

Understanding Human Needs for Effective Facilities Management

Ahmad Hazwan Ahmad Hariri
Consultant, GFM Services Berhad
30th November 2018

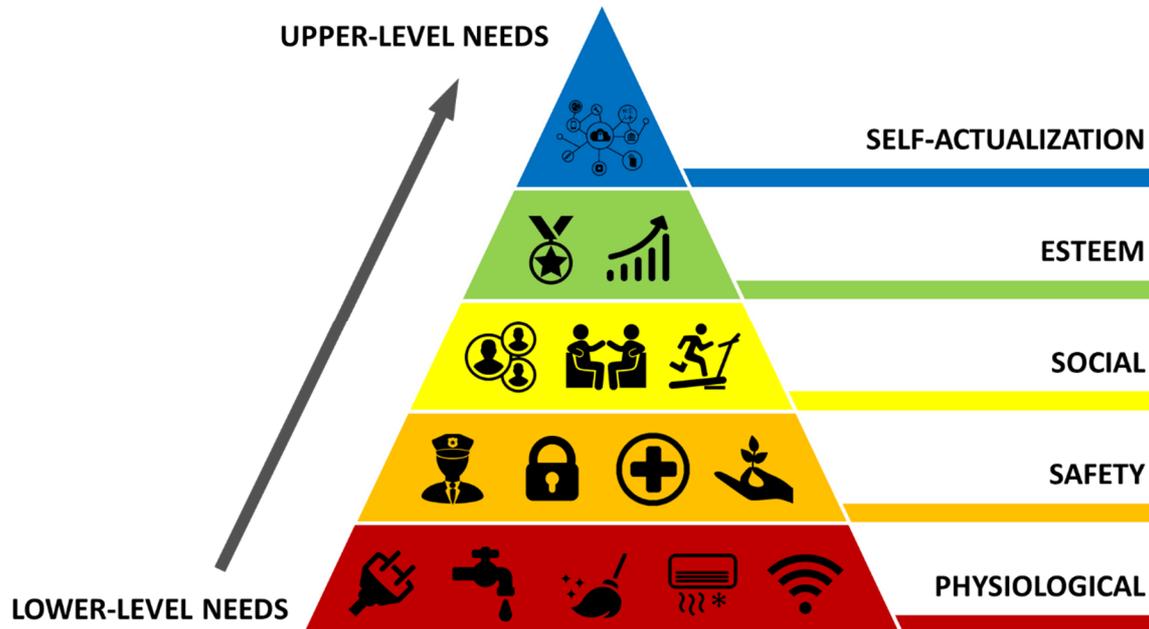
The function of Facilities Management (FM) aims to consistently enhance user experience and optimise productivity of the core business by integrating people, place, process and technology within the built environment. The Facility Manager is responsible to strategise and oversee operation and maintenance activities of a facility to ensure that the capability of the physical assets can be optimised to fulfil individual and organisational business needs. For some organisations, effectiveness of the facility services is crucial to ensure success of their core business. Facilities from sectors such as healthcare, education, hospitality and public service require special attention to ensure that needs of the end user are constantly fulfilled.

Needs of the facility users can be correlated with the psychology theory presented by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper, *A Theory of Human Motivation*. The theory is commonly known as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and is frequently portrayed as a five-level pyramid with the largest and fundamental needs laid at the bottom while the more complex needs reside at higher levels. Maslow's theory is simple and fairly effective in addressing human needs. The theory specified that humans need to be satisfied in stages and that the lowest level of unmet needs in the hierarchy is the prime motivator of behaviour.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a universal theory which can be translated and adopted in FM. However, the Facility Manager would need to understand the concept in order to incorporate the theory into FM strategy.

Facility users would be distracted from all other needs until demands from the most fundamental, which are physiological, have been fulfilled. Next, when the facility has been effectively secured and protected, then social needs can be put in focus. Social need involves conduciveness of the built environment to encourage social interaction among facility users and the surrounding community. Upper-level of the hierarchy begins with esteem needs and then followed by self-actualisation needs. Esteem need involves appreciation and recognition of the built environment, its surrounding and its community while self-actualisation needs can be correlated to the highest quality management of the facility.

Needs of the facility users according to the facilities management perspective are illustrated and further explained in the following diagram.



The following table describes the diagram above in further detail:

NO.	NEEDS	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
1	Physiological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability of a built facility to meet basic needs of the facility users • Involve physical condition of the facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninterrupted supply and provision of water, electricity, air conditioning, sanitation, telecommunication, etc. • Acceptable level of cleanliness
2	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of safe and healthy environment for the facility users to live, work or move around freely • Protection from internal and external harms or threats towards individual and business operations • Involve physical, environmental and emotional condition of the facility users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective operation and maintenance of fire protection system, building security system, etc. • Acceptable level of indoor air quality • Effective emergency and disaster management • Compliance of local or international codes, regulations and standards

NO.	NEEDS	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
3	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition and environment that allow and promote healthy social interaction among facility users and the surrounding community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of indoor and outdoor spaces and facilities such as multipurpose rooms, visitors lounge, exercise facilities, gardens, etc. • Easy access to the nearby community halls, shopping malls, recreational areas, etc.
4	Esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement or credit given to a built facility and its community resulted from outstanding initiative, management and practice • Able to improve productivity of the facility users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimisation of asset condition through improvement initiatives and programs • Green Building Index certification, Energy Management Gold Standard certification, etc. • Awards and recognition received
5	Self-Actualisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition as reputable facility with unique and high-quality services that able to stimulate business growth and attract top tier investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the modern, state of the art technology to enhance experiences of the facility users • Integration of IoT into operation and maintenance practice to improve efficiency