ABSTRACT

As a formal topic for research and public business discussion, benchmarking is relatively new. Therefore, very few as yet know its meaning and how to do it well.

The underlying rationale for benchmarking is to learn to improve business processes and increase competitiveness. This involves knowing what is critical to the success of a business, finding and learning from others who perform these analogous processes better and adapting that learning to enhance revenue performance.

Benchmarking in building maintenance management is almost unheard of locally. This is because of the unique characteristics of the building maintenance industry: it is fragmented and competitive with little sharing of information. Furthermore, building maintenance is often overlooked as a business function. It often plays second fiddle to the other business operations. Therefore, far less advance management tools are adopted by building managers to effectively manage the buildings.

Building managers are currently challenged to meet greater demand for improved maintenance standard with less staff, less capital and in less time than ever before. To achieve these competing objectives, building managers require new managerial approaches to assess their maintenance performance. However, performance assessment in building maintenance management not only lacks depth and breath of analysis, it is also unable to identify those critical processes that require tactical and strategic improvements to attain superiority. To identify the solution that enhances better customer satisfaction and ensure effective utilisation of maintenance resources, building managers should turn to benchmarking.
Benchmarking in building maintenance management straddles between the disciplines of benchmarking and building maintenance management. This research attempts to bridge the two disciplines. It addresses the implementation of benchmarking in building maintenance management through an internal benchmarking case study using primary data obtained from a local property management company (whose name is not disclosed and referred to as Company X).

The various elements of this research have been brought together to support and prompt building managers to undertake benchmarking in search for superior performance. The findings clearly show that there are substantial opportunities to improve customer relations and deploy resources more efficiently and productively by pursuing the best-of-the-class examples identified by the benchmarking study.

This research contributes to a better understanding of benchmarking in building maintenance management. It is also hoped that from this research that other researchers will be able to stimulate further ideas and hypotheses for subsequent study.

Benchmarking is a quality tool that will lead to continuous performance. In today's competitive environment, building owners and tenants are becoming more discerning and demanding. However, resources remain limited. Through benchmarking, building managers can keep pace with new maintenance trends, improve customer satisfaction and deploy resources more efficiently by pursuing the 'best' practices identified through the benchmarking study.