



Leadership Conversation Guide

Framing facilities as a system that protects
risk, reputation, and capacity.

SECTION 1	Reframe Facilities for Leadership	3
SECTION 2	Turn Issues into System Stories	4
SECTION 3	Present a Simple, Ranked Recommendation List	6
SECTION 4	Questions to Ask a Potential Partner	8
SECTION 5	Your Notes for the Next Leadership Conversation	10

SECTION ONE

Reframe Facilities for Leadership

Goal: Move from “clean vs. dirty” to strategic language.

When talking with leadership:

1. Link facilities to risk:

- Safety incidents, compliance findings, audit results, infection-related issues, uptime and environmental control in critical environments.
- **Sample framing:**
 - *“Here’s where our current facilities setup is increasing our risk of [safety / compliance / reputation / uptime] issues.”*

2. Link facilities to reputation and trust:

- Executive, client, patient, student, tenant, staff, family, and public perceptions across your facilities.
- **Sample framing:**
 - *“This is how our environment is shaping the story people tell about us before they experience our services.”*

3. Link facilities to people and performance:

- Staff morale, recruitment, retention, patient/tenant/student satisfaction, confidence from boards or community.
- **Sample framing:**
 - *“The condition of these spaces is starting to show up in how staff and [patients / tenants / students / residents] feel about being here.”*

4. Link facilities to your capacity:

- How much time you spend managing vendors and putting out fires vs. leading the facilities function and designing Facility Systems.
- **Sample framing:**
 - *“Right now, I’m spending X% of my time chasing issues that should be managed by a stable facilities system.”*

You can give these as short bullet examples leaders can adapt.

SECTION TWO

Turn Issues into System Stories

Goal: Don't present isolated incidents—show patterns and roots.

For this exercise, please reference information from your completed *Facility Playbook Workbook* and/or *Vendor & System Snapshot Workbook*.

Pick 2–3 priority issues from your playbook. For each, define:

- What leadership sees/feels (symptom)
- What's driving it (system cause)
- What you propose (system change, not one-off fix)

Example format:

- **Issue:** Repeat complaints about main lobby cleanliness before leadership visits.
- **Symptom (leadership sees):** “The lobby is unpredictable; sometimes it looks great, sometimes not.”
- **System cause:** Timing/frequency misaligned with traffic; unclear ownership between two vendors within the Janitorial & Facility Maintenance system.
- **Proposal:** Align lobby under one accountable provider; adjust schedule to match peak times; set clear standards and inspection routine.

PRIORITY ISSUE #1	
SYMPTOM	
SYSTEM CAUSE	
PROPOSAL	

PRIORITY ISSUE #1	
SYMPTOM	
SYSTEM CAUSE	
PROPOSAL	

PRIORITY ISSUE #1	
SYMPTOM	
SYSTEM CAUSE	
PROPOSAL	

SECTION THREE

Present a Simple, Ranked Recommendation List

Goal: Help leadership choose, not drown in detail.

Turn your insights into a short, ranked list of 2–3 recommended changes for the next 6–12 months, then be ready to explain each one in plain language, why it matters, and what result you’d expect to see.

Examples:

- **What it is:** plain language
- **Why it matters:** risk, reputation, people, time
- **What result we’d expect to see:** in specific facilities or Facility Systems

CHANGE #1			
WHAT IT IS			
ROUGH COST / COST ESTIMATE	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
WHAT RESULTS WE’D EXPECT TO SEE			

CHANGE #1			
WHAT IT IS			
ROUGH COST / COST ESTIMATE	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
WHAT RESULTS WE’D EXPECT TO SEE			

CHANGE #1			
WHAT IT IS			
ROUGH COST / COST ESTIMATE	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
WHAT RESULTS WE'D EXPECT TO SEE			

SECTION FOUR

Questions to Ask a Potential Partner

Goal: Equip leaders to evaluate vendors/partners on systems and accountability.

Use these questions to move beyond price and task lists and understand how a potential partner actually runs their operations, manages risk, and supports facility leaders over time.

How do you design facilities services as a system, not just a task list?

How do you define and inspect quality for different types of spaces and Facilities Like Yours
(e.g., corporate, medical, industrial, government, higher ed, K-12, controlled environments)?

Who is ultimately accountable for what happens in our buildings—system by system?

(Janitorial & Facility Maintenance, Floor Care & Surface Restoration, Exterior & Grounds, Construction Cleaning & Space Readiness, Disinfection & Emergency Response, Critical Environment Cleaning)

How do you handle security and access control for your teams across different facility types?

How do you adapt your program over time as usage, risk, and needs change across our campuses and Facility Systems?

What does a typical client relationship look like over 3–5 years in terms of system design, reviews, and improvements?

SECTION FIVE

Your Notes for the Next Leadership Conversation

Goal: Give leaders a place to consolidate into a one-pager.

(If you use a full Vendor & System Snapshot template, you can reference or attach it; this section is the quick version.)

LIST CURRENT VENDORS IMPACTING FACILITIES

List all vendors that are currently impacting your facilities, what areas they own, and complete the additional prompts.

Examples:

- **What they own:** janitorial, floor care, exterior & grounds, construction cleaning & space readiness, disinfection & emergency response, critical environment cleaning