



## ISO/TC 267 - Facility Management

### ISO/TC 267 Spotlight with Mindy Williams-McElearney

Mindy Williams-McElearney is a current member of IFMA's board of directors and chair of the IFMA Standards Committee. We spent a few minutes with her at IFMA's World Workplace Conference in Phoenix discussing her perspective FM standards and the outlook of the profession.

**Q: Can you explain a little about yourself and your professional background?**

- I am Vice President of L&K Partners, and immediate Past President of the NYC Chapter. I have over 25 years of experience in the Commercial Interiors, Design & Construction industry. I have been with L&K Partners, a Construction Management firm based in New York City, for 6.5 years. Prior to that, I spent 6 years on the architectural side and 14 years in contract furniture with Knoll.

**Q: So, it sounds like you “fell into” the industry. Can you tell us how you came to focus on FM?**

- I started in the industry on the sales side, and although the facility manager was my primary client, I became increasingly aware of this hidden layer in the built environment. It occurred to me – people need a place to sit; buildings need care. These things don't happen on their own. I began to realize facility management was a discipline, a profession in its own right.

**Q: What does great FM mean to you?**

- The definition of FM has changed greatly over the years. However, one might currently say that “great FM” is defined by the customer experience. The customer or company employee can focus on their job because everything in their workspace has been well thought out and executed in such a fashion, that they don't even consider that the space is designed and maintained for their comfort and productivity. Access to natural light, indoor environmental quality concerns, safety and security, cleaning, recycling programs, etc., are all taken care of as if by magic. The facility manager is nearly invisible unless something goes wrong.

**Q: How do you apply standards to your own work?**

- I am OCD in my personal life, so I can appreciate the value of having standards and processes. While we know that there is not a “one size fits all” solution to FM, standards provide guidelines for facility managers – a place to start to find solutions to their challenges. ISO 41001 and the other FM standards already published by ISO/TC 267 bring us one step closer to creating an “All Inclusive, How-To Handbook” for the NextGen of FMs.



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### **Q: How do you see FM changing during the next 5-years?**

- FM is constantly evolving, and I think that will continue well into the future. Technology has had an incredible impact on everything around us, and FM is not an exception. Technology has enabled the FM to be better informed with real-time data analytics and to use that information to create better spaces that run more efficiently.

### **Q: What does the industry need to respond to these changes (knowledge, skillset, training, standardization, etc.)?**

- Our industry needs to recruit the next generation of facility manager's sooner and make access to specialized training more accessible. So many people are unaware of FM as a profession, and that is making it harder to fill positions being vacated by retiring facility managers. We also need to consider how technology is making a bigger impact on the built environment. We are not only looking for people interested in the profession, but also for people with a specialized knowledge of the new technologies being installed in our facilities.

### **Q: Do you have any last thoughts you'd like to share with us?**

- At its core, the work that ISO/TC 267 is doing is at the heart of why I joined IFMA: to add value to the industry, to make facility management relevant and to educate the profession. That's why I raised my hand to chair the IFMA Standards Committee.. IFMA's participation as the administrator of the U.S. mirror committee shows the organization is truly invested in being part of the standards discussions happening globally that impact our industry. It's important that we make our members aware of this work and its significance, not only to the industry but to the facility manager.