

The 2025 facility managers' reading list

In celebration of World FM Day, we put together a list of some of our favorite books on facility and workplace management, from introductions and references to deep dives on BIM for FM, root cause analysis, asset management, criticality, leadership, the Internet of Things (IoT) and smart buildings, artificial intelligence (AI), and even a few on important trends in architecture and design.

Facility management introductions, overviews, and references

Let's jump into the list with some books perfect for diving into facility maintenance. The ones here provide good coverage on the various topics a facility manager needs to know, and you'll likely want to keep them handy so you can dip back in later when you need a quick refresher or want to look up a fact or figure.

[Disruptive Workplaces](#) by Tom Ryckaert

With chapter titles like Data is King and Between Caveman and Herd Animal, this is a truly wide-ranging look at facility and workplace management. There are deep dives into specific metrics, examinations of the social and culture trends outside the office that affect how and where we work, and meditations on how best to think about technology.

The book covers a lot of ground, but Ryckaert promises it all comes together to create a "deep and multifaceted insight into what we mean by the 'disruptive workplace.' And hopefully, also some handles to make your FM and workplace more efficient, productive, and pleasant than ever before."

[Total Facility Management Fourth Edition](#) by Brian Atkin and Adrian Brooks

The updated version still includes detailed explanations of what facility management means to different stakeholders, including owners, tenants, operators, and most importantly facility managers, but it also adds a lot more information on many of the newer industry standards. There are also expanded sections on sustainability and environmental management, two topics quickly growing in importance.

One of the strengths is how the authors consistently show the connections between facility management and an organization's overall objectives, highlighting the key role the built environment plays in long-term success.

[Facilities Manager's Desk Reference](#) by James M. Wiggins

The book's big pitch is its width, with information and insights "covering all the principal facility management (FM) services." Designed for the busy facility manager (Is there any other kind?), the book can be your go-to reference on everything from legal compliance to creative ways to cut costs. With a focus on concise practical advice, there's lots to appeal to both accomplished professionals and those newer to the field, including students.

Effectiveness, efficiency, and experience

For all the advantages that come with a wider view, sometimes what you need is a deep dive. The following books take on fewer topics and show you how to target and achieve specific goals.

[Designing Neuroinclusive Workplaces: Advancing Sensory Processing and Cognitive Well-Being in the Built Environment](#) by [Kay Sargent](#)

Citing stats showing neurodivergent individuals now make up one fifth of the world's population, Sargent says workplace and facility leaders need to create spaces that support their specific needs. It can be a lot to incorporate, including strategic spatial zoning and sequencing, sensory zones, patterns, textures, colors, lighting, and "soundscaping," but Sargent shares how even small adjustments can deliver big improvements in cognitive function and fulfillment for all employees.

There's a lot of practical, actionable advice here, too, making it a must-read for human resources and accessibility teams, as well as architects, interior designers, and space planners.

[In Service To Others.... A US Navy Seabee's Journey](#) by [Randall Niznick](#)

It makes sense that a book about service aims to help more than one group. Part of Niznick's motivation for writing the book was to help his family understand and appreciate his 23 years as a US Navy Seabee, but he also wanted to share deeper insights into the nature and value of service.

Of specific interest to current and future facility and workplace leaders, Niznick covers the challenges veterans face when making the move from military to corporate life. He shares his personal journey, including the trials, tribulations, and invaluable lessons he learned, to help others in their own transitions from the military to new roles in the business world.

[Smart Cities: Reimagining the Urban Experience](#) by [Paul Doherty](#)

With rapid changes in technology and society, governments and policymakers need to rethink urban planning and development, explains Doherty, and he has ideas on how to connect information technology infrastructure with development goals for smart cities.

There are plenty of strategies, master plans, work templates, and real-world examples to help practitioners, urban developers, and policymakers foster greater social responsibility in a data-driven world that remains focused on the most important element of any environment, the people.

[Everyday AI: Transforming Life In The Digital Age: A Practical Guide To The AI Revolution](#) by [James Waddell](#) and [Stan Gibson](#)

Everyday AI makes a strong case for how AI is everywhere, with a look at how this evolving technology is changing communication, healthcare, education, workplaces, entertainment, geopolitics, legal systems, and business. It covers the obvious benefits while also exploring the ethical considerations and overall effects on society.

[BIM for Facility Managers](#) by the International Facility Management Association ([IFMA](#)) Business information modeling is at the center of design and construction, connecting everyone from the architects to the team that sources the rebar. But all those early investments in data can go to waste during operations and maintenance, the two most expensive phases in the facility life cycle. IFMA sets out the guidelines for linking BIM data with facility management platforms and includes six case studies to illustrate how your data can deliver more.

[Building T.E.A.M.S.: A Guide to Capital Needs Analysis](#) by [Cameron Christianson](#)

According to the online description, the book promises to be “a guide for facilities professionals on how to develop, implement, and manage a long-range life cycle planning and annual facility condition assessment program. It speaks to elements of total cost of ownership modeling as well as the strategic foundation required for long-range planning.”

But it’s also the fulfillment of a promise the author made to his father to share his groundbreaking work on facilities management and capital planning, including his admonition: “Just remember, facilities management is people management, and we bring the buildings along for laughs.”

[The 2025 Workplace Index report](#) by [Eptura](#)

With so many changes in facilities and workplace management over the last year, it’s important to have the most up-to-date industry numbers and insights. With a survey of 200 operational leaders and insights from 25 million global users, the latest report uncovers and outlines the critical paradox in technology: enterprises aren’t suffering from a lack of

tools. In fact, it's the opposite, with two thirds of companies using from 6 to as many as 40 different solutions to manage workplace operations.

There's a path forward, and the report details the positive trends and opportunities for leaders looking to embrace unified solutions.

[Maintenance and Reliability Best Practices Third Edition](#) by [Ramesh Gulati](#)

Already a solid resource for facility and maintenance managers on a wide range of critical topics, including leadership, change management, ISO standards, maintenance optimization, and communication, the latest edition adds:

Forty percent more end-of-chapter self-review questions

New chapters on standards, with a focus on ISO 55000

Insights into new trends like Industry 4.0, Maintenance 4.0, and IIOT

For the more motivated, Gulati offers a separate workbook for extra practice and review.

[Root Cause Analysis Made Simple](#) by [Susan Lubell](#)

Looking for an introduction to RCA but aren't sure where to start? Lubell delivers explanations of the basics of RCA, what it is, why you need it, and the concrete steps you can take toward implementation. At just under 70 pages, it's an efficient way to get up to speed on this critical process for maintenance and reliability.

[Physical Asset Management: An Organizational Challenge](#) by [Dharmen Dhaliah](#)

Facility management is all about getting things to work together, from the smallest gears in your assets and equipment to the people on the team, from your department to all the other departments across the organization. Dhaliah sets out a framework for holistic success and then uses case studies to show you how all the parts can work together. The book promises, "Existing gaps and overlaps are uncovered, exposing those that hinder collaboration and alignment."

[Risk-Based Asset Criticality Assessment Handbook](#) by [Suzane Greeman](#)

This one is special for us. Suzane Greeman was an asset management legend, both for her industry knowledge and passion for sharing it. We are proud to have had her as the first guest on the Asset Champion podcast, and since her passing, we miss her dearly.

For everyone whose job comes down to keeping an asset-packed facility online, the book's message hits home: If you're running an asset-heavy organization, you need a systematic

process for assigning criticality. The problem: many organizations lack programs that are well thought out and properly implemented, leading to hidden, uncontrolled risk.

The solution: this book, Risk-Based Asset Criticality Assessment Handbook.

Greeman leveraged her extensive career and long list of successes into a step-by-step process for fixing the traditional approach to assigning criticality, empowering organizations to develop their own methodologies specific to their operating contexts.

[Why Execution Fails and What to Do About It Second Edition](#) by [John Fortin](#)

Thanks to his extensive career as a change manager, Fortin knows that if you don't have some room in your plan for failures, your whole project is going to fail. In an [Asset Champion podcast](#) interview, the author explains that success isn't a straight line.

In fact, success is a cycle.

"...planning of your project, executing it, but then just making sure you're checking in on yourself, that it's going well. So, you have to have that PDCA (plan, do, check, act) circle. You may have to restart, refresh a couple of times."

And once he's defined success in the book, he goes back to show how to bring the whole team along with you.

Smart buildings and efficiency

"Work smart, not hard" is great advice, but for today's facility manager, it means something a bit different. Many of today's buildings are "smart," packed with sensors pulling in real-time data on everything from temperatures to occupancy. The result is more control and less waste, but only if you know how to leverage all that data into actionable insights.

[Internet of Things for Facility Management: Strategies of Service Optimization and Innovation](#) by Nazly Atta

Imagine being a doctor before the invention of the stethoscope, back when the best you could do to hear their heartbeat was hold your head close to a patient's chest. Now jump to today, where X-rays have given way to MRI and CAT scans. New technologies have completely changed the field of medicine, and doctors have had to adapt by learning new skills to keep up.

It's the same with facilities, where sensors can capture many different types of data, and a lot of it. So, facility managers now need to know how to incorporate real-time, large-scale data sets into their processes.

Atta gives an overview of the new tech, explains the changes it's bringing with it, and offers ideas about how FMs can leverage data to deliver better decision-making.

[The Design of Everyday Things](#) by Donald Norman

When organizations started trying to entice people back to the office, they soon realized they needed ways to “justify the commute” by delivering a better employee experience. They needed to improve the ways people could interact with and be supported by the workplace.

So, it makes sense for facility managers to go to the source and learn from the guy who coined the expression “user experience.” The author advocates a more holistic view of design, starting with his famous example of how his team at Apple carefully considered every aspect of the customer's experience – right down to making sure their computers came in a box that could easily fit in the backseat of a car.

A lot of the book is a high-level introduction to the importance and practices of good design, so you might find more to think about than concrete, actionable steps.

[How Buildings Learn, What Happens After They're Built](#) by Stewart Brand

There's plenty of talk these days about the possibilities and pitfalls of [converting empty office space](#) into residential real estate. But the idea that buildings change over time is nothing new.

Sometimes the changes are due to age. Sometimes they're because of the surroundings or other external forces. But the problem, according to the author, is the lack of processes for managing these changes.

Brand provides examples of both buildings that successfully found new lives and those that didn't, complete with carefully annotated pictures. He then outlines a process for designing facilities that can age well before eventually being reborn.

Get the coffee table version

Eptura is a software company, so of course we love all things digital. That said, there are some books that work better as plain old paper. Midway through a challenging day at the keyboard, it's a good idea to take five minutes away from the screens and grab a book. Clicking through a document is always more efficient, but when it comes to relaxing and getting lost in a text or images, it's never as effective as sitting with a big heavy book in your lap.

[The LEGO Architect](#) by Tom Alphin

Even a brief description of the book gives you a good idea of how much fun it would be to flip through the pages.

“Travel through the history of architecture in *The LEGO Architect*. You’ll learn about styles like Art Deco, Modernism, and High-Tech, and find inspiration in galleries of LEGO models.”

After you finish building the 12 models in the book, you can move on to [The LEGO Engineer](#).

Leadership for FMs

People think facility managers keep facilities, assets, and equipment up and running. But that’s not exactly true. What they do instead is run the teams that keep everything working.

Which is why leadership is one of the most important skills for facility managers. You don’t need to know everything about every asset. But you do need to know everything about managing and motivating the people who do.

[LEADERSHIP ASSETS: Empower Your Career from the Workshop to the Boardroom](#) by Dr Monique Beedles

A lot of fields have well defined paths to success. Want to be a doctor? Start with med school. Looking to be a movie star? Head to Hollywood. But what’s the first step to being a success in facility management? Traditionally, it’s been a lot less clear.

Until now. Beedles draws on her own experiences to deliver a framework for charting a personal path from the workshop to the boardroom, including an explanation of the nine essential leadership skills you need along the way.

[The Productive Leadership System – Maximizing Organizational Reliability](#) by Tom Moriarty

A famous quote about leadership is that “Leaders aren’t born, they’re made.” Moriarty offers an interesting spin: Leaders aren’t trained, they’re held accountable.

Basically, instead of relying on traditional leadership training programs that tend to overpromise, under deliver, the author proposes a system that focuses on the concept of accountability. There are different leadership roles, including experts, managers, coaches, and visionaries, but they all share a desire to be responsible. The best way to help them develop as leaders is to create systems through which they made accountable.

If you’re looking to advance into a leadership role within the field of facility management, the book outlines the skills you need to get yourself there.