



How to Speak Maintenance

Everyone in multifamily should learn to speak maintenance!

Article 4 | Focus on Training – Part 1

While often overlooked, training programs should be a main priority for property maintenance and office teams. Through strong training programs, teams and individuals alike have opportunities to grow and evolve. However, there is great risk when training isn't a made priority, especially by leadership.

Some of the main benefits of training programs include:

- ⊗ Higher profit margins and reduced employee turnover.
- ⊗ Increased employee satisfaction due to leadership investing in its people.
- ⊗ Improved job productivity, such as working reduced hours, an easier workday and less maintenance calls.

Unfortunately, many businesses think training costs them too much time and money. As people become focused on their day-to-day activities, they may lose sight of the bigger picture – the overall goals and objectives of the team and themselves. For leadership, it's imperative to recognize these greater goals, and understand how training programs will support and enable their employees to achieve greater success and, in turn, profits.

Without training programs in place, the business and leadership may be inadvertently sending a message to employees that they are not valued or worth the time and financial investment. When employees are encouraged to grow, learn and improve their skills, they will have higher job satisfaction, be less likely to leave the company, and be a greater overall asset to the company.

So, how do you go about creating the right training tools and programs for your team?

Here are a few key features to consider:

- **Compensation** – Align the learning initiatives with the compensation and bonus structure.
- **Show ROI** – Help employees understand how and why the training is worth their time. For example, it will enhance their productivity, create easier days, or reduce weekend or evening work.
- **What's in it for me?** – Create opportunities for people to participate in effective developmental programs and give them metrics on how these trainings will benefit their careers and improve performance.

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- **Be flexible** – Not every person learns the same way, so offer different platforms for people to digest the information, such as videos, handouts, web tutorials and in-person learning sessions.
- **Encourage interaction** – Information retention increases through collaboration and discussions, so aim to create programs where people can have open-ended dialogue and participation.
- **Measure** – Training programs should be developed to encourage improved workplace behaviors and productivity. Aim to set goals for the outcome of a training, and measure whether it was successful.

For maintenance and office teams, training programs may be constantly evolving as properties change and new systems are put in place. Leadership should continue to identify areas of improvement and learning challenges to create opportunities for people to better understand the property and how it functions.

Key Takeaways:

- Training programs cost time and money but can be one of the greatest business resources. When executed well, training has a high ROI and increases profit margins significantly.
- The benefits of training programs include higher profit margins, reduced turnover and improved productivity.
- Leadership should invest in employees by offering training opportunities. Not only does this show them that they are valued and important assets, but employees are able to learn new skills, improve productivity and become better performers.
- It's not just about attending the training. Employees need to understand why the training is important and be incentivized to apply these learnings.
- Leadership needs to ensure that training programs encourage positive changes by establishing a target or intention behind the training and measure its effectiveness.

"How to Speak Maintenance" is a monthly series that focuses on teaching property managers and office staff how to better understand and appreciate the work and the value of the maintenance teams, eliminate conflict points that come up, and provide better customer service for our residents.

This episode, "Training – Part 1," features:

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