President's Notes

I love measuring and improving things! Especially, if it’s something that is easy to do, and is effective with meeting an established organizational mission. The task can be labor intensive and expensive so I’m fairly selective.

Nevertheless, in spite of all my efforts I’m still convinced by an article written by a friend of mine, Pieter van der Have, a retired Director of Facilities at Utah State University. He was also the President of APPA (www.appa.org) where I’m a member, and he currently serves as a consultant for Facility Engineering Associates, Inc. (www.fea.com). College Planning & Management recently published his perspective on measuring, or the lack thereof. Here’s an excerpt:

"It is a constant source of amazement to me to find out how often a request or design standard for a power (or other type of utility) meter at the building level is not enforced during building design, and is matter-of-fact 'value engineered' out of the building project, in deference to more visible "luxury" requests that offer no payback. For most campuses, the cost of utilities far exceeds the cost of O&M for the same facilities. Undeniably, that is a boatload of money to leave afloat without a rudder or a map. How ridiculous is that?"

This article is titled with a word that he designed himself, "Metrophobia" (click for full article: http://efsfacilities.org/uploads/METRIPHOBIA_.doc ). In his perspective he describes probably one of the greatest reasons for the lack of measuring—"having a fear of measuring." Overcoming the fear of measuring within an organization can be very labor intensive and emotionally draining. Nevertheless, it is the essence of energy efficiency:

"We are negligent in performing the ethical requirements of our assigned stewardship if we fail to do all we must to obtain/manage/utilize relevant, reliable, and credible metrics. If our bosses resist supporting us (e.g. provide the resources) in our quest to acquire and manage these types of metrics, shame on them! On the other hand, if we do not effectively utilize those resources and tools, thereby diminishing our roles as facility management professionals...doubly shame on us!!! The cure for metrophobia originates from within..."

No Margin—No Mission...

"With energy to care."

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