
Service Provision: Operational Support Services

This article sets out the portfolio of six core services provided by incubators: reception, secretarial, security, communications, cleaning and kitchen.

Objectives

- Define, structure and supply a portfolio of operational services to incubated companies. This means that the incubator provides or makes available services such as: reception, secretarial, security, communications, cleaning, kitchen, etc.
- These are essential services because they support incubated companies by giving them time to concentrate on developing their processes, products and services.

Key Issues

1. **Reception Services:** This service is generally provided by a receptionist hired by the incubator; that is, a professional hired for this purpose to work in administering the incubator program. Obviously this only applies when the administration shares the same location as the incubated companies. In this case, the incubator receptionist should have an up-to-date grasp of basic information on the companies in order to be able to provide information when required.

2. **Secretarial Services:** At most incubators this type of service involves work such as sending fax messages, filling out invoices, maintaining the collective mailbox of the incubated companies (receipt and mailing of small packages), etc. Employees of the incubator also often provide this type of service to incubated companies.

3. **Security Services:** This involves checking on the security of the physical installations of the incubated companies since they usually keep equipment and other valuable items on their premises. Employees that work for the staff of the incubator itself normally offer this type of service to client companies; that is, they already provide this type of service to the incubator management, or through professionals hired to provide this service to the companies.

4. **Communication Services:** This involves the provision of communications infrastructure to incubated companies, such as: an internal communications network via Internet, telephones with internal extensions, Intranet, etc.

5. **Cleaning Services:** This refers to the cleaning and maintenance of the individual premises and those communal areas used by the incubated companies. Like other services, these may also be available through the staff of the incubator.

6. **Kitchen Services:** These services deal mainly with the maintenance of the environment that serves as a meeting place for the incubator, and which is offered for use by incubated companies. This environment is important because it provides the setting for casual interaction among the entrepreneurs.

Responsible Parties

In-house professional or team with the ability and knowledge to organize such services.

Indicators

- Number of suggestions/criticisms regarding the services provided,
- Companies well served in regard to these operational needs,
- Increase in the number of services that can aid in providing adequate support to incubated companies.

Results

Fully meet the needs of incubated companies in relation to operational services by making them available.