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dream MAKER

Mary Miller's vision of helping employees **achieve their life ambitions** has reduced turnover and improved productivity for Jancoa

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CEO, Jancoa



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Living Her Dream



SIX YEARS AGO, while researching an article, I read the business book "The Dream Manager" featuring the owners of a fictitious janitorial company. The book covered turnover problems — something nearly all building service contractors struggle with — and addressed how employee relations can improve retention.

While interviewing the book's author, Matthew Kelly, I learned that he chose a BSC for his character for a reason. Kelly

put me in touch with Mary Miller, CEO of Cincinnati-based JANCOA and brainchild behind the Dream Manager program.

I found Miller's story fascinating, but unfortunately wasn't able to share more of it in that original article. For years I have waited for an opportunity to revisit the topic. After JANCOA won Bronze for Best Place to Work at the Best in Biz awards in 2013 and hearing that Miller was going to be a featured speaker at the 2014 WFBSC Congress, it was time.

Miller's vision of improving her employees' quality of life is uplifting, especially considering the competitive nature of the cleaning industry and intense pressure on prices. It costs money to help employees and few people are willing to foot the bill.

For example, according to a recent *Contracting Profits*' survey of facility executives, having janitors earn a living wage is important to 86 percent of respondents. But, only half of facility executives are willing to pay extra to actually make it happen.

Of course, money isn't always the answer to better workers. Studies show that a raise needs to be at least 7 percent to lead to more motivated employees. And in this point, Miller's idea is realistic. She can't afford to give everyone this high a raise, nor does she sugarcoat the fact that people don't want to be janitors. Miller knows people will eventually leave JANCOA, but she can make their time at the company a positive one. In return, her employees will provide faster and better service.

Check out her story starting on page 24. 

Dan Weltin, Editor-in-Chief

Miller knows people will leave JANCOA, but she can make their time at the company a positive one

MAY/JUNE – VOLUME 20, NO. 3

Contracting Profits (ISSN 1083-3781) is published bi-monthly, with combined issues for January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December by Trade Press Media Group Inc., 2100 W. Florist Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53209-3799. Periodicals postage paid at Milwaukee, WI and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: send address changes to *Contracting Profits*, PO Box 47704, Plymouth MN 55447.

U.S. Subscriptions are \$55 per year, \$90 for two years. All foreign subscriptions are \$67 per year, \$125 for two years, \$125 additional per year via USPS priority mail. Single copies are \$8.

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Web Exclusive Content

Webcast Archive: Food Safety And Sanitation

Did you miss our recent webcast covering the proper cleaning and sanitizing of foodservice areas? Foodborne illnesses can have detrimental financial effects for facilities. Get prepared by watching consultant Dr. Brian J. Hill's presentation anytime for free at www.cleanlink.com/webcasts

Distributors Identify Industry's Most Useful Products

The Distributor Choice Awards Program recognized the most innovative and useful sanitary supply products of the year, as determined by sanitary supply distributors. The online campaign highlighted 280 different products from various categories and identified 40 winners. To learn more about the program, go to www.cleanlink.com/17096news and watch for the logo identifying winners throughout the site.



Employer Obligations For Health Laws

There is a lot of confusion surrounding laws that apply to employee health issues. *Contracting Profits'* columnist and legal expert Perry Heidecker covers employer obligations for worker compensation, disability, the Affordable Care Act, social security and other laws. Read the column at www.cleanlink.com/16980cp

2014 Supply Line Recap

The New Jersey Sanitary Supply Association (NJSSA) recently held its biannual trade show and convention in Atlantic City and it was a resounding success. Hear from NJSSA president Steve Lentini and read about the event highlights and attendance figures at www.cleanlink.com/17060news



Quick Tips

Are you looking for solutions to a current cleaning problem? Do your employees need a refresher in procedures and product selection? Or maybe you're simply searching for industry best practices? CleanLink's daily tip feature has it all covered.



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Recruiting Is Easier Online, Especially On Social Networks

By Mel Kleiman



Mel Kleiman is a certified speaking professional, writer, pragmatic business owner and consultant on frontline employee recruiting, selection, and retention best practices. He serves as president of Humetrics, is a member of a number human resource-related boards and organizations. He is also a longstanding member of the Society for Human Resource Management and the National Speakers Association.

Mel is the author of five books, including the best-selling "Hire Tough, Manage Easy - How to Find and Hire the Best Hourly Employees," as well as hundreds of articles for numerous magazines and trade journals worldwide.

Spreading your employee recruiting message is now significantly easier because you can use social networking tools to connect to a more desirable and broader labor pool.

According to the Pew Research Center, 65 percent of adult Internet users are members of, and regularly visit, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. These sites open your doors to higher quality applicants because your social network connections are the people who know your company best: your existing employees, customers and vendors. When they rebroadcast your job openings, they are implicitly recommending you as an employer. By building your social networking presence, you can collect a large following of "virtual recruiters."



Here's how to get started:

1. **Invite applicants to your virtual front door:** When you activate your social networks, you'll want to lead potential applicants to your website. Your website should allow applicants to learn about your company, your job openings and provide a way for them to apply online.
2. **Make it easy to apply online:** Many employers discourage jobseekers by requiring applicants to enter their entire work and education histories, references and personal information line-by-tedious-line. Many potential applicants, especially those who have jobs, will balk at the time required in return for the slim chance they may be selected for an interview.

Make it easy for potential recruits by accepting their existing resume and cover

letter via email. But, don't stop there. Many busy, working people and most frontline, hourly employee candidates won't have the time and/or skills to create or update a resume. It's better to develop a short form job application for your website. Ask for only the most basic information: name, contact information, best time to get in touch, what they've been doing for the past two years (work, school, etc.) and why they're interested in the job. This will give you enough information to decide whether to call and ask a more complete set of pre-screening questions (such as whether or not they have reliable transportation, the hours or days they prefer to work, their specific skills, etc.).

By the end of this pre-screening phone interview, you'll know whether or not it will be worth your time, and theirs, to invite them to interview.

3. **Post your job openings on Craigslist.org:** Craigslist is both effective and simple to use. It serves all major (and many minor) population areas so you can target job applicants in your city or town.
4. **Sign up for Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter:** By having a presence on each, chances are you'll connect to a fair number of customers, employees and vendors who can act as virtual recruiters by reposting your job openings.

Using social networks to promote your company as a great place to work will also promote your organization as a great contractor. Both will help you build your bottom line. ☐

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[Activated Water]

Turning Water Into A Powerful Cleaner

Manufacturer Roundtable takes questions *Contracting Profits* has received from building service contractors and poses them directly to cleaning industry manufacturers. Each month questions and answers for a different product category will be featured.

By Dan Weltin, Editor-in-Chief

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Please explain how your “activated water” product works scientifically.

Dao: Our product is a stable form of super-oxidized water. Its active ingredient is pure hypochlorous acid. Hypochlorous acid is generated by the human body’s own immune system to kill invading pathogens. It is highly effective even at very low concentrations.

Shanahan: We have patented the blended stream generation of sanitizer and cleaning solutions. Our devices never employ salt for our cleaning solutions, as it typically leaves a sodium residue on surfaces. The cleaning solutions are color-coded to ensure that the user knows what they are working with in keeping with typical cleaning chemicals.

The power is our proprietary alloy and computer controller that allow us to transform our natural supplements into cleaners and degreasers. This alloy also allows us to frack (break up) the custom blended sodium supplement to create a pH stabilized sanitizer/disinfectant solution.

Based on the science of electrolysis, users create a mixture of minerals and water with an electrical charge to pro-

duce a blended stream of electrochemical activated (ECA) water. In fact, the solution is so natural, the human body produces a form of the solution in white blood cells to kill germs and fight infections (hypochlorous acid).

Leis: Our on-site generation technology uses a water electrolysis process. Our device is connected to a facility’s tap water supply, drain and standard electrical outlet. Softened tap water and salt are combined and the mixture flows into an electrolytic cell. This water electrolysis process creates two separate streams — a cleaning solution and a disinfecting/sanitizing solution.

Built-in sensors measure critical output parameters in both solutions to ensure efficacy. The solutions are then dispensed into spray bottles, automatic scrubbers, mop buckets and carpet extractors for cleaning crews to use.

Hengsperger: We take the oxygen you breathe — O₂ — and split these molecules so that the individual oxygen atoms recombine to form O₃, or “ozone.” That third oxygen molecule is very unstable and becomes a natural oxidizer.

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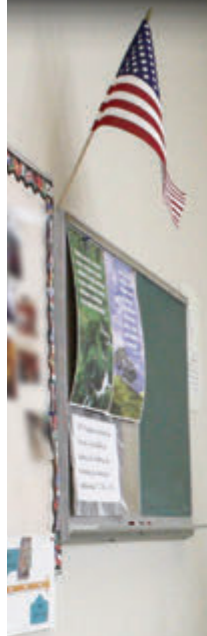


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Manufacturer Roundtable

We infuse O3 into the water where it is perfectly safe. Chlorine and hydrogen peroxide are other examples of oxidizers. Since this third oxygen atom is so unstable, as the molecules find each other (if not used up to break down dirt or kill germs), they naturally revert back to O2 again, leaving just water and oxygen as your end product.

Q How long does the water remain "activated?"

Leis: A ready-to-use (RTU) cleaning solution remains effective for 90 days when stored in a closed container. The RTU disinfectant/sanitizer is effective for seven days in a closed container. After seven days, it should be discarded and replaced.

Hengsperger: We can keep the water activated up to 24 hours. Aqueous ozone typically only remains activated for 15 minutes. This is where we can make the biggest impact on the environment as we are putting only water and oxygen down the drain. We have some customers that go through 100 gallons of solution a day. Since we produce the solution on-demand there is no need to have longer life than this.

Dao: Our formulated bottled product has up to 24 months of shelf life. Once applied, our product does not leave any toxic residue. It is biodegradable and safe for the environment.



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Shanahan: Our cleaners are stable until used up, even if that takes a full year. Our sanitizer/disinfectant remains stable for 14 days.

Q How has your product been proven as effective as chemicals?

Shanahan: We have been thoroughly vetted by the University of Massachusetts, Lowell Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) Lab and have been found to perform equally to all contemporary green and non-green cleaners.

Dao: Our products are EPA, FDA and USDA approved and tested by GLP labs. Our products are also tested and proven in real life settings and clinical studies. In studies conducted by our customers, our products are proven to be as effective as, or better than, most commonly used chemicals; e.g. bleach, quaternary ammonium, glutaraldehyde or alcohol. Even at low concentrations, it shows good sporicidal kill against C. diff based on GLP tests. In addition, our product has been proven to be as good as a cleaner against concentrates for multi-surface, glass, floor and bathroom uses.

Leis: The multi-surface cleaner has been evaluated by a number of independent organizations. Tests by TURI shows it works as well as two comparative, conventional products for all-purpose and glass cleaning. It is also certified high-traction by the National Floor Safety Institute (NFSI), registered by NFSI as acceptable for use as a general purpose cleaner in and around food process areas. It has received the platinum seal of approval from Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) when used as part of a deep cleaning system, and it is WOOLSAFE-approved for use on wool and advanced generation synthetic carpets.

The disinfectant/sanitizer has been independently tested and meets the EPA standards for a one-step cleaner/disinfectant, a food contact surface sanitizer, and a non-food contact surface sanitizer, all at the same concentration.

Hengsperger: We have had testing that was done at TURI to the GS-37 standard and we passed all challenges, even their Huckers Soil test.

Q What are some common uses for activated water products?

Hengsperger: We go in and have facilities remove all of their everyday cleaning products when we do a trial. We have them use our solution for everything from glass to stainless steel to carpet and any hard floor surface.

Shanahan: Essentially anywhere you would use traditional cleaners/sanitizers and disinfectants. Our solutions perform like that of any traditional cleaner and in fact have a faster kill rate than most quats. Use them where you would use any cleaning, sanitizer or disinfectant.

Leis: The cleaner replaces a variety of conventional daily-use chemicals including all-purpose cleaners, glass cleaners, stainless steel cleaners, in-tank for automatic floor cleaning equipment, and as a pre-spray and in-tank for carpet cleaning.

The disinfectant/sanitizer replaces conventional one-step cleaner/disinfectants, food contact surface sanitizers, non-food contact surface sanitizers and deodorants.

Dao: Our products can be used as a hospital-grade disinfectant, food contact sanitizer, multi-surface cleaner, glass cleaner, stainless steel cleaner, floor cleaner and bathroom disinfecting cleaner.

Q What are good markets for activated water?

Leis: Any facility that has sustainability goals or any organization seeking to create a reputation for sustainable practices is a good candidate for on-site generation technology. In addition, facilities where indoor air quality is important, as well as buildings where maintaining a high level of clean is critical should consider on-site generation. Schools and universities, along with healthcare facilities, are often good candidates for on-site generation technology.

Shanahan: Education is a leader. Schools now know that traditional chemicals and the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) associated with them can have real side effects on children. Activated water can remove all VOCs and provide real results.

Hospitality is another good market. Many clients don't appreciate the smell of cleaning products or fragrances when they travel. A clean room with no smell is far better and safer for people with asthma. All markets have applications where traditional chemicals can be replaced by activated water technologies.

Hengsperger: Anywhere. We have customers in just about every vertical imaginable.

Dao: Our products are currently being used in the healthcare, institution/education, hospitality, commercial facilities, food processing and service, transportation and household markets. Our products are also used in industrial applications; e.g. water treatment and waste management centers. 

Visit www.cleanlink.com/cp for additional activated water questions, including how much product to use and how to know its working.

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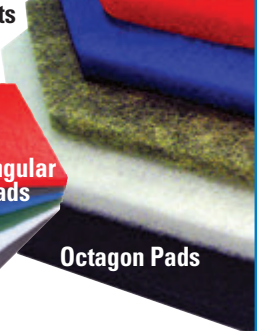
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[Carpet Care]

Day Cleaning Calls For Quieter Vacuums

Stephanie S. Beecher, Associate Editor

For many building occupants, janitors are the invisible people who arrive in the evening to tidy up the office before morning rolls around. If janitors happen to be on-site during business hours, they are treated as imperceptible figures cleaning the floors and fixtures in the background.

Fortunately, this perception is changing. As more facilities turn to day cleaning programs to reduce energy and labor costs, building occupants are able to put a face to the cleaning staff, and subsequently, gain newfound respect for the workers who help keep facilities clean, safe and healthy for tenants and visitors.

"In nighttime cleaning, most people don't have an idea who the people are who clean their space," says Patrick Fragomeni, regional manager at Janitronics Facility Services, in Albany, New York. "They may draw a negative image of who those people are. Once you bring in employees during the day, the occupants are more appreciative."

In fact, this building service contractor provides a growing number of cleaning services performed before 5 p.m., even in facilities with extended hours.

"Many facilities operate in the global economy and collaborate with companies overseas," requiring them to accommodate the schedules of their foreign partners, Fragomeni explains. "The only negative is it gets a little bit more difficult [to clean] when someone is sitting behind a desk."



Vacuuming Challenges

Day cleaning — or anytime janitors are brought on to clean in the presence of tenants — has its challenges. Unlike nighttime cleaning programs, cleaners must take into consideration how their tasks affect fellow building occupants.

One of these challenges includes vacuuming facility floors. While it is recommended that day porters vacuum common areas, floor matting, lobbies and other carpeted areas during so-called "slower periods" of building traffic, loud vacuums remain a common source of complaints from building occupants.

According to one vacuum manufacturer, the single "most annoying factor" to consumers while vacuuming or being in the same room with an operating vacuum, is a machine's noise level.

The average noise level of a vacuum is between 70 and 85 decibels, the unit used to measure sound pressure. That's more than the decibel level of a typical conversa-

tion (60 decibels) and comparable to the sound of a large truck barreling down a roadway (85 decibels).

That level of sound is not only "annoying" to building occupants, but also has the potential to inhibit employee productivity. Work disturbances are one of the strongest aversions to implementing a day cleaning program within a facility.

For some companies, however, there isn't an "ideal period" during which to vacuum building floors.

Some of Janitronics' largest clients include call centers for national phone, cable and insurance companies that, similar to global firms, operate 24/7. These buildings contain up to 60,000 square feet of floors, and can be occupied by more than 200 customer service employees in a single shift.

Because these employees are constantly on the telephone, it was of utmost importance that janitors kept noise levels to a



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A Janitronics' employee day cleans the carpeting of a conference room using a low-decibel backpack vacuum

minimum during cleaning. But, despite Janitronics' best efforts, vacuuming still proposed a "noise pollution" problem.

"For all your daily cleaning, vacuuming is most important because you're taking contaminants out of the air," and removing dirt and soil from facility floors, says Fragomeni. "But, traditional vacuums were a distraction to our customers. So, we started using equipment that was more conducive to the work environment."

Besides following daytime cleaning protocols, such as alerting occupants that janitors have arrived to clean their workspaces or waiting until an office was vacated, Jani-

tronics purchased a fleet of low-decibel backpack vacuums to quietly clean facility floors.

"Presenting change in any building is always a challenge, especially when the building occupants are not accustomed to having their workspace cleaned during business hours," says Fragomeni. "We typically ask our customer to first communicate internally describing to their employees the change. We also address the fact a low-decibel vacuum will be used with minimal, if any, disruptions."

Janitronics' employees use the cordless, low-decibel backpack vacuums to perform daily "detail vacuuming" tasks, such as traffic areas, under trashcans, chair wells, and other visibly soiled spaces. Detailed, wall-to-wall vacuuming tasks are completed about once a week, Fragomeni says.

Using a cordless vacuum eliminates potential trip hazards that can arise while vacuuming around occupants, he adds.

Though Fragomeni says people will always be acutely aware that someone is vacuuming around them, he says occupants have been satisfied about the noticeable difference in noise levels since the low-decibel vacuums were introduced.

"The backpacks we used to use were around 68 decibels," he says. "On the [new] backpack vacuum, the low-speed setting is 51 decibels, and on the high-speed setting, which increases power, it's 55 decibels. It's been very successful."

Still Getting Great Lift

A common concern for BSCs who wish to implement low-decibel vacuums into their cleaning programs regards the machine's overall performance, Fragomeni says.

At one period of time, it was considered that the louder a vacuum motor was, the better the machine "suctioned" the soil and debris from commercial building floors. Today, efficient motors can both be quieter and effective.

While it's true that lower-settings do reduce vacuum lift, Fragomeni says there is only a slight difference in static lift, or the amount of air being sucked through.

Fragomeni points out that reduced lift may become an issue in industrial facilities, or other environments with heavy soiling. In those cases, a high-powered vacuum is best suited, he says.

"We haven't seen much difference — we're getting great lift," says Fragomeni. "It was an earlier concern, but so far has not been an issue."

To further maintain suction and low-decibel volumes, Fragomeni suggests that janitors remove and clear a vacuum's filter bag after every two hours of use, and at the end of every shift. At least once a week, the company's janitors simply wash the filters with water. It's also important to replace filters, when needed.

These actions prevent the filter from becoming blocked with soil and debris — which not only can thrust contaminants back into the air, but can also cause clogging and motor malfunction. When a vacuum malfunctions, its motor will operate at an increasingly higher volume, negating the benefits of using low-decibel carpet equipment.

"As far as it relates to the force of the vacuum itself, the use of multiple filters or HEPA filtration is paramount," Fragomeni says. "The amount of maintenance is minimal and it takes a shorter period of time. When you do that you're extending the life of the vacuum motor, too." **CP**

Reducing The Risks Of Hearing Damage

Under the new LEED v4 revisions, the U.S. Green Building Council requires that vacuum cleaners are certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute "Green Label" Testing Program for vacuum cleaners, capture 96 percent of particulates 0.3 microns in size, and operate with a sound level at less than 70 decibels.

Vacuum volumes higher than 70 decibels causes environmental "noise pollution," and may result in adverse health effects to building occupants and users of floor equipment.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Association, repeated exposure to high levels of noise can cause permanent hearing loss and other problems, such as "stuffy" ears and tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

Loud occupational noises can also create other physical and psychological stress, reduce worker productivity, interfere with communication and concentration, and contribute to workplace accidents and injuries by making it difficult to hear warning signals.

While OSHA's legal limit to noise exposure in the workplace is 90 decibels over an eight-hour period, the agency warns that hearing problems can begin under lower-decibel exposures, especially to hearing sensitive workers.

A color-coded "noise-meter" on OSHA's website shows vacuum cleaners in the "orange" or modest risk range — just below dangerous levels of occupational noise exposures.

But with some independent consumer studies recording vacuum noise levels at 90 decibels and higher, vacuums may quickly enter OSHA's red zone — and put occupants and workers at risk for hearing loss.

Low-decibel commercial vacuums, which are typically between 60 and 70 decibels, may help facilities and building service contractors strike the perfect balance between cleaning efficiency, and janitor and building occupant health.

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[Dilution Control]

Simplify Floor Care With Preportioned Chemicals For Autoscrubbers

By **Kassandra Kania**

Scrubbing and mopping vast expanses of flooring — think gymnasiums and school hallways — is often an arduous task, but thankfully autoscrubbers make the job less burdensome.

These machines allow custodians to cover square footage more quickly than manual mopping methods — a plus for both operators and building service contractors. But being able to cover more ground in less time has its downside, such as the long haul back to a centralized station to dump and refill solution tanks.

“Autoscrubbers give you the ability to clean tremendous distances,” says Mitch Darin, owner of Synergy Systems LLC, Highland Park, Illinois. “But the problem with tremendous distances is if you only have one centralized location you have to go back to that place to refill your tank. This can be especially difficult if you have multiple levels and your central storage is in the basement.”

In situations like this, preportioned chemical packets can be a worthwhile investment for the operators of floor care equipment.

“With the packs, people don’t have to go back and forth to a centralized location,” says Darin. “They can carry with them just what they need to do the job, and wherever there’s a sewer and sink they have a refill station, so their productivity increases.”

Jeff Adams, a sales representative at The Mop Bucket, North Kansas City, Missouri, advocates using preportioned packets in facilities that don’t have centralized mixing stations.

“If you don’t have dilution stations [preportioned packets are] a good idea,” he says. “And if you have water sources in

other parts of the facility, the custodian doesn’t have to go all the way back to a filling station. He can cut a pack open, pour it in and fill it from the water source. It’s very convenient.”

Vision For Precision

In addition to being convenient, preportioned chemical packets improve accuracy, leaving less room for dilution errors.

“In many companies it’s not uncommon for chemicals to be improperly mixed,” says Rene Tuchscher, chief operating officer at KBM Facility Solutions, San Diego, California. “This increases the likelihood that the quality of work goes down and also the probability that someone could get injured. With preportioned packets, you diminish the chance for error in the mixing process, thereby improving productivity.”

Preportioned chemical packets for autoscrubbers reduce the chance of inaccurate dilution ratios in several ways. When mixing the chemical with water, operators follow “the rule of one” to achieve the proper dilution ratio.

“Typically, you add one pack per 10 to 15 gallons of water, which is the standard size of autoscrubbers,” explains Bill Watson, business development manager for Massco in Wichita, Kansas. “So people can be easily trained to add only one pack per autoscrubber and add another one when that solution tank is empty and ready to refill.”

And because packets are premeasured, solutions can be prepared more quickly with less mess.

“Ensuring accurate and controlled use

AUTOSCRUBBER PRODUCT SHOWCASE



ADVANCE — Including a 28-inch scrub path with dual 14-inch scrub pads, the SC750 REV autoscrubber removes floor finish without using chemicals. The autoscrubber can run continuously for

up to 210 minutes in low moisture settings. The product is useful in healthcare, educational, retail, commercial and government facilities.

IPC EAGLE — CT45 Automatic Scrubber

features a compact size that is easy to transport and store. The machine also features an ergonomic and easy-to-use handle, and metal squeegee in a V-shape that provides great drying results regardless of the surface type.



TENNANT COMPANY — Contributing to sustainable initiatives, the T17 Battery-Powered Rider Scrubber helps reduce the amount of water used to clean when using the available Extended Scrub

technology, which filters and recycles recovered solution. It’s also available with the ec-H2O technology and features the largest available battery capacity in its class. It is designed to reduce costs to clean, improve facility image and provide a safe environment for the operator and service personnel.

CLARKE — Vantage 17 Compact Autoscrubber has a highly maneuverable design and wide 17-inch scrub path, maximizing cleaning productivity with a center-pivot squeegee system. Employing a gas spring for optimal

blade pressure, the squeegee system can pick up solution in both forward and reverse in just one pass. Equipped with a 8.2-gallon solution tank and 7.7-gallon recovery tank, the machine can operate for up to two hours on a single tank.



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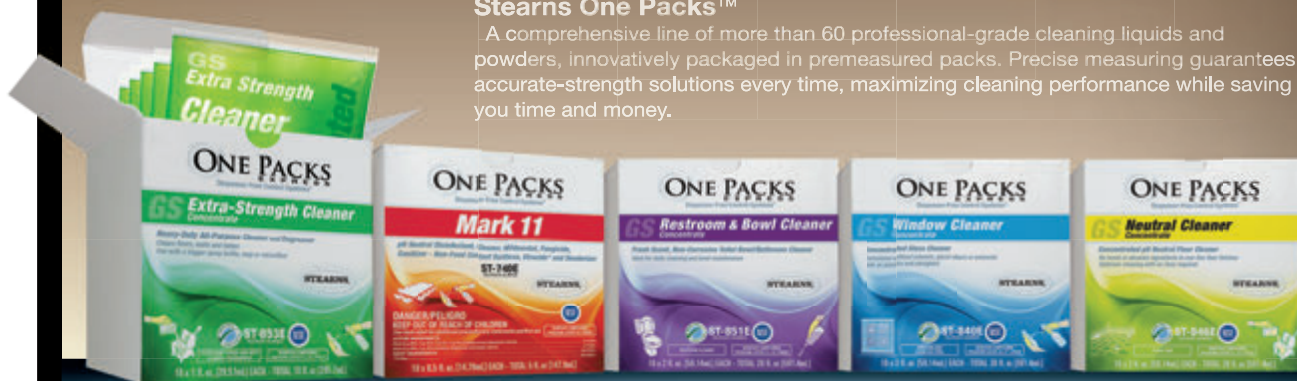
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[Dilution Control]

of the product is less messy,” says Tuchscher. “It’s easy to use, it’s simple and the handling of the chemical is much easier.”

Color-coding also reduces the chance of error and simplifies training.

“All the products are color-coded, so even if the operator doesn’t speak English or can’t read he knows pink goes on greasy floors and yellow goes on sensitive floors,” says Darin. “He can also carry multiple products with him, so if he needs to switch to a different type of solution he can do that very quickly without having to go back to a central location.”

Premeasured packets for autoscrubbers reduce the chance of chemical misuse, but more importantly reduce the risk of worker injury.

“The portion control program ensures safety for the operator of the autoscrubber,” says Watson. “He simply fills the autoscrubber with water, opens the pack and adds the contents to the machine.”

Cleanup is also less hazardous, should a spill occur.

“If you take a portion control packet and

have a spill, you have a few ounces of product to clean up,” says Darin. “Spill a 55 gallon drum and you’re calling the fire department to do a hazardous cleanup.”

The Case For Space

One of the biggest benefits of using preportioned packets for autoscrubbers is their positive impact on inventory control. Knowing exactly how much product a facility has, as well as how much product is needed to complete cleaning tasks, takes the guesswork out of budgeting and simplifies inventory management.

“From a management standpoint, knowing how much it cost you to clean your building every single night is a tremendous advantage,” says Darin. “After a period of time, you know how much product it’s going to take to clean a particular area. Therefore, if you’re sending out an operator with four packets you know exactly how much it cost per area, per night, as well as per week, per month and per year.”

Packets are also advantageous when it

comes to stocking and storing product.

“If you know it takes you 10 packets to clean the building per night, and you have 50 packets on the shelf, you know you have five nights’ work,” says Darin. “You don’t have to look in a drum and shake it to try and figure out how much you have. So you can be much closer to just-in-time deliveries.”

Not only do preportioned packets help prevent overstocking, but their compact size greatly diminishes the amount of storage space needed.

“You can make a lot more solution for a lot less space,” says Adams. “That’s one of the advantages of premeasured product: They take up less storage space than a 55 gallon drum or even a one or five gallon drum for smaller companies, which is what we deal with.”

Boxes of preportioned packets can ease the burden of transporting chemicals to and from the worksite. Take for example, a BSC in charge of a school district with 14 buildings. If the company uses drums of chemicals or RTU products, they’ll either

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Carpet Care? Yep.
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BETCO — With operation at only 54 decibels, the Stealth DRS21BT Micro-Rider Scrubber is useful for day cleaning. The low profile operator compartment makes

it easy to enter and exit the machine, which comes with an automatic pad engage and disengage feature. The scrubber has a cleaning path of 21 inches and features a built-in filling hose and measuring cup. Cleaning productivity measures up to 31,000 square feet per hour.

SEALED AIR DIVERSEY CARE

— A ride-on auto scrubber, the TASKI Swingo 4000 is equipped with a 52.8 gallon tank that can clean up to 70,000 square feet without refilling. A chemical distribution system reduces water and chemical consumption by up to 50 percent. All-wheel steering, longer battery life and unique squeegee system reduces floor care times and costs.



KÄRCHER — B 60 W, walk-behind scrubbers feature a 16-gallon fresh and recovery tank-in-tank design, tool-free interchangeable modular disc or cylindrical scrubbing heads, a 33.5-inch vacuum squeegee and the

company's Intelligent Key system. The slim design and low operating noise output is designed for narrow or irregularly shaped spaces and noise-sensitive areas.

TORNADO INDUSTRIES

— BD 20/11 auto-matic scrubber is designed for smaller floor areas. The low-decibel machine operates at 67 decibels. It features a 20-inch cleaning path, 11-gallon solution tank and heavy-duty parabolic squeegee for 100 percent solution recovery, even on 180-degree turns.



need a truck to deliver to the 14 buildings on an ongoing basis or have 14 different store houses.

“With the portion control program, you can take a quarter case of product, put it in your car and move from place to place, and you can guarantee that you have the right amount,” says Darin.

Using preportioned chemical packets

with autoscrubbers brings the same benefits of chemical dilution control to the floor care program. By switching to these tiny packs, BSCs will appreciate properly mixed chemicals, improved safety and better storage options. **CP**

Kassandra Kania is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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[Restroom Care]

Cleaning Waterless Urinals Requires Special Maintenance

By Karen Pilarski

Waterless urinals are becoming more common in commercial restrooms, especially in areas with low water supply. Proponents of the systems say the fixtures are better for the environment than flushable urinals because they don't require water to direct urine into facility plumbing.

"Waterless urinals can save thousands of gallons of water per unit if used and maintained correctly," says Mickey Crowe, a cleaning industry consultant at CLEEnTech Consulting Group in Woodstock, Georgia.

Installing waterless urinals may also contribute to energy conservation efforts, including in high-rise buildings.

"It takes a lot of energy to move water around," says Keith Schneringer, marketing manager at Waxie Sanitary Supply, in San Diego, California. "Collecting water and then having to ship it to all the different buildings to flush urinals [uses a lot of energy]. If you are able to reduce the amount of water transferred it is better for the overall energy consumption of a region."

Outside of waterless urinals' environmental benefits, facilities are installing the units to maintain sanitary restrooms. Because they do not use water, there isn't a need to flush the fixtures, which reduces touchpoints to clean and leads to fewer odor problems.

For facility managers, that also means less maintenance costs, as low valves and flush handles are often the root of urinal malfunction.

While waterless urinals look much like traditional urinals, they present their own unique set of cleaning challenges and protocols. Ignoring these differences can negate the benefits of waterless urinal units.

How Waterless Urinals Work

A standard urinal uses water to flush the urine into a pipe known as a "P-trap." The shape of this pipe, which is not unlike the ones installed under most sinks in restrooms and kitchens, creates a water seal that prevents sewer gases from escaping into the restroom.

"Plumbing code states you can have a certain amount of liquid between people in the bathroom and sewer gases," Schneringer explains.

Unlike standard urinals, however, waterless urinal pipes are installed on a downward pitch to allow the urine to flow naturally to a central discharge pipe or into the main sewer line. If there are urine puddles in the urinal, then the pipe may be installed incorrectly. To prevent sewer gases and urine odors from entering the restroom, waterless urinals require a cartridge to be securely inserted into the urinal drain.

When urine flows into the cartridge, it acts as a funnel using gravity to pull the urine into the drain opening and into the facility's

plumbing system. The cartridge further contains a liquid sealant — a buoyant fluid that floats to the top of the cartridge as urine enters and overflows the contraption — that serves as a barrier between urine, sewer lines and the restroom. Ultimately, this sealant helps to prevent urine malodors.

The common “ammonia” smell that is often found in commercial restrooms is the result of a chemical reaction between urine and water. To make matters worse, the water that is left behind after flushing remains on the surface of the urinal, and becomes a breeding ground for germs and bacteria. With waterless urinals, the only fluid to hit the surface of the unit is urine — generally a sterile substance — which drains and evaporates from the surface leaving it dry shortly after use.

“The longevity of the sealant liquid depends on traffic of the facility. In an airport or mall the sealant would need to be changed on a more frequent basis,” Schneringer says. “If the sealant depletes or accidentally gets flushed down the drain too fast, or if the sealant is not present, the sewer gas comes up through the pipes. This is what causes the unpleasant fragrance.”

According to manufacturers, cartridges need only to be changed out three to four times a year, or after roughly 1,500 uses. And since regular irrigation isn’t required for these urinals, there is no water “turbulence,” aka the plummage of water and microbes sent into the air following flushing.

These devices also hold urine sentiment — otherwise known as urinal scale, sludge or calcification — the buildup of which can be a main source of restroom piping issues leading to expensive sewer maintenance costs.

How To Clean Waterless Urinals

Due to the inclusion of cartridges, waterless urinals necessitate special maintenance. According to manufacturers, while cleaning the outside of a waterless urinal is pretty standard, the process with which to remove and replace cartridges requires distinctive care.

Most waterless urinals are crafted from customary porcelain or high performance composite materials. Cleaners should wipe down urinals from the outside-in with a soft cloth and a traditional disinfectant cleaner, says Crowe. It is important not to use bristled brushes or harsh chemicals, both of which can cause scratches and other damage to the unit’s surface.

These small cracks can harbor germs and odors, and make daily cleaning more difficult. A bioactive cleaner may help stop persistent smells associated with urine and uric salt, Schneringer says. Many chemical manufacturers offer specific waterless urinal cleaners.

“It cleans up the urine and is actually live bacteria that ends up eating the bad bacteria that causes the odor,” he says.

There are a few signs to watch out for when it is time to switch out a urinal cartridge. The unit itself may be experiencing “slow flow” issues — causing urine to flood the unit — or sealant may be seeping through the top of the

device (usually visible in a blue color).

To check for flow issues, janitors simply pour one to two cups of water down the drain to measure drain speed. A slow flow rate may implicate a full cartridge or piping issues. To remedy the problem, janitors should first put on long rubber gloves and remove the cartridge using the manufacturer’s cartridge extractor tool, or key.

Cleaners should then check the mouth of the drain for clogging and flush the housing with 2.5 gallons of hot water and disinfectant solution. It is recommended that staff then wipe the inside of the housing, and flush the housing a second time, before inserting a new cartridge.

Once the cartridge is fully inserted and locked into place, the sealant solution needs to be refilled. It is important to fill the cartridge with fresh water before pouring the sealant into the device. Cleaners can check the level of sealant anytime by placing a pipe cleaner, toothpick or strip of paper into the top of the cartridge.

In between cartridge refills, building service contractors should clean waterless urinals daily. **CP**

Karen Pilarski is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee.

When cleaning waterless urinals, it is important not to use bristled brushes or harsh chemicals

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[Down and Dirty]

Skip Seal is a trainer and consultant with more than 30 years management experience in the cleaning industry. He is a LEED Accredited Professional and a Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) ISSA Certification Expert (I.C.E.). Seal and his team offer support across the country with sales and operation analysis, new market penetration, and sales training. He can be reached at skip@seal-360.com.

‘Fast Floors’ Require Quick Attention

By Skip Seal

The call from the nursing home came several hours after I had left the area. In fact, I was already a couple hundred miles away when I turned around and headed back.

According to the administrator, several nursing home residents had fallen in the last few hours. One fall had resulted in a severely broken hip. She added that one wing of the nursing home’s floor appeared slick.

We had a “fast floor situation” on our hands.

Some background. This facility was the customer of a distributor and used a chemical company’s entire floor care program. In other words, the nursing home did not use mopping solution from one company, finish from another, and so on.

The environmental staff had gotten behind and needed the floors stripped and refinished. Together, the distributor and I recommended a quality building service contractor we were confident could do the job. The floors were stripped and refinished in a timely manner and the job was done correctly. In fact, the job was completed the night before. The floors were excellent.

Based on our confidence in the products and positive experience with the contractor, we were surprised and concerned with the call. However, our concern was more for the injured residents than over the products or the work of the contractor. We had to respond.

By the time I arrived, the contractor and the distributor representative had discovered the problem. One of the environmental service staff members had sprayed furniture polish on the handrails in the wing where the falls occurred. The quick response by the distributor and the contractor encouraged the administrator and restored her faith in the program.

We were able to “slow the floor down” by dust mopping, damp mopping and then spray buffing with a red pad. This was a temporary fix but it worked for the time being. The contractor rearranged the schedule to enable a crew to come in that night to top scrub and recoat the floor.

End of story? Not quite. Several lessons were learned from this incident.

1.) The distributor representative sold all of the janitorial products to the facility, which included the furniture polish. From this point forward, training was included in all product sales with the training verified by a sign-off sheet.

2.) The administrator realized that using one floor care program from one vendor is the only way to go. Had she used floor care chemicals from different companies, and had we not found the furniture polish to be the problem, how would anyone move forward to determine product liability?

3.) The contractor learned the chemical company he was using from the distributor had Supply Chain Liability Insurance. Why is this important? We live in a society where litigation is common. Not only do legitimate slip falls occur but there are scams regularly reported in the news. Having supply chain insurance from your vendor means you have someone powerful in your corner should litigation occur. 





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dream MAKER

Mary Miller's vision of helping employees **achieve their life ambitions** has reduced turnover and improved productivity for JANCOA

By Dan Weltin, Editor-in-Chief



IT COSTS MORE THAN \$1,600 to replace a trained janitor. So, wouldn't it make financial sense to do whatever it takes to keep these employees for as long as possible? Yet, building service contractors experience turnover rates ranging from 35 to 75 percent. And for some unfortunate BSCs, turnover runs as high as 400 percent.

Contract cleaning is a people business. No amount of product technology will cover up the shortcomings of a poorly trained and unmotivated worker.

Mary Miller, CEO of Cincinnati-based JANCOA, learned this lesson 20 years ago and has been perfecting her solution ever since. In fact, her innovative answer to turnover just garnered the company Bronze for Best Place to Work at the Best in Biz Awards in 2013.

So, what's her secret? Focus on employees' dreams and goals.

"The Dream Manager program is about inspiring our employees to really go after what they want in their lives," says Mary. "There are not too many people who grow up and want to be a janitor."

Whether it's buying a house or going to nursing school, Mary, along with husband and company Founder Tony Miller and Dream Manager Joe Candellica, identify what each employee feels is missing from his life and put him back on that path.

"For the most part, janitorial is a transitional job on the way to something else," says Mary. "Frequently they forget what they were on their way to because of disappointment and frustration in their lives. We get the opportunity to help awaken what people really want to do in their lives."

Not only do employees benefit from the program, but by taking an interest in their employees' lives, JANCOA has improved employee retention. Since its inception, turnover has dropped from more than 100 percent down to just 65 percent.

A People Problem

BSCs may have heard of the book "The Dream Manager" by Matthew Kelly, of Floyd Consulting. It tells the story of Admiral Janitorial Services, a fictitious contract cleaning

company who turns its turnover problem around by helping its employees achieve their life-long ambitions. However, few readers may realize this remarkable story is based on JANCOA and an idea born out of conversations between Mary and Tony.

Tony started JANCOA in 1970 as a 19-year-old college student. For the next 20 years, he ran a steady, sustainable company as a way to take care of his extended family. But it was when Mary, Tony's third wife, came on board that JANCOA began to transition from a respectable "mom and pop" shop into the sophisticated building service contractor it is today.

While attending her first Building Service Contractors Association International conference, Mary met a consultant who promised he could improve the company's cleaning processes and efficiencies. But he quickly realized there was no fixing JANCOA — the company didn't have a cleaning problem, it had a people problem. Whether they were late, absent, or flat-out quit, there were never enough janitors available to clean the buildings. In fact, Mary and Tony even needed the consultant to help vacuum one night.

Back then, Tony and Mary viewed janitors as no different than the mops, vacuums and chemicals they used. Janitors and their products had the same purpose: clean the building. But just as a vacuum needs maintenance and care to work properly, so do people. In fact, people need it more.

"If you're breathing, you need encouragement," says Mary. "You need to have dreams to be excited about and something to look forward to."

When the consultant quit after two days, things finally clicked for Mary and Tony. If they invested more in their staff, employees would in turn invest more of themselves in JANCOA.

"When you have people really working toward something, rather than just going through the motions, it makes a huge difference in quality [of cleaning]," says Mary.

She made it her goal to figure out what was missing from the lives of her staff members.

First Steps

The first move to help improve the lives of employees was to change the 65 part-time employees to full time and offer benefits.

Then Mary and Tony began informally surveying their employees, asking them what were the biggest obstacles in getting to work. The answer was clear: a lack of transportation. Cleaning takes place at night, often after public transportation has ended. And not every employee lives near the bus lines or has access to a car.

If you're breathing,
you need
encouragement.
You need to have
dreams to be
excited about and
something to look
forward to

So Tony became the driver of the JANCOA shuttle, picking up workers at their homes and dropping them off at their worksites. The solution all but eliminated absenteeism and tardiness; turnover began to shrink.

By transporting workers, Tony was given a window into the world of his employees — and he was surprised by what he saw.

"Tony would come home and say, 'You can't imagine how these people are living and how many people live together,'" says Mary.

Mary and Tony began discussing what else they could do to improve their staff's quality of life. The shuttle

rent, she received an eviction notice on Christmas Eve. Mary was forced to put blinders on and focus solely on making enough money to get by. She saw this same mentality in her janitors — and decided to do something about it.

Dream Big

As in the book, the first participant in the Dream Manager program was a long-time janitor whose dream was to buy a house. Through research, community connections, proper planning and a little financial aid, JANCOA was able to make this dream a reality. This success was able to quash any critics and solidified the importance of the program. Many employees



JANCOA offers its own English as a Second Language classes. The program helps many employees reach their dreams of learning to speak and read English

was a great start, but it wouldn't be a silver bullet to solve all the problems. Employees had issues other than a lack of transportation that prevented them from getting to work or even staying at JANCOA for more than a short time.

"We thought if we took away some of those other problems in their lives, and improve their quality of life, then maybe they could come to work more often," says Mary.

Mary knew first-hand what it meant to be in "survival mode." Years ago as a single mother of three, she lost two jobs in the same year. With no way to pay the

wanted to sign up to share — and reach — their dreams.

Nearly 15 years later, that's still the case. Since its creation, every staff member has had the opportunity to work with the Dream Manager.

"The Dream Manager program is very much a part of our HR," says Mary. "Everyone that gets hired knows about our program."

New hires are given a Dream Manager form and asked what they hope to accomplish in the next three years.

Once dreams are identified, the next steps are building a bond and establish-

ing trust with workers. To break the ice, Dream Manager Candella would bring workers cans of Coke to start a conversation or show up to an account with pizza during a break.

"It's amazing the conversations you can have over pizza," quips Mary.

Candella used to spend 40 hours a week interacting with employees, trying to overcome language and culture barriers and forge a relationship.

"I had to engage people five or six times before I established trust," says Candella. "Once that was accomplished, it began to open doors to more personalized issues."

Now Candella has transitioned into HR, as well as being Dream Manager. This allows him to meet and interact with new hires as early as their first day.

Whatever the dream, Candella is there to answer questions, point employees in the right direction or provide feedback. JANCOA has stopped offering financial assistance with dreams and Candella won't do the work for the person, but sometimes all people need is a helping hand and encouragement.

"The ones who really get [the program] walk out their own dreams," he says. "For example, when they're closing on a house, they have incredible feelings of success and independence," knowing they achieved it on their own.

Over the years the Dream Manager program has helped employees earn a GED or college degree, start a small business, adopt a child, stop smoking, learn to speak and read English, or even pursued their "dream" career once leaving JANCOA.

"Everyone wants to feel good about themselves," says Candella. "And when we do something for employees and treat them as people with talent, amazing things can happen."

Sometimes the simplest of dreams can be the most impressive. One of Mary's favorite dream stories is a worker from Nigeria who earned his driver's license.

"He was so proud of it," she says. "With a driver's license he now had the freedom to get outside of the bus lines, which meant he could get a job making more money. His world opened up because he had that license."

Embracing Turnover

For a lot of employees, their dreams are to have a good job or make more money. Candella alerts them of opportunities that exist at JANCOA, but at the same time, he doesn't shy away from helping them find a career outside of janitorial. The trade-off is that they'll work hard and do a good job while still at JANCOA.

While there are employees who've been with the company for 10 years or more, the goal is to retain employees for at least three to five years while they pursue their dream and then head out for something different.

For BSCs who struggle with turnover, this may seem oxymoronic, but not to Mary.



JANCOA owners Tony and Mary Miller at the 2011 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards

"Nobody holds on to a career anymore," she says. "The job for a lifetime doesn't exist, especially in our industry."

When an average janitor makes \$10 an hour, the odds of him staying at the company for his entire career are slim to none. While it's true that some janitors can ascend the company ladder and become technicians, supervisors or even upper management, that's not the case of every employee.

"So instead of fighting [turnover], let's embrace it," says Mary.

Mary realized that if they can improve the quality of life for an employee while they work for JANCOA, that person would be even more committed to perform the best job possible. He'll show up for work, be on time and clean accurately and consistently. There will be fewer mistakes, fewer customer complaints and as a result, longer customer

retention. It's a win-win situation for both the employee and JANCOA.

"When people are working toward a dream, they come to work with a different attitude," says Candella. "They're more motivated."

Along with this motivation, when janitors stay a minimum of three years — as opposed to three months — they accumulate the experience and knowl-

edge to clean efficiently. These two factors will naturally improve productivity. As a result, janitors at JANCOA clean an average of 7,000 square feet per hour. That's twice the square footage per hour than the competition and most likely the rest of the country.

In the end, it could be said that the consultant did put Mary and Tony on a path to better cleaning efficiencies.

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Cover Story



Mary loves to share her story and inspire others. She recently presented at the 2014 WFBSC Congress

Boosting productivity and reducing turnover go a long way in keeping costs down, which helps keep the Dream Manager program affordable. While customers appreciate the benefits given to janitors, that doesn't mean they're willing to pay extra for it. Bids still need to be competitive in the marketplace.

But while clients aren't interested in paying for the Dream Manager, they are willing to award contracts for great service, which the program achieves. As a result, business has doubled in the past 10 years.

"The return on investment has really changed our business," says Mary. "We are one of the top three cleaning companies in the greater Cincinnati area."

The company has also

received accolades from the business community. In addition to the aforementioned Best in Biz award, JANCOA was nominated for the 2011 Enquirer Media Top Workplaces Award and 12th Annual Tri-State Family and Private Business Awards.

Mary herself has received the 2010 Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber's Fifth-annual WE Celebrate award and the 2013 YWCA Career Women of Achievement award. She was also a finalist for the 2010 and 2011 Ernst & Young South Central Ohio and Kentucky Entrepreneur of the Year.

Eventually — and by design — employees will leave JANCOA to pursue bigger and better opportunities. But with such recognition as a great place to work, the company has no problem filling vacancies. Through customer and employee referrals there are always worthy candidates waiting for the chance to apply. In fact, for six straight years JANCOA didn't run a job posting. Pretty impressive for a company with a staff that has grown to nearly 400 employees.

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Dream Manager Joe Candella (left) has helped hundreds of employees reach their dreams, including Gabriel Ortega

Inspiring Others

From Colorado to South Africa, companies all around the world have been inspired by Kelly's book and the Dream Manager program. Executives have implemented it into their own businesses, helping countless employees better their lives and pursue their dreams.

"It's fascinating to me how many people have personalized and incorporated this little idea that came out of Cincinnati and put their own twist on it and have been successful," says Mary.

Over the years JANCOA has helped hundreds, if not thousands of workers achieve their dreams. Mary's goal is 10 million, but if one adds in all the other companies with their own Dream Manager-inspired programs, she's well on her way to achieving her own dream.

But for every success there's probably another company that lets the program fizzle out. It's not easy to keep the Dream Manager going. So for JANCOA to still run it after nearly 15 years is an amazing accomplishment. Especially given the enormity of staff, of which 70 percent are immigrants or refugees from nearly 25 different countries. The language and culture barriers can be difficult roadblocks for Candella to wade through.

So many dreams can also make it overwhelming and sometimes employing a dream manager isn't enough. It helps to have a champion to keep it going and businesses can look to consultants for help. At JANCOA, they have the original champion — Mary. And she won't stop until employees — new or veteran — achieve their dreams.

"People have to have something to be excited about," she says. "It doesn't matter if you're the janitor at night, the CEO of the cleaning company or the president of the country. You have to have a big dream, figure out a way to go after it and be consistent in doing so." **CP**

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Equipment Purchases: BUY VS. LEASE

Floor equipment is one of the biggest investments a commercial cleaning company can make. Can BSCs afford to tie up their capital?

By Hilary Daninhirsch

TOM WATSON, owner of TC Watson Cleaning Services in Medford, New Jersey, considers floor care to be the “gravy” of the commercial cleaning industry.

“It’s where the money is made,” Watson explains. “Add on services like floor and carpet care, and you ‘supersize’ your customer from a basic customer to a much more profitable one.”

Perhaps that’s why floor maintenance is of the utmost importance to both building service contractors — and, as the second largest source of customer concern after restrooms, according to industry consultant, Bill Fellows — to customers, as well.

But besides basic floor care tools, such as mops and buckets, the addition of high-powered vacuums, extractors, burnishers, strippers, sweepers, or auto-scrubbers can be a major investment.

In fact, some large customers may require up to 14 different machines to complete a job, easily running BSCs thousands of dollars, says Steve Putnam, director of procurement at Marsden Bldg Maintenance LLC.

“From a capital expense standpoint certainly, floor cleaning equipment is a large investment,” Putnam says. “Selecting the correct equipment helps ensure the most profitable investment model overall.”

Because of their high cost, it is pertinent for a BSC to acquire floor care equipment in the most practical manner for their business. There are several ways to attain floor

machines including purchasing through a distributor, through a manufacturer, as well as leasing or renting the equipment.

Putnam and other industry experts help BSCs weigh-in on the cost-effectiveness of each method.

Distributors Vs. Direct

The size of both a BSC’s business and the buildings that it services are key factors in determining whether the contractor chooses to obtain equipment from a distributor or a manufacturer.

Smaller companies tend to buy from distributors, and

larger companies often buy directly from the manufacturers, says Putnam. As the umbrella corporation for cleaning companies scattered across several states, Marsden prefers the latter.

Putnam believes that a strategic partnership with a manufacturer allows for more competitive pricing. Economic efficiency is a bonus when a BSC is based in more than one state, as a contractor is more likely to negotiate deals and have greater purchasing power, he says.

Fellows agrees.

“What happens is that the more you can buy, the less it costs per unit,” he explains.



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"If you only get one of everything, you will pay close to manufacturer suggested retail price — even through a distributor."

Overall, Putnam believes the market is trending toward direct purchase from manufacturers, particularly for growing building service companies.

"You have the depth and knowledge and educational skill set of the manufacturer helping you directly address your cleaning needs," Putnam says. "For a smaller BSC, it is probably more cost-effective to purchase through distribution. Smaller BSCs tend to operate in a specific

are generally not as flexible as distributors. Replacing parts is easier when a BSC has a local distributor, as a manufacturer may not have a local authorized dealer in the area.

"They can't always be there in a matter of hours; that's a drawback and you are taking that risk," says Fellows.

Of course, the larger the company, the more likely they have multiple pieces of equipment at the ready, but being unable to finish a job due to a nonfunctioning piece of equipment is a possibility when a BSC is a small business owner.

Putnam posits that the manufacturer

Watson points out some advantages to buying outright, such as a higher tax deduction and total ownership of the equipment. However, a few disadvantages include higher upfront costs, maintenance responsibilities and the risk that the equipment will become outdated, since it is more likely that a BSC will hold on to the machine longer.

Watson says the pros of leasing include easy equipment upgrades and smaller out of pocket expenses, which may be better for newcomers. Significant cons include long-range expenses and smaller tax write-offs.

"Leasing is preferable when you want fixed-level payments that you want to spread out over a period of time," Watson says. "You get a nice low payment with leasing, but it probably costs you more in the long run."

And the support a BSC will likely receive when he or she leases floor equipment is on par with the support that comes with an outright purchase.

"Leasing is becoming a more popular method, especially for high-end equipment like autoscrubbers," says Fellows.

Putnam adds that BSCs often do not have the opportunity to test out a piece of equipment when taking the leasing option.

Renting a piece of equipment by the hour is also an option, but that's usually reserved for a one-time job, Fellows says.

"Distributors offer rentals that are good for companies who may have a job that is bigger than they have the equipment to handle at a time, or maybe it's a company that doesn't do that type of work frequently, so buying can tie up some of their capital," he adds.

In addition to cost, BSCs must also consider the safety of employees, and a machine's overall ease of use. Ultimately, it's important for a contractor to choose the piece of equipment most likely provide a return on investment — and thence.

"It's extremely important that the correct floor equipment is selected," Fellows says.

And having the right vendor can help a BSC make that decision. **CP**

Hilary Daninhirsch is a freelance writer based in Pittsburgh.

Ultimately, the real distinction is what sort of value a BSC receives in return for the money spent on floor equipment

geography or state and so their needs can be supported best by a local distributor."

There are good reasons to deal with distributors, too, with perhaps the primary advantage being personal service. Even experienced BSCs require training before using new equipment.

"In the case of distributors — you will virtually always get some free training that goes along with it to teach people properly how to use and care for it," says Fellows.

Watson recalls a distributor who came to a job he had bid on and helped him to analyze the right type of floor equipment needed.

"A national company doesn't have anyone on the ground," Watson says. "Being able to talk to someone face-to-face and have a relationship with that person is a big benefit."

Manufacturers may provide initial training, but may not provide ongoing hands-on education further on down the road. Distributors are more willing and able to help troubleshoot if or when something goes wrong with the equipment, even if a BSC is experiencing troubles during an overnight job.

Manufacturers do offer repairs, but they

is the better choice when parts break down because they have direct expertise.

At the end of the day, the real distinction, says Fellows, is what sort of value a BSC receives in return for the money spent with a distributor versus a manufacturer.

There can be a downside to being tethered to just one dealer, however.

"The disadvantage of having a relationship with one particular distributor is sometimes innovations come from manufacturers, and that distributor doesn't represent that manufacturer in the area," Fellows says. "If you don't know about it, you may lose an opportunity to improve," floor care processes, he says.

Leasing and Renting

Whether to buy or lease is a decision to be based on upfront costs versus long-term costs. Ultimately though, buying a large-scale piece of floor machinery is logical if a BSC has many jobs and customers.

Yet, the costs of floor care equipment can vary wildly.

"A big mistake is people buy the stuff upfront and they don't have any work for it," says Watson. "They never had a plan for getting customers."

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Healthcare Markets Providing Opportunities For BSCs

Cleaning contractors are filling in the gaps left behind by budget cuts to environmental services departments

By Ronnie Garrett

AS THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT pulls the excess out of the healthcare system, hospital occupancies are escalating as fast as budgets are plummeting, says Mark Heller, president of Hygiene Performance Solutions Inc., a North American consulting firm devoted to helping hospital environmental services departments improve their cleaning programs.

"In the good old days, hospitals operated around 70 percent capacity," Heller explains. "Today, as redundant capacity gets sucked out of the system, it's driving occupancy up, and that is putting the squeeze on budgets."

And as hospitals tighten their in-house cleaning budgetary belts, the time is ripe for building service contractors to swoop in and grab a share of the business, Heller says.

"There is a huge opportunity if the BSC can rise to the challenge," says Heller. "Healthcare organizations are hungry for whoever can deliver the goods within their budgetary constraints."

BSCs, especially those who have never

operated in the healthcare space before, can capture a share of this market if they can implement evidence-based cleaning practices that support better clinical outcomes. According to Heller, this requires BSCs to be more market-focused, more nimble, and to put in processes, systems and people that deliver on their hygiene promise.

"But," he warns, "if BSCs approach healthcare as just another segment of cleaning, and remain stuck in the paradigm of traditional cleaning methods and being the low-cost cleaning provider, they won't flourish."

Focusing On Healthcare

Elite Facility Systems, a Dallas-based firm specializing in caring for medical, dental and health facilities, once cleaned office buildings. At least, until Tricia Holderman, its owner, president and CEO, fell ill and began spending considerable time in healthcare facilities.

While receiving care, she says she started looking at how cleaning was performed

at hospitals and decided to focus Elite's efforts in healthcare.

Today the BSC only cleans healthcare facilities, and as an offshoot of this role, has established niche markets in the industry, too. The company is viewed by its clients as an extension of the healthcare system itself and that has led to new opportunities, Holderman explains.

In fact, when hospitals lose their director of environmental services, Holderman is often tapped to step in as their interim director.

"Doing this let me see how things work behind the scenes," she says. "I've learned that the situation over the last couple of years is very unique. Healthcare facilities are putting off refilling positions for as long as they possibly can."

Seeing their challenges in this way helped Holderman position Elite Facility Systems to fill in the gaps as needed. The company has found a specialty in performing project work for hospitals, which keep their in-house staff assigned to maintaining patient rooms, offices and lobby areas. When these facilities fall behind on their detail cleaning they come to Elite for help.

"When longer-term patients are moved from ICU either to a room, X-ray or surgery, we come in and do the detail cleaning," Holderman says. "That includes washing walls, cleaning windows, changing the privacy curtains and so on. That kind of detail work is time consuming and when hospitals do not have enough full-time equivalents (FTEs) on staff, they bring in contractors to perform this specialty work."

Elite also cleans their operating rooms and emergency rooms — tasks often done on third shift.

"Many hospitals are outsourcing their third shift work because it's too hard to hire third shift employees," Holderman explains. "They are not finding quality people to fill those jobs."

Outsourcing benefits hospitals because the money to pay contractors comes out of a different budget than their FTEs. Every environmental services department budgets for a certain number of FTEs.

"As FTEs are cut, they're able to add people on the contracting side," she says. "There is no other way for them to keep these buildings clean and viable, other than bringing in a contractor."

Filling In The Gaps

Another area that's become a sizable revenue source for Elite is filling temp-to-permanent-hire positions.

"Our employees fill in during vacations, maternity leaves or when there is a vacancy," Holderman says.

This allows hospitals to "try before they buy." Elite charges a finder's fee to the hospital, so it works out financially, even when losing employees along the way.

"We don't mind losing employees to the hospital," Holderman says. "We view it as an extension of the services we offer."

Hospitals appreciate getting well-trained, experienced workers. These employees have passed drug screening and background checks and are up-to-date on all their shots.

"That is a very expensive process to get through and very time consuming," Holderman says, explaining that when hospitals vet a potential employee, two months may have passed. "Not many workers can wait two months to start working. We bring them to the table with all of this in place."

The advantage is that the environmental services department always has enough staff. A Virginia hospital Elite works with hires on 50 percent of Elite's

temp-to-hire employees. Not only that, but its former employees have moved up through the ranks; several are supervisors and one is in a management position.

"It's a pathway to bring them in-house. And it works out well," says Holderman. "They don't hire someone and not know if they are going to call in sick a lot or take time off to deal with personal issues. That kind of weeding out is already done, and at the end of the temporary assignment, if they are not a good fit, they go away."

Employees benefit, as well. When Elite keeps them on its staff, they make more money than they would starting out as a new employee at a hospital. A full-time temp with Elite makes \$15 an hour to start, but as a new-hire at a hospital they'd only bring in \$12.50 an hour.

"People who work second or third shifts would rather have the extra cash," she says. "I don't know why hospitals pay less for people who do such an important job, but they do."

Getting Started

Elite Systems got its start in medical office buildings, or MOB, which are facilities where outpatient surgeries occur. They are

Patient Room CLEANING TIMES (PER 150 Sq. Ft.)

12.6 MINUTES

Empty Trash, Clean & Disinfect Surfaces
and Bathroom, Replace Supplies, **Dust Mop Floor**

16.2 MINUTES

Empty Trash, Clean & Disinfect Surfaces
and Bathroom, Replace Supplies, **Wet Mop Floor**

14.04 MINUTES

Empty Trash, Clean & Disinfect Surfaces
and Bathroom, Replace Supplies, **Vacuum Floor**

14.4 MINUTES

Empty Trash, Clean & Disinfect Surfaces
and Bathroom, Replace Supplies, **Flat Mop Floor**



Source: The Official ISSA 540 Cleaning Times

Healthcare Cleaning

also more likely to employ day cleaning staff.

"We never aspired to clean hospitals," Holderman says, but cleaning MOB's helped Elite build its business and over time hospitals began calling them, too.

MOB's are a good place for BSC's to test the waters. With no overnight patients, workers have the luxury of cleaning rooms without worrying about turnover time.

"In a hospital, you don't have that luxury," Holderman says. "Turnover times are key."

A BSC, however, cannot just decide to switch to healthcare. There are things that need to be in place for this endeavor to be successful. The first step is to add an infection control professional to the payroll.

worker they hire, the education and training they invest in them, and the sophistication of their change management," he says. "It's not about smothering their efforts in supervisors to compensate for low-level frontline employees."

Top Of The Line Training

Training is key to the success, and here BSC's need to invest in training workers on the principles of infection prevention, the concepts of disease/microorganism transmission, and how to apply this knowledge to cleaning procedures. Heller explains when nurses go to school they are taught point-of-care assessment skills,

workers know what they are doing and how to clean properly and safely. It also gives them a leg up on the competition to say my supervisors and managers have these certifications."

Everyone from management down to frontline employees requires education and certification in the basic principals of infection control.

"In a foodservice company, it's expected that all levels of the organization are trained in food safety," Heller says. "The same holds true for environmental services."

Heller adds that he's not aware of certifications for frontline workers, but indicates BSC's have an opportunity to differentiate themselves by developing such certifications in-house then testing their employees on their knowledge.

"The hygiene of a facility is a patient safety issue," he says. "When it comes to environmental hygiene we cannot allow employees to go off and perform critical functions without actually testing whether or not they are competent."

Elite Systems employs an infection prevention nurse to do bloodborne pathogen training, HAZMAT education, and PPE training.

"She has created an online training tool so that employees can go in periodically for refresher training," Holderman says. "That was one of the first things we put in place to make sure our employees were compliant. It's not just about training employees to clean. It's also about regulatory training."

Advanced training also benefits employees if BSC's move them up the pay scale as they add to their education, says Scherberger.

"The more training they get, the more valuable they are, and the more they should be paid," he says.

The healthcare industry can be a good market for the building service contractor willing to go the distance.

"If a BSC is stuck in a low-cost cleaning service world, they are missing the boat," says Heller. "That might be acceptable for other industries, but in healthcare that's just not going to cut it." 

Ronnie Garrett is a freelance writer based in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. She is a frequent contributor to Contracting Profits.

Healthcare organizations are hungry for whoever can deliver the goods within their budgetary constraints

"The best analogy I can give is how contracted foodservice providers understand they need nutritionists and dieticians as part of their technical capabilities," says Heller. "BSC's need to think of infection preventionists as part of their clinical infection prevention, corporate capabilities team."

Heller adds BSC's also need an employee with clinical analytics capabilities. These individuals must be able to crunch the numbers to translate hygiene outcomes and compare them to clinical performance.

"That's where the magic happens," says Heller. "Most BSC's lack that capability today and rely on hospitals for it. That's a strategic error because their entire value cannot be positioned on being the low-cost provider. It has to be centered on making a difference in clinical outcomes, which translates into an effective financial strategy for hospitals."

Finally, Heller believes that BSC's need to raise their sophistication or change management. It's not enough to hire low-price, lesser quality staff, and put a supervisor on every shift to monitor what they do.

"BSC's need to think about the quality of

which are to understand each unique scenario and evaluate it appropriately, then apply the correct protocols and practices based on those assessments.

"BSC's need to think about point-of-clean assessment skills, which teach workers to analyze each situation and apply the correct standards and practices to them," he says. "In other words, we need housekeepers to be thinking and not just doing, and that requires more education."

Heller says at minimum all BSC's in healthcare should be members of APIC, the association for professionals in infection control and epidemiology. This organization can help them remain on top of current regulations and best practices.

John Scherberger, an industry consultant specializing in helping BSC's clean in the healthcare space, recommends that supervisory personnel obtain certifications from the Association of Health Care Cleaning Professionals, the Association for Health Care Environment and ISSA.

"By certifying managers through these organizations," Scherberger says, "managers can put in place training that ensures

A. FLOOR CARE EQUIPMENT

Mytee Products — The Speedster extractors come standard with a convenient faucet fill, useful for times when a garden hose or bucket is not available. Users simply hold the flexible rubber end to the water source and then open the faucet. The hose is integrated into the solution tank, and can be easily slid back into place.

B. HAND DRYER

Excel Dryer — XLERATOReco hand dryer has all of the features and benefits of the XLERATOR hand dryer, but with one-third of the energy use. The unit features "No Heat" technology that dries hands in 15 seconds while using 500 watts of energy.

C. CHEMICAL SPRAYER

Clorox Professional — Products with SMART TUBE require less effort to dispense and have an ergonomic grip with a wider, more comfortable trigger for better coverage and control to deliver more cleaning power per spray. The patented design with integrated dip tube reaches to the very bottom of the bottle so no product is wasted. Products are also designed with a wider opening for convenient, mess-free refill and snap-to-lock, securely sealing the bottle to minimize waste from spills.

D. FLOOR PADS

3M — The polyester fiber used to make a range of the company's floor pads contain a minimum of 50 percent post-consumer recycled content. The pads made with recycled material are durable, washable, reusable and have the same performance standards as traditional products. The pads' packaging also contains 50 to 100 percent recycled content and is recyclable.

E. SOAP DISPENSER

Kutol Products Company Inc. — Designer Series Wall Mount Dispensers combine "top dispensing" technology that eliminates leaks with more design choices. Along with colorful trim accents, users can customize the look with an easy-to-slide window card. Features existing 1000 mL refills plus new larger sizes. Dispensers are available in both manual and automatic options to meet the ADA 4-inch hallway protrusion requirement.

F. FLOOR PAD

ACS Industries Inc. — The Blue Blend Natural Hair Pad is designed for soft to medium floor finishes. The pad has a combination of fibers, natural hair and resins to provide high shine, strength and durability. The soft/medium pad is ideal for grocery, retail and challenging high-traffic floor maintenance applications.

G. TIMEKEEPING SOFTWARE

EPAY Systems — Blueforce time and labor management system is flexible and web-based. The time and attendance system can handle multiple locations, assignments and job types, as well as mobile employees and union rules. Users can mix-and-match time tracking devices; employees can punch in via biometric time clocks, telephone/IVR or the Web.

H. FLOOR EQUIPMENT

Advance — SW8000 industrial-sized rider sweeper features a 50-inch main broom and DustGuard side broom dust suppression system, increasing productivity by over 70 percent. The equipment also features Kubota engines for quiet operation, One-Touch controls for ease of use, a Clear-View design for operator comfort and enhanced operator safety.

I. ODOR CONTROL

Spartan Chemical Co., Inc. — The Airlift Clothesline Fresh RTU Handi Spray line is formulated to eliminate malodors and to freshen rooms with a long-lasting scent of clean laundry. The sprays are available in Clean, Soft and Linen fragrance varieties.



Products

J. DISINFECTANT

Betco Corp. — Featuring a neutral pH formula, pH7Q can be used for damp mopping highly polished floors and won't dull, haze or leave a film, but will leave a lemon fragrance. The multi-purpose, germicidal detergent and deodorant, disinfects, cleans and deodorizes in one step. The pH7Q has a dilution ratio of 1:64 (2 ounces per gallon) and the pH7Q ULTRA yields 256 gallons of ready-to-use solution per gallon.

K. CARPET EQUIPMENT

Tornado Industries — Marathon 350 is a compact carpet spray-extraction cleaner that can be used in hotels, automobiles and commercial buildings. After spraying solution deep into upholstery, staircases, or carpet fibers, the machine dissolves dirt and recovers soiled solution. It has a 1.5-gallon recovery tank/solution tank, a 1,100-watt vacuum motor, and weighs only 22 pounds.

L. GENERAL PURPOSE CLEANER

Charlotte Products — A general-purpose spray and wipe cleaner, ES74 has been certified green by EcoLogo. It can be used to remove heavy soils, grease, oils, pen and marker marks, and can be used as a white board cleaner. No rinsing is needed.

M. DISINFECTANT/CLEANER

ProRestore Products — BotaniClean is available in Canada under the name BotaniPure. It is an effective cleaner, disinfectant and deodorizer in a ready-to-use formulation for hard non-porous surfaces, including stainless steel, chrome, glass, plastics and vinyl. The product has a low toxicity formulation, and is mildly acidic to attack acid-workable soils such as hard water scale. The product is effective against MRSA, MRSE and HIV-1.

N. AIR MOVER

Sanitaire by Electrolux — SC6055 Precision Air Mover pulls air from above into the fan chamber and sends the driest air into precise areas by way of four different drying positions. The 18-pound air mover can be as quiet as 67 decibels and features a 0.4 horsepower motor that moves air at a velocity of 3,400 feet per minute. When daisy-chained together, six units can work off one 15-amp circuit for drying carpets, floors and small rooms.

O. TOWELS

Cascades Tissue Group — When in contact with wet hands the Antibacterial Paper Towel releases Benzalkonium Chloride — an ingredient commonly found in gel sanitizers, baby wipes and antiseptic skin solutions — to kill 99.99 percent of bacteria. The green-colored towels contain 100 percent recycled fibers and are eco-friendly.

P. NO-TOUCH CLEANING MACHINE

Kaivac Inc. — The 1750 no-touch cleaning machine features a removable "black box" engine compartment for rapid repair and exchange. The machine's high-pressure spray quickly and effectively washes away soils, bacteria and other bio-pollutants from surfaces. It also uses a three-stage vacuum motor, which removes moisture and soils.

Q. FLOOR CHEMICALS

PortionPac Chemical Corp. — The line of signature unit-dose concentrates is optimized for autoscrubber and carpet extraction machines and includes MopPacLITE, a pH neutral everyday cleaner; ScrubPac, a heavy duty power scrubber; PowerPac, an industrial strength degreaser; and NeutraPac, a floor conditioner. The floor care products in the line work together to prolong floor life.

R. HAND HYGIENE TECHNOLOGY

GOJO Industries — SMARTLINK Hand Hygiene Solutions measure and improve hand hygiene compliance in hospitals. The technology can monitor compliance by floor, unit, room or individual. Users can then upload, visualize and analyze data in i-Scrub, a free application for Apple devices. The Clinician-Based Support feature provides detailed improvement plans based on the results.



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S. FOAM SOAP

DEB Group — GrittyFOAM heavy-duty foaming hand cleanser features suspended scrubbers to wash away tough dirt but still be gentle on hands. As a foam soap, users require less product, water and energy to clean hands.

T. ODOR CONTROL

Nyco Products Co. — The Marvalosa Urinal Screen features a lavender scent that lasts between 30 and 45 days. The scent blends in with other products in the line. The screen fits any urinal shape or contour, and prevents drains from clogging. It is useful for schools, churches, office buildings, healthcare facilities and other public restrooms with high traffic.

U. FLOOR PADS

Americo Manufacturing Co. Inc. — Full Cycle floor pads are specially formulated to biodegrade after being placed in an anaerobic (without oxygen) environment and in the presence of certain types of microorganisms that exist primarily in active landfills. An independent laboratory testing showed up to 78 percent biodegradation of the pads within one year, as compared to less than 4 percent for a conventional pad.

V. BACKPACK VACUUM

Atrix International, Inc. — New Generation 36V Battery Operated Backpack Vacuum can be used in confined areas where corded electric vacuums are not a viable option, including entryways and stairwells. The vacuum's rechargeable Lithium Ion battery pack and battery charger provides 55 minutes of continuous run time and has a full charge time of approximately 3.5 hours.

CASE STUDY:

Machine Switch Saves Both Time and Money

Square Scrub — As school begins to break for the summer the custodial staff at Joliet Junior College prepares for their busy season. In the past, they have used traditional swing machines to strip their floors but recently switched to the Square Scrub orbital floor preparation machine to prepare their VCT floors and clean tile and grout. By switching machines and using the "top scrub" method for their VCT floors, they were able to save money.

"We were able to scrub out four times the amount of space by switching to Square Scrub machines" says Nick Sciacotta, custodial superintendent of the Junior College.

Sciacotta added that his staff was used to having to "finesse" their previous machines to get them to do what they wanted them to. They found however, that with the orbital floor preparation machine they were able to control the machine and perform much more precise work including in tight areas and corners.



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Is Cleaning A 'Miserable' Job?



SEVEN YEARS AGO, the now retired CEO of Porter Industries, Steve Hendrickson, introduced our leadership team to his favorite management

author, Patrick Lencioni. The first book of Lencioni's we studied together was "The Three Signs of a Miserable Job."

Lencioni often uses what he terms the "business fable" to communicate his subject and ends with brief chapters describing how the lessons can be applied to your staff and company.

In "The Three Signs," Lencioni focuses on three themes that his fable's protagonist, former executive Brian Bailey, developed after he assumed his career years were over. After selling his company, Brian filled his days skiing in Lake Tahoe. But after a skiing accident, he quickly found himself with nothing to do.

Brian and his wife occasionally ate at a small Italian restaurant near their new home. Both noticed the general apathy and lack of passion and execution on the part of the restaurant's staff. After one of these experiences, Brian dropped by the restaurant to offer his help to the owner and walked out a part owner and evening manager. While observing the staff Brian developed his theory of what was keeping this restaurant from becoming a better place to work and patronize.

First, Brian observed several employees who were unable to measure their own performance, which he

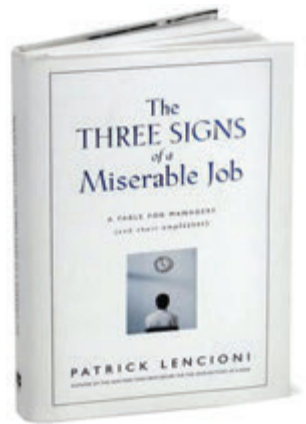
termed immeasurement. Second, he found employees saw their work as irrelevant. Third, Brian observed that the staff suffered from anonymity. No one was genuinely interested in the employees as individuals.

As the fable continues, Brian helps the employees find ways to measure their own performance. In addition he asks each employee to identify who they served, and therefore who would find their work relevant. Finally, as their manager, Brian spends time learning about the employees, their families and their extracurricular activities.

Lencioni's three simple principles from Brian's fable can be applied to any industry — and janitorial often faces a "miserable job" stigma. So, we continually search for innovative ways to help our janitors measure their own performance. We train our leadership to remind staff that their work matters to thousands of customers and building occupants who are affected by the cleaning efforts put forth in their workspaces everyday. Most importantly, we take the time and learn about our staff members, their lives and what is important to them.

I would encourage you to read this book and open yourself back up to the simple strategies that we all likely employed at one time in our careers, but may have set aside for "more objective" practices.

Ken Sargent
President and CEO
Porter Industries
Loveland, Colorado



The Three Signs of a Miserable Job By Patrick Lencioni

As a child, author Patrick Lencioni listened to his dad describe the frustrating dysfunction within the company he worked at for 40 years. As president of The Table Group, Lencioni has dedicated his career to helping organizations, and the people within them, become more successful.

With "The Three Signs of a Miserable Job," published in 2007 by Jossey-Bass, Lencioni tackles the universal problem of job dissatisfaction. Using a fable to illustrate his message, the book gives employers the resources to engage, motivate and retain employees.

The key is eliminating the three primary culprits: anonymity, irrelevance and immeasurement.

Do you have a favorite business book? E-mail dan.weltin@tradeexpress.com to contribute.

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