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1200 BUILDINGS PROJECT ADVICE SHEET

Liaising with tenants during a retrofit

In most retrofit projects, it's necessary to keep tenants occupying the space so that rents collected contribute to the revenue needed for the project.

Therefore, keeping tenants on, managing their expectations and protecting their work productivity is critical to the success of the project.

There are four phases of a retrofit project, and tenants need to be involved in each.

PLAN**Planning**

1. Involve the tenants as much as possible in the planning phase. The information they provide can be helpful in deciding what is needed as part of the building retrofit. They have, after all, been living and working in the environment, so will have a very good idea of the building's shortfalls.
2. Consult with and survey tenants about how the building could be improved.
3. Take tenants into account when planning project implementation. Will the choices you intend to make at every level of the project allow your tenants to remain in their space? For example, will pressure testing the building mean that tenants will need to vacate their space? What happens if new ductwork is required for the HVAC, and ceilings have to be removed? What if windows need reglazing? How will a new control system be fitted with new sensors in occupied spaces?
4. If a building energy assessment has been conducted, let them know the results and the recommendations made to improve the building performance. See if they agree.
5. When designs are drafted and equipment and systems selected, let your tenants know the likely results of these changes on energy and water reduction. This will be good for them to know, as they could calculate likely decreases in electricity and gas bills. Let them know likely improvements to air quality, which will impact on their work performance. Give them the good news.
6. If you intend to conduct the retrofit around the termination of their leases, make sure that the leases are checked and tenants agreeable to termination.

Implementing

1. When it is known what works are required, schedule the project as much as possible to minimise tenant disruption.
2. Do as much of the dirty, noisy work out of office hours.
3. Provide separate lifts for tradespeople to use.
4. To minimise noise, carpet floors in spaces above tenants that are being refurbished
5. When the work is finished plan a day when the building is publicly launched. Invite your tenants to be part of this activity so that they buy in to the "green" qualities of the new building.

Read 1200 Buildings case studies at melbourne.vic.gov.au/1200buildings

COMMISSIONING

Commissioning

1. There may be new elements in the functioning of the building that involve your tenants, such as:
 - a new metering system
 - lighting sensors
 - after-hours air conditioning switches
 - mechanical over-ride devices on windows, external blinds, etc.
 - water-flow devices
 - new waste disposal procedures.

Make them aware of the changes and provide information on how to properly use the new systems.

2. In order to achieve high energy efficiency standards, the set points on temperature during winter may have been set lower and during summer, higher. This will create a change in the environment for the tenant, and they may need to be educated about this.

Educate them in terms of:

- wearing appropriate clothing for summer and winter.
- not expecting that when they return from the heat outside, the inside building temperature will be set to cool them down, or vice versa.

3. Part of the project commissioning process will entail measuring the actual performance outcomes against what was expected in the initial design. Let the tenants know the results, to show that the retrofit objectives have been achieved. This will again reassure them that the inconvenience of the retrofit was worth putting up with.
4. When the retrofit is complete, provide training to tenants on best practice operation of the building to ensure good efficiency is achieved. This will be important on an on-going basis to maintain best practice with new staff too.

ONGOING

On-going

1. In most cases, you will have little direct influence over tenant's electricity use. However you can encourage your tenants to reduce energy and water use by signing up to the CitySwitch green office program www.cityswitch.net.au

CitySwitch tips to improve office energy efficiency include:

- Activate 'sleep' mode on office equipment that isn't in constant use.
- Arrange desks near windows or re-paint in pale, reflective colours to maximise natural light in the office.
- Switch off the lights if you are last to leave the room - 70 percent of energy used in offices is attributed to lighting.
- Switch to energy efficient appliances and save significant amounts of energy.
- Upgrade office lighting to include occupancy sensors and timers.
- Ensure you buy energy efficient light bulbs.
- When possible utilise laptops - they use just 10% the amount of power of a desktop PC.
- Shut down all equipment each night at the power source.
- Install shading and blinds on windows to utilise natural light and keep heat in or out.
- Clean light fittings and tubes to restore up to 30% of light output.
- Locate printers and photocopiers away from air-conditioning sensors - heat from this equipment can mean thermostats over cool the office.
- Reward staff who have switched off their computers and monitors at night with a chocolate surprise!