areas

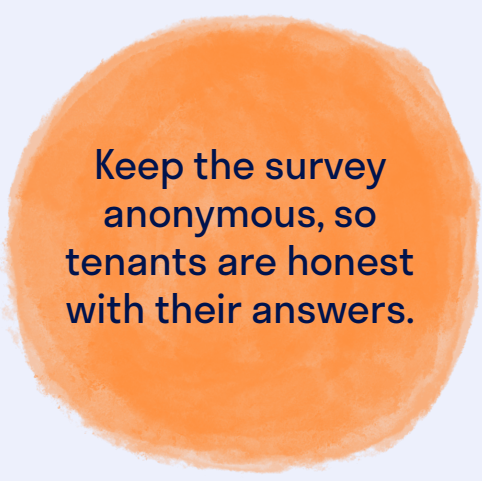
Survey tips:



Add or remove questions according to your metrics and what you want to know



Send out the survey regularly (either quarterly, or twice yearly)



Keep the survey anonymous, so tenants are honest with their answers.

Ways to improve tenant satisfaction

After you have completed your survey, you may now see some clear areas where you need to improve your property or services.

To start working on improving tenant satisfaction in your property, there are some actions you can take on top of the direct feedback that you received from your tenants. Here are some examples:



Communicate Effectively

Communicating with your tenants well in advance of maintenance, rent increase, fire alarm tests etc. is vital to ensuring that everyone is accommodated for and feels heard.

Often the best way to ensure that your tenants feel listened to and well communicated with is to have multiple communication channels, such as **email, phone and a tenant portal**. Just having email, for instance, can lead to missed emails and is not easy to scale.

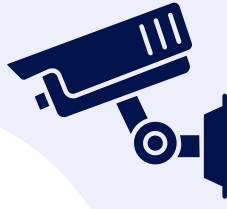
A tenant portal can be a really valuable piece of software to add to your workflow. Depending on the software, a tenant portal can:

- Reduce your workload with **automated messages** that you can schedule ahead of time,
- Gather all feedback, messages and insights from your tenants in **one central location**,
- Let tenants pay their rent, sign leases and submit maintenance requests through it,

which means that for you, all tenant-based communication happens in one place.



Regularly review the security of your property



Safety and security of your property should be regularly **reviewed, checked and upgraded**. It takes just one incident in your property for tenants to feel unsafe and concerned about the safety of their home.

When reviewing the safety and security of your property, here are some things to look into:

Apartment locks

When a tenant moves out, the apartment lock should be changed just in case the previous tenant had extra keys cut.

For the new tenants' peace of mind, the locks should be changed **immediately** so they have the reassurance that they are safe in their new apartment.

Security cameras

Security cameras should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are working, and to ensure there aren't any areas the cameras cannot pick up activity — such as at the main entrance. By regularly checking your security cameras, you are being **proactive** in preventing any security issues.

Upgrade your intercom system

Consider upgrading your intercom to one which:

- allows you view **real time access logs**,
- allows you to **add and remove access** to the property entrance at the touch of a button.

Defigo's intercom system does both of these. It also allows tenants to access the property entrance using their cell phone, meaning no more key cutting for you, as well as reliable, understandable data about who is entering the property.



Proactive Maintenance



Unresolved maintenance issues over an extended period of time can be very damaging to tenant satisfaction.

By proactively scheduling maintenance work or upgrades, you can show your tenants that you take their living conditions seriously and want them to have a good life in your property.

One way to begin doing this is to schedule **regular inspections and servicing** of systems and equipment.

Scheduling regular inspections and servicing can greatly extend the lifespan of such things as HVAC and plumbing systems.

These inspections will almost guarantee that you **save money** in the long run, since systems will likely not have to be replaced as often, and unexpected issues are less likely to arise.

Ensuring that the property is well maintained at all times, will not only help maintain tenant satisfaction, but will also give tenants a great sense of pride in their apartment and in the property.

Tips

Make a list of all the systems that you would like to have regular inspections on, and routinely go through the list throughout the year.

If you see an issue in the property, don't wait for a tenant to report it, schedule it to be fixed right away, and inform your tenants that you are aware of the issue and that it is scheduled to be fixed.

Provide desirable amenities



By adding desirable amenities to your property, you not only ensure that the existing tenants are satisfied, but you also cater to future tenants who could be enticed by the additional offerings of your property.

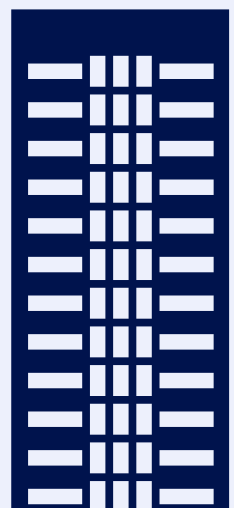
Amenities don't necessarily have to be such things as a fitness center, a picnic area, or cafes and restaurants — although those things are highly desirable if you have the space and money.

They could also be a **secure bike storage** area, a modern **laundry room** with new washers and dryers, an **office area** with desks, monitors and a coffee machine for those working from home, or someone that handles **package deliveries**.

Offering something in addition to just the apartment your tenants live in will give the impression that you want them to thrive in the property.

Tip

It's worth asking your tenants what sort of amenities they want and would use. That way, you will know exactly what your tenants are looking for, and instead of them looking elsewhere for a property that provides the amenity, you can provide it.



Create a Community Feel



While not all tenants are interested in getting to know their neighbors, some will be keen to get more involved in their community.

A good community spirit is a great **differentiator** for a property, especially in urban areas where it can be challenging to meet new people.

To begin building a community feel, you might want to consider setting up a **notice board** or an **online forum** for tenants to communicate with each other, post news, updates or events that are upcoming.

You could propose some social events such as a **children's halloween party**, or a **barbeque**. This way you can encourage tenant interaction and foster long term relationships with the tenants yourself.

Setting up annual recurring events is a good way to ensure that tenants know what is coming up ahead and can prepare accordingly.

Try The Norwegian way

In Norway, apartment buildings have a regular 'Dugnad' where tenants come together to do garden work, clean out the basement, or tidy the bicycle storage, for instance.

This can often be followed by a barbeque with all the tenants.

Dugnad's are not mandatory, but are very much encouraged to build a sense of trust, community and pride in the property.

What to expect from improving tenant satisfaction

Increasing tenant satisfaction demands both planning and money. Both of these things can be challenging to fit in amongst your regular day to day tasks and focuses. With this in mind:

Is it worth improving tenant satisfaction?

Tenant satisfaction is beneficial for you and your property in both the long and the short term. Here are some benefits of improving tenant satisfaction:

Short Term

- Your tenants will feel cared for, listened to and valued.
- Tenants will likely make less maintenance requests or complaints.
- Tenants will be more likely to stay in their apartment long term, meaning you will spend less time finding new suitable tenants.

Long term

- Your property will stand out against the others in your area.
- You could look to increase rent as a result of your improvements.
- You will likely be spending less money on replacing systems and equipment in the property if you plan ahead, meaning your NOI could increase.

