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MAXWELL STEPHENS GUIDES

FOR EMPLOYERS

Recruiting a Facilities Manager: 10 Things You Need to Know

Ten practical steps for hiring a Facilities Manager well, from defining the role to onboarding the person you appoint.

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01
Introduction

A Facilities Manager is an important appointment for any organisation. This is the person responsible for the physical working environment: keeping buildings safe, compliant and working, and making sure the people inside them can do their jobs.

It is a role that is easy to take for granted when things run smoothly. Its importance becomes obvious very quickly when they do not.

The remit can be extensive, particularly in organisations with large workforces, multiple sites or demanding occupiers. That breadth is exactly what makes the role difficult to recruit well, and why a careful, structured selection process matters.

This guide sets out the ten things we believe every employer needs to get right when recruiting a Facilities Manager, in the order you will meet them, from the first conversation about the role to the new manager's first weeks in post.

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A clear brief is the first hiring decision.

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02

1. Job Analysis

To recruit the right Facilities Manager, start with a thorough job analysis before you advertise or brief anyone. The analysis defines exactly what the role is for and where it sits within the organisation as a whole.

The Facilities Manager is often the first port of call for employees, so the role demands someone who communicates well and builds good working relationships. Before you write the job description, work through the fundamentals:

- The day-to-day responsibilities of the role, across buildings, services, suppliers and people.
- Where the role sits, who it reports to and who it manages.
- The skills and experience the person genuinely needs.
- The minimum qualifications, and whether they are truly essential.
- Which criteria are **essential** and which are **desirable**, such as experience in your sector.

Much more is now expected of Facilities Managers than in the past. Project planning, budgeting, contract management and compliance leadership are routinely part of the brief, so the person you appoint needs relevant experience to meet those demands.

Check the Market Before You Set the Package

Part of the job analysis should be market research, to make sure the salary and benefits you are offering are competitive. Our 2026 salary bands place Facilities Manager roles at **£40,000–£65,000**, with scope, complexity and location determining where a role should sit within that range.

Once you have defined exactly what you need, you are ready to prepare the job description and take the role to market.

> **DEFINE SUCCESS FIRST**
>
> Ask what the new Facilities Manager should have achieved after their first year. The answer usually tells you more about the real brief than the list of duties does.

03

2. Culture: Know What You Want

Culture is a word used often in the workplace, but it is worth being precise about what it means. Culture is the working environment of an organisation: its values, its behaviours and the way things actually get done.

Everyone who joins needs to be able to work effectively within that culture. When they cannot, it becomes much harder to keep the whole organisation focused on the same goals.

Not everyone will thrive in the same environment. If you are building a positive, energetic workplace, the last thing you need is a Facilities Manager whose approach works against it. Because the role is so visible, the Facilities Manager's attitude is felt across the whole organisation.

Be clear about the culture you have, and the one you are working towards, and hire a Facilities Manager who will flourish in it and help improve the business. Get the match right and you strengthen the culture further, with better morale and higher retention as a result.

> *"Fit is not sameness. It is someone who makes the culture stronger.*

04

3. Resourcing

Advertising a role and waiting for CVs to arrive is no longer enough, particularly for a specialist position. Technology has given organisations many more ways to find the right people, and the strongest Facilities Managers are often not actively looking.

There are several ways to widen your reach:

- **Professional and social networks:** LinkedIn and other platforms let you reach large, relevant audiences, including people who are open to a move but not applying.
- **Direct search and headhunting:** approaching specific individuals whose experience matches the brief.
- **Specialist recruitment partners:** consultancies that already know the market and the candidates in it.

Why a Specialist Helps

The right recruitment partner can transform your candidate pool. A consultancy handles the sourcing for you, freeing your time for everything else, and brings access to a far wider and more diverse network of candidates than an advert alone will reach.

A specialist Facilities Management recruiter offers something a generalist firm, working across a wide range of roles, usually cannot: a detailed understanding of what the role involves and who is genuinely capable of doing it. For a specialised appointment such as a Facilities Manager, it often makes more sense to let a specialist run the process.

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Hire for the culture you are building.

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4. Shortlisting

A strong response to your advert is good news, but it also means you have the task of deciding who to interview. To do that well without consuming all of your time, set specific criteria before you start and compare every CV against them.

1. Confirm your **essential** and **desirable** criteria from the job analysis.
2. Screen every applicant against the essential criteria first.
3. Take forward only candidates who meet all of the essential criteria.
4. If the response is strong, prioritise those who also meet the desirable criteria.
5. Record why each candidate was progressed or declined, so decisions are consistent.

How far you narrow the field depends on how many candidates you want to interview and the quality of the response you receive.

Shortlisting is harder than it looks. Facilities Management job titles are not standardised, so two candidates with the same title may have managed very different levels of complexity. This is one reason many employers choose to place shortlisting with a specialist recruitment firm, whose knowledge of Facilities Managers and what the role entails allows it to shortlist quickly and accurately.

READ PAST THE TITLE

Look for evidence of scope: the number of sites, the size of budgets, the contractors managed and the compliance responsibilities held. That tells you far more than the job title.

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5. Interview and Assessment

The Facilities Manager role can be complex, which is why more than one interview stage is sometimes needed. Competency-based interviews are usually the most effective, because candidates have to give specific examples. That makes it much easier to see how they have handled the realities of the role in practice.

It can also be worthwhile to include a practical assessment, so you fully understand the candidate's skills and how well they are likely to perform. A short case study based on a realistic scenario from your own estate often works well.

Running a Good Process

- Tell candidates from the start what the interview and assessment process involves, so their expectations are managed.
- Have at least two people conduct each interview, so one can take notes and you can compare views afterwards.
- Use consistent questions and agreed criteria, so candidates can be compared fairly.
- Treat the interview as a two-way conversation, not an interrogation.
- If a nervous candidate is struggling with a question, offer some support without giving them the answer.

> **What should a strong answer from a Facilities Manager sound like?**
>
> It should move beyond general statements. Ask the candidate to explain the situation, the responsibility they held, the action they personally took and the result. That separates direct experience from general familiarity with a subject.

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Titles vary. Evidence does not.

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6. Communication

Recruiting for any specialised role is difficult, and the variety of the Facilities Manager role makes it harder still. To attract the right person and make sure they want to join you, keep the lines of communication open throughout the hiring process.

Candidates want to be kept informed, even when the news is disappointing. Nobody wants to feel their application has disappeared into a black hole, and the way you treat candidates is remembered and shared.

If you want to hire someone but need approval before you can make an offer, tell them. Otherwise a strong candidate may accept a role with a competitor while they are waiting to hear from you.

Good communication makes candidates feel valued and shows them a professional organisation that cares about its people. A short note explaining what is happening and when takes very little time, and it manages expectations far more effectively than silence.

> *Silence during a process is still a message to the candidate.*

08

7. Timelines

Many organisations underprepare for recruitment, and it causes unnecessary delays that can cost them talented candidates. A Facilities Manager process can involve three or four stages and take several weeks to complete.

Plan your schedule well before the first interview. Agree dates with everyone involved, and keep the gaps between stages as short as possible. It is easy to lose both candidates and the momentum you have worked hard to build.

Be aware of the candidate's situation. Most will find it difficult to take time away from their current role, so try to hold interviews on the same day or within a couple of days where you can.

It is also worth asking whether every stage is really necessary. Too many hoops can put strong candidates off. In most cases, an initial telephone or video conversation followed by a face-to-face interview, with an assessment if the role requires one, should be sufficient.

- ✓ Interview dates agreed with every panel member before the role goes live
- ✓ Each stage has a clear purpose, and none duplicates another
- ✓ Feedback turnaround agreed internally, ideally within a few working days
- ✓ Offer approvals and budget sign-off arranged in advance

✓ Candidates told the full timetable at the outset

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8. The Right Checks

Before you confirm the appointment, carry out the right checks to confirm the successful candidate's suitability for the role. These will normally include references from previous employers and, where they matter to the role, evidence of qualifications.

Right to work checks are a legal requirement for every new employee, not only candidates from overseas. Where a candidate needs a visa or sponsorship, the checks are more detailed and must be completed correctly before they start.

Employing someone without the right to work in the UK can lead to significant civil penalties, as well as reputational damage. It is a costly mistake that few organisations can afford, so make sure the correct checks are completed, recorded and kept on file.

REFERENCE THE ESSENTIALS

Use references to test the experience that matters most to the appointment, such as compliance ownership or budget responsibility, rather than simply confirming dates of employment.

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Structure makes interviews fairer and sharper.

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9. The Offer Process

The candidate you want may well be considering other offers, so this stage needs to be handled carefully. Some negotiation is common, particularly if your preferred candidate receives a counter-offer from their current employer.

Decide in advance the maximum you are prepared to offer. At the same time, keep the salary in line with others doing the same role in your organisation. Pay differences tend to become known, and inconsistency creates problems of its own.

If your process has already run for several weeks, the offer is not the moment to lose the candidate. Getting it wrong at this stage is frustrating for everyone involved.

Do Not Undervalue the Candidate

Avoid pitching the offer too low. If you offer near the bottom of the market range when competing employers are offering near the top, the candidate is unlikely to feel you have their interests at heart. They will conclude that you are trying to pay as little as possible, and that impression can last well beyond the offer.

Get the Details Right

Check the offer carefully before it is issued. Once it has been signed, errors can be difficult to correct. The wrong salary can cause real problems, and even something as simple as an incorrect address can delay the process and unsettle the candidate.

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Slow processes lose good candidates.

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10. Onboarding

Onboarding is as important as every stage that came before it, and arguably more so. You have found the right person for the role. The last thing you want is for them to leave within weeks because their first impressions were poor.

Managers often invest a great deal of time and effort in recruitment and then forget that onboarding is part of the same process. Starting a new job is a nerve-racking experience. If you make a new starter feel welcome, they will look forward to coming back the next day rather than dreading it.

Before Day One

- Tell the relevant colleagues who is joining, when, and how they will fit into the team.
- Arrange a security pass and building access if required.
- Have a working computer, email account and system logins ready, including any helpdesk or CAFM systems the role uses.
- Plan introductions to key stakeholders, contractors and suppliers.

Most of us have started a job and found we could not access the systems we needed. It is frustrating, and it leaves people questioning why they joined. It is not the impression you want to give any new recruit, least of all the person who will run your facilities.

On Arrival

- Assign a mentor or buddy they can turn to with questions.
- Show them around, including facilities such as toilets and places to eat.
- Explain the arrangements for breaks and lunch.

Some new starters will be too nervous to ask about these basics, so do not leave them in a position where they have to. A well-planned onboarding process significantly improves your chances of keeping talented people.

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The offer should confirm their decision, not test it.

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Getting the Appointment Right

Recruiting a Facilities Manager is a decision with lasting consequences for your buildings, your people and your costs. Each of the ten steps in this guide reduces the risk of getting it wrong, and together they give you a far clearer basis for choosing well.

Maxwell Stephens has specialised in facilities management, estates and workplace recruitment since 2006. We work as a trusted adviser to employers, helping them avoid the common pitfalls of recruiting a Facilities Manager and choose the right course of action at each stage of the process.

To discuss a Facilities Manager appointment, call us on 0207 118 4848, email info@maxwellstephens.com or visit maxwellstephens.com. We have offices in London and Darlington.

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Onboarding is where retention begins.

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THE EVIDENCE

What the Data Says

What UK data shows about the market for recruiting Facilities Managers.

51%

51% of organisations surveyed by SFG20 in 2026 reported a shortage of FM staff.

Source: SFG20 State of FM survey, reported by TWinFM, 2026

12 weeks

The average time to hire in the UK climbed to 12 weeks in spring 2026, up from 10 weeks in autumn 2025.

Source: Totaljobs Hiring Trends Update, 2026

0.42

Structured interviews have the highest mean validity of common selection methods (.42) in the Sackett et al. meta-analytic update.

Source: Sackett et al., Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2023

41%

41% of UK organisations that selected candidates in the past year said new recruits always, mostly or sometimes resigned within their first 12 weeks.

Source: CIPD, Resourcing and talent planning report 2024

95%

95% of candidates placed by Maxwell Stephens remain in role one year after appointment.

Source: Maxwell Stephens, 2026

Sources were checked in September 2026. Select a source to open the original research. Maxwell Stephens figures are drawn from our own published vacancies and placement records.

CASE STUDY

See It in Practice

Unigestion Facilities Manager Recruitment

Unigestion, an independent global asset management firm, asked Maxwell Stephens to recruit a Facilities Manager to lead workplace operations, facilities services and front-of-house delivery in its London office. The brief spanned statutory compliance and business continuity at one end and reception standards and catering at the other, two halves that tend to attract different candidates. We built a detailed understanding of both the technical requirements and the firm's collaborative culture, ran a targeted search, and put every shortlisted candidate through a structured assessment covering technical competence, leadership, stakeholder management and cultural fit. The appointed Facilities Manager integrated quickly and strengthened compliance, supplier performance and the workplace experience.

It shows how a thorough job analysis, a clear view of culture and a structured assessment combine to produce a shortlist that can do the whole job.

Read the full case study · Browse all case studies

FROM THE BLOG

Related Reading

- How to Hire a Facilities Manager: A Complete Employer Guide
- 5 Steps to Shortlisting the Right Candidate
- How to Create an Effective Onboarding Programme

MAXWELL STEPHENS INSIGHTS

Continue Reading

- How to Hire a Facilities Manager
- How to Interview Facilities Management Candidates Properly
- The Cost of Slow Hiring in Facilities Management

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