

# Cleaning With A Team

**How to plan and implement a team cleaning program in your facility.**



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## **SECTION 1**

### **All about Teams. Pre-History**

Long before recorded history, human beings were using teams to simply survive. The early hunters with primitive weapons found very quickly that not only was there strength in numbers but that by hunting in organized teams they were more successful. One hunter, with one spear or arrow could possibly kill birds and small game after investing many hours in the hunt. In order to feed his family this way it was necessary to hunt every day and to be successful each time. When a number of hunters formed a team they found that they could hunt larger game which would provide food for all of their families for longer periods of time. The hunting party could use the skills of all of the members of the group to improve their chances of success. Working together they proved to be much more effective than the solitary hunter so they stayed together in tribal groups or teams.

### **Early Civilizations**

Early civilizations recognized the effectiveness of teams. Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations made extensive use of organized teams to build their buildings, fight their battles and provide amusement in contests of skill and strength. Specialization meant that each part of a task was done by a person most trained and suited to the work. A group, or team of workers with different specialties working together was found to be much more effective than single individuals.

### **Teams More Effective**

Why are teams more effective? The answer to this question lies in both technology and in human nature. From a technology point of view it seems obvious that the

more time invested by a person in learning a skill the more proficient the individual will become. We see this with all skills in life today, from baseball players to brain surgeons. Specialization definitely leads to higher skill levels. In part this explains how teams of individual specialists can be more efficient than individuals who attempt to learn and practice all of the skills at the same time. There is another factor, which is equally important in delivering high efficiency, the human factor, sometimes known as “team spirit”

## Team Spirit

“Team Spirit” results from the basic human instinct to compete. All through time humans have had to compete to survive. Competing against weather, wild animals, enemies, disease and time itself has become part of what we call “human nature”. This instinct to compete, when directed into a team-work setting has a multiplier effect on work performance. In addition the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to others may provide more job satisfaction, particularly in work not normally seen as satisfying.



## **Social Animals**

We are social animals. We live in communities mostly by choice. Within our communities we work and live together operating as members of the community. Modern life has begun to change the sense of community in many ways, sometimes for good reasons but not always with completely good results. Banking by telephone means not going to the bank, not meeting your neighbours at the bank, not speaking to the teller. Ordering goods by telephone from home also reduces interpersonal contact. In lots of ways life is becoming more solitary and impersonal, causing us to lose the personal contact in everyday work and life that we need as human beings. Working in a team environment provides the personal contact that is disappearing from our daily lives making the work experience more satisfying for the worker.

Another significant social issue in these times is personal safety. There is a perception that life is not as safe as in previous years. People are extremely concerned about their personal safety, at home, on the street, and in the workplace. The sense of security which results from working in a team environment is an important consideration for employers and employees, particularly when work is done at late hours such as building cleaning. Safe working practices are more likely to be observed in a team environment. Whether at work or in a sporting setting, the fact that a peer group or team members can observe the behaviour or performance of a team member tends to encourage safe practices. As well, other team members have an interest in the safety of each other, particularly if the loss of a player or worker due to injury can cause them to have to work harder to meet the team's objective.

## **Administration**

Administratively, teams are generally easier to manage than individuals. Provided there is basic agreement and understanding of the team's objective and the resources and skills exist, then to a large degree the team will try to meet or exceed its targets. The main administrative tasks are the same as they would be in dealing with individuals: ensuring that resources are adequate for the task, training to ensure skills are appropriate. A third administrative task is to ensure that the balance of team characteristics is maintained. See section 4 for more on this subject

## **SECTION 2**

### **Various types of work assignment systems.**

In the cleaning industry there are typically four types of work assignment systems in use today. These are, Zone Cleaning, Gang Cleaning, Project Cleaning and Team Cleaning. Each system has a logical reason or reasons for its use and each has its place in the operation of a cleaning department. This is not to say that each system is equally efficient in the use of labour and material resources, simply that operational needs and circumstances may dictate that a particular system should be used at a particular time. An examination of these systems will help us to understand when a particular work assignment system should be used and how to use the system for maximum efficiency.

#### **Zone Cleaning .**

Zone cleaning, sometimes called area cleaning or route cleaning involves the assignment of a specific area of a building to a janitor. The janitor is responsible for all of the cleaning activities in the assigned area, sometimes referred to as a “run”. In order to do this work the janitor must be fully competent in all areas of janitorial work and be provided with tools and equipment to perform all of the daily tasks required to clean the “run”. Equipment to perform work done on a less frequent basis must be available when required and the janitor must know how to operate this equipment effectively. Adjustments to routine cleaning procedures must be made to allow time for the less frequent cleaning procedures such as stripping, waxing, wall washing, carpet shampooing to be done. Janitors performing zone cleaning generally work alone except for contact with supervisors or , in the case of day shift workers, the building occupants.

## **Benefits of Zone Cleaning**

The primary benefit often quoted for zone cleaning is the sense of ownership of the work that the zone cleaner is said to possess. Quite often this sense of ownership does exist and is reflected in the pride the janitor has in his or her work. The zone cleaner knows every area of the assigned area, every building occupant and can be an effective security person as strangers are easily recognized and directed to their destination, or off the property as needed. The zone cleaner is responsible for every cleaning activity in the assigned area, any failure to provide good service can be attributed to this janitor.

## **Disadvantages of Zone Cleaning**

The same “benefits” claimed by the zone cleaning system are its potential weaknesses. Since each zone cleaner performs all the cleaning activities in a zone he or she must be completely equipped with all of the tools and supplies to do the work. As each type of cleaning task takes only a portion of the shift most of the tools and equipment are not in use most of the time but must be available whenever the zone cleaner needs them. When each zone is fully equipped large amounts of tools and equipment are assigned for short periods of time at considerable cost to the operations budget. In addition the very fact that the zone cleaner has a detailed knowledge of the assigned area will often lead to service failures when relief is assigned during vacation or illness. Supervisors must be particularly vigilant to ensure that the zone cleaner is not being persuaded by building occupants to do “little extra” chores at the expense of the set routine. The zone cleaner usually works alone and has little contact with others, a problem in the case of accident or a security incident. In large buildings where area dictates there be several zone cleaners it can be difficult to achieve a uniform service standard. Inspections must be repeated for each zone to assess the standard achieved in the building taking up supervision time in repetitive inspections.

## **Gang Cleaning**

Gang cleaning involves the assignment of a group, or gang of janitors to a task or area. This is usually done when the work must be completed in a very short time or when a large open area needs to be stripped and refinished. The group motivation in a gang can be quite strong leading to high efficiency in some of the areas of assignment. Often the gang will be led by a lead hand or supervisor who is the most skilled, (sometimes the only skilled) person on the crew.

## **Advantages of Gang Cleaning**

Group motivation is the greatest advantage of gang cleaning. The difference in production rates over individual production rates can be quite high. Supervision is constant and usually the work standard is as high as the personal standard of the lead hand. Newer staff with less experience can learn from the lead hand and develop skills while the work gets done. Provided the gang is of a size suited to the work this can be an efficient work unit. Many of the benefits of gang cleaning are incorporated into team cleaning.

## **Disadvantages of Gang Cleaning**

Gang cleaning is mainly suited to large open space cleaning where most of the work involves the use of simple hand tools, (mops, brooms, wall washing). More involved work requires a larger amount of power equipment to fully equip the gang. This costs money. The organizational structure of the gang can result in several problems. unfairness in assigning work is often reported by gang cleaning crews. Lead hands may not wish to train unskilled workers to too high a skill level so that the lead hand retains the position of most essential employee in the gang.

Sometimes gangs become entirely composed of one ethnic group, this can present problems in the case of assigning relief staff to the gang.

## **Project Cleaning**

Project Cleaning is the practice of assigning specialty teams of janitors to perform single cleaning assignments. Examples of this are Wall washing teams, floor finishing teams and stripping teams. Lately specialty cleaning has involved creation of contract cleaning companies that only clean washrooms!

### **Advantages of Project Cleaning**

Once again the group or team spirit tends to result in high efficiency. Individuals are usually all well skilled in their tasks and work as a team to get the work done. Training is limited to the specialty of the team and equipment is in constant use with this method of assignment. Work tends to be done to a consistent standard and within consistent time limits. Over the short duration of each project this method has benefits similar to team cleaning.

### **Disadvantages of Project Cleaning**

Project cleaning by the very nature of its schedule, does not meet the needs of a daily cleaning task. For this reason it is mainly used as an add-on service by cleaning managers, or for seasonal work or work done during shut-down periods. When cleaning, as opposed to maintenance is done by project teams it is usually as a “last resort” to correct an unsatisfactory situation that regular cleaning programs have failed to deal with. When this is the case the team involved begin to resent cleaning up after other cleaners. This often results in lowered morale and poor relations between the daily cleaning staff and the project team. Project work should always be made up of tasks that cannot be done within the normal cleaning schedule.

### **Team Cleaning**

Team Cleaning takes the positive aspects of gang and project cleaning, the team spirit and the specialization to provide an assignment system designed to be efficient, cost effective, fair and easy to supervise and manage. Assigned areas can

be much larger than those assigned to a zone cleaner, often an entire large building will be assigned to a team. Team size is set according to the total workload. Teams are comprised of four specialist types, Light Duty Specialist, Washroom Specialist, Vacuum Specialist and Utility Specialist. Depending on the assigned work there may be more than one of each specialist or there may be a situation where each person is responsible for more than one specialty. The key to this type of assignment is that whatever specialty work is being done is being done for a logical period of time. This reduces the ratio of “get ready and put away” time to actual productive time. Equipment issues are optimized to the number and type of specialists rather than by zone thus reducing equipment inventories per building. The duties of each specialist are generally described in fig. 1 but can and should be modified to suit specific buildings and tasks. The use of “best methods” coupled with “best times to do work” enhance this system. Boredom and risk of unfairness is handled by rotation of the specialist duties on a periodic basis, either weekly or monthly.

## **Advantages of Team Cleaning**

Supervision of team cleaning assignment is much less time consuming than for an equal number of zone cleaners. Since usually only one person is assigned to washrooms for instance it is often only necessary to check one or two washrooms to verify the standard. Compared with zone cleaning where one or two washrooms in each zone need to be checked . The same applies to the Light duty and Vacuum Specialist work. Relieving absent workers is simpler as knowledge of the building is of less importance than knowledge of the specialist skills. Insertion of a “green” relief into a team does not involve a time consuming orientation of the zone or building. Other team members are usually close at hand to direct the relief person in the event of unfamiliarity with locations of janitor rooms, washrooms etc. The Vacuum Specialist usually follows the Light Duty Specialist so this position is often assigned to the relief janitor. Utility Specialists need to have the most building knowledge and skill so are usually relieved by other team members, not by

the relief janitor. The “team spirit” effect found in project and gang cleaning applies equally to team cleaning, enhancing output. Employees are not working alone in this system leading to greater personal safety. Training can be focused on skills and “best methods” rather than building knowledge, resulting in a more flexible and adaptable workforce.

## **Disadvantages of Team Cleaning**

To properly implement Team Cleaning requires planning and preparation. Quick fix changes are doomed to failure. Any change is usually resisted by staff and poorly prepared and presented changes are liable to be sabotaged very quickly. In fact introduction of change is so important that one chapter of this manual is devoted to the subject.

## SECTION 3

### Why Team Assignments are Effective

In the cleaning industry the introduction of “Team Cleaning” has generated both interest and controversy. Is it a real improvement? Is it just a way to promote backpack vacuum sales? Would simply demanding higher output from janitors work just as well? If it works, why does it work? Team cleaning does present a significant opportunity to reduce labour while maintaining or improving cleaning standards. Use of the backpack vacuum is important, but so is the selection of all equipment and procedures used in cleaning. The reasons for the improved efficiency are all related to the way in which Team Cleaning affects the work planning process.

Frederick Winslow Taylor, considered the father of scientific management one hundred years ago proposed that work should always be done by the “best method”. While some of Taylor’s other views, such as dividing the workplace into thinkers and doers are now seen as too autocratic, the principle of the one best method, or “best practice” is still valid today. Taylor also recognized that breaking down work into clearly defined specialist tasks and training workers to excel in these tasks led to higher efficiency. Part of the improvement came from the high level of skill, but a larger part came from the use of “best practice” coupled with a minimizing of “make ready” time.

**Make Ready Time** Make ready time is the time needed to prepare to start a task. It includes all of the time needed to put away material used in a previous task as well as the time to assemble material needed to start the task to be done. In an ideal work environment make ready and put away time would occur once in a shift. In construction and in some assembly line work this is the case. In the Cleaning Industry however the janitor is expected to perform a number of different

tasks, one after the other, then repeat the process in another area, and then another area and so on until the end of the shift. Even if the make ready time is very brief, say two or three minutes, the number of repetitions will multiply the times so that the total make ready time may be an hour or more in an eight hour shift.

## **Effective use of Equipment**

Use of equipment can be described in three ways, misuse, disuse, and steady use. The first two are responsible for many more equipment failures than the last.

### **Misuse**

Misuse occurs most often from lack of familiarity with the equipment. Often this results from a lack of training, but it can also result from the constant set up and put away with short use periods in between that zone cleaning requires. So much time is spent plugging and unplugging, winding and unwinding cords, draining and refilling tanks that workers will begin to take short cuts, and damage the equipment through carelessness or poor procedures.

### **Disuse**

Disuse results from workers choosing not to use equipment that they are unfamiliar with or that is awkward to set up and put away. Once disuse is allowed to continue the equipment either deteriorates or accessories become separated from the machine, hoses are lost, filters are plugged, jets are plugged and electrical cords deteriorate. Then resistance to the use of the machine is created in the worker due to its condition.

## **Constant Use**

The secret to avoiding misuse and disuse is constant use. When a piece of equipment is in use for a major part of a shift the worker will tend to become expert in its use, more likely to care for the equipment and be unlikely to “park” the equipment in the back of a supply room. Most janitorial equipment is designed for much heavier use than it actually receives and will require no more maintenance than underused equipment, in fact often less! Team Cleaning is designed to maximize the use of equipment by minimizing the amount of equipment assigned to the workplace. Tools are used for longer periods of time on a daily basis by well trained staff. The best equipment is chosen for the job and used in the most efficient way.

## **Use of Available Time**

In any cleaning activity involving teams there will be the possibility of one member of the team having available time as a result of finishing his or her assignment ahead of schedule. There should always be a plan for the use of this time. Verbal instructions, such as “if you get finished early, clean .....” are seen as an invitation to the staff to ensure that only the scheduled work is done in the time allowed. It is far better to provide a written work order to each employee on a daily basis. Prepare a quantity of small work order assignments

which will add to the quality of the cleaning service. This work need not be of a major nature, after all you’re only using small amounts of time. In fact if you find that larger projects are being done in “available time” then a review of the work plan is needed. This will often happen in the early stages of Team Cleaning implementation as the team becomes familiar with their assignment and efficiency improves. The importance of planning for the use of incremental amounts of available time can’t be emphasized too strongly. Cleaning is a daily function, all savings are typically multiplied by 260 days per year so that even a five minute saving per day represents almost 3 days of labour in a year as can be seen in the table following.

<b>It was only five minutes !</b>			
<b>Number of Staff</b>	Lost hours per week	Lost hours per month	Lost hours per year
<b>1</b>	0.4	1.8	21.7
<b>5</b>	2.1	9.2	108.3
<b>10</b>	4.2	18.3	216.7
<b>25</b>	10.4	45.8	541.7
<b>50</b>	20.8	91.7	1083.3
<b>100</b>	41.7	183.3	2166.7

**Table shows the time lost based on five minutes per person per day.**

## **Planning for Relief**

Relief planning for a Team Cleaning assignment is made more efficient because there is an opportunity to use the available time of all of the remaining team as well as adjusting the assignment to do the work of the missing team member. Relief planning should always be done in advance so that the team knows what must be done. Implementation of relief plans should be an automatic response by the team, saving both time and headaches.

## **Avoiding the Hero Trap**

The “Hero Trap” is a phenomenon very familiar to many managers of Zone Cleaning operations. It works like this: In a group of workers there is always one employee who is capable, good-natured, eager to help out in any situation, often keen to take on new challenges. This may seem like a dream come true. Hero is usually given the difficult challenging jobs, asked to help other slower staff finish work. Hero may be called upon to fix problems caused by other cleaners. For a while, Hero is happy. Then Hero becomes resentful or depressed or burnt out.

Why? The fact is Hero will eventually realize that life is unfair, his reward for doing good work is to be given even more work, sometimes other peoples work! At the same time he realizes that the workers doing less work or poorer work have been rewarded by being given additional help, Him! Very quickly Hero becomes disillusioned and dissatisfied. At the same time the other workers are able to welcome another recruit into the ranks of the “below average”. Fairness in work assignments will avoid the “Hero Trap”, The Team Cleaning planning strategies described in this manual ensures that this dangerous process does not take root in an organization.

## SECTION 4

### The Client Needs Survey

The title of this section refers to Client **Needs**, note that it is not Client **Wants** ! Very often these are quite different, usually the wants being much greater than the needs. To plan a cleaning program without establishing the needs of the users is to invite over servicing in some areas and under servicing in others. This is the worst type of situation that a Cleaning Manager can encounter. Labour is being wasted on the one hand, and clients are complaining on the other.

A carefully done client needs survey is an invaluable tool in the preparation of a cleaning plan. This does not involve asking the client to determine the services and frequencies of service, but rather asking the client to describe the expected outcome of the cleaning process. For example: “*Window sills, shelves and ledges will be free of dust*”. This is much better than “*All offices shall be dusted daily*” This kind of input allows the Cleaning Manager to plan the work based on performance rather than on schedules set by non-cleaners.

One procedure to involve the client in determining needs is to propose a range of standards for each area and invite the client to choose the standard that will meet the needs of the particular operation being carried out in that area. This method will often result in labour saving as the client takes an active part in establishing reasonable and achievable levels of cleaning. A good guide to this is the APPA manual on cleaning standards. A section of the standards is reproduced at the end of this manual.

## SECTION 5

### Developing a Labour use Strategy

No matter what assignment system is being used, Team, Zone or Gang the first step to building an efficient Cleaning Operation is to develop a clear strategy. The Strategic plan should clearly define the following:

**What** should be done

**How often** should it be done

**What standard** should be achieved

**When** should it be done

**How** should this be done

**Who** should do it

**Lets deal with the parts of the plan one at a time:**

#### **What should be done**

When deciding what should be done it is extremely important to be specific. This means defining **all** of the required activities in **every** area. Because cleaning is a repetitive activity, both in actions and locations *every* minute saved or squandered is multiplied. Time saved in the planning process by generalizing will not result in an effective strategy and will always cause time and money to be wasted in the workplace. Each separate task no matter how small must be identified at this stage.

## **How Often Should This Be Done**

Now that each task has been identified for an area or location the frequency, or how often the task is to be done can be decided. Once again, do not generalize, take care to review each task separately when deciding on its frequency.

## **What Standard Should Be Achieved**

The standard to be achieved has a great effect on labour requirements and on frequency. It is not enough to specify a high standard and then specify a low frequency. The standard will drop to unsatisfactory levels if the frequency of cleaning is not matched to the level of quality required. Standards should be specific to each location, remember, do not generalize! If a client needs survey has been carefully done standards for each location can be established with confidence.

## **When Should This Be Done**

The timing of assignments is extremely important. While there are always exceptions for organizational reasons, there is always a “best time” to do any task. Efficiency is highest when disruption of the employee is lowest. Working around people always slows down the cleaning process. Conversely “graveyard” shifts may not produce the efficiency required due to a physical “slow down” that has been shown to occur between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m. In addition labour costs are often higher for this shift due to union contract provisions.

## **How Should This Be Done**

To decide on the procedure or method by which the work will be done it is necessary to consider several factors. Will the method disturb the clients operations? Sometimes the best method results in noise or odour that will disturb the client. (see “When should This Be Done” above) . Are the staff doing the work properly trained in the “best method”? Are tools and equipment available for the work? Each of these factors will influence the choice of method. The strategy should be to plan to use the best method at the best time and only to compromise if

absolutely necessary. Labour savings resulting from “best methods” will very quickly pay for new equipment.

### Who Should Do This

Whether Zone Cleaning or Team Cleaning the choice of which employee to assign to the task is quite straightforward. In Zone Cleaning it is the janitor assigned to the zone, provided the janitor is trained for the task, all will be well. In Team Cleaning the task will be assigned to one or more of four specialists. These specialists will be well trained and will use the best methods for the work.

Very clearly making all of these decisions seems like an immense task, yet to plan a strategy that will result in an efficient cleaning operation, the information obtained from the answers to these six questions is essential. Any time spent in this process will be repaid many times over in the resulting efficiency of the operation. The table following shows an example of how the information is tabulated

Room	Task	Frequency	Standard	Schedule	Method	Operator
101 Office	Empty Trash	Daily	Complete	Evening	“Brute on Wheels	Light Duty
101 Office	Spot clean	Weekly	Detail Clean	Evening	“Brute” on Wheels	Light Duty
101 office 101 Office	Vacuum Carpet Clean	Weekly 3 Months	Full Area complete	Evening Weekend	Backpack Self contained extractor	Vac Spec’st Project Cleaning
101 Office 102 General Office	Wall washing Empty Trash	Annual Daily	Complete Complete	Evening Evening	Taski Mini Mop “Brute” on Wheels	Project Cleaning Light Duty

Part of typical table to plan assignments

At this stage of the planning process all that has been established is the task and what kind of specialist will do the work. Before the When and how can be decided it is essential to decide on the method and equipment that will be used to do the work. Production rates for different types of equipment can be so different as to vary the amount of time to do a task by up to 100%. Obviously equipment choice is very important to the planning process, Section 6 following deals with this topic.

## **SECTION 6**

### **Equipment Planning**

“Give us the tools, and we’ll do the job” The manager or supervisor of a janitorial operation has a major responsibility when the time comes for selection of equipment. Ask any Janitor why he or she is using whatever piece of equipment they are currently using and nine times out of ten the answer will be, “this is what they gave me to do the job with”.

Team Cleaning will result in somewhat improved efficiency even with poor or unsuitable equipment, to get the maximum benefits from the Team Cleaning system the individual specialists must be properly equipped for the work. This is not difficult or expensive to do, but should be done with care and planning so that the choice of equipment always allows the use of “best methods”. Each specialist should be provided with the tools to do the work effectively and efficiently. The summary of equipment for each specialist that follows is the basic minimum for Team Cleaning. Situations that are unique to any operation may need additional special tools.

## **The Washroom Specialist**

This specialist should be equipped with a janitor cart containing the following:



**Mop, bucket and wringer**

**Lobby brush and dust pan**

**18" or 24" dust mop**

**Bowl mop and germicidal solution jug**

**Trigger spray bottles, germicide & glass cleaner,**

**Properly labeled Paper refill supplies and soap refill**

**Trash container liners**

**Extension duster**

**Washroom closed sign**

**Pad and pencil Assignment card and MSDS (laminated)**

**Putty knife**

**Gloves and safety glasses**

## The Vacuum Specialist.



This specialist is equipped with a **lightweight backpack or hip mounted vacuum cleaner**. A quantity of trash can liners and garbage bags will also be carried by this specialist for use when double checking the light duty specialist has emptied waste containers. Whatever type of vacuum cleaner is carried should ideally have **four levels of filtration**, ( disposable bag, cloth bag, motor filter and exhaust filter), to minimize the chance of airborne dust in the vacuum exhaust from soiling the area just cleaned. This type of vacuum is a major component of any program to improve indoor air quality (IAQ) as well as do a superior cleaning job.

## The Light Duty Specialist



The light duty specialist is equipped with a trash barrel on casters and a wrap around tool caddy containing at least the following tools and supplies:

All purpose cleaner in a trigger spray bottle, properly labeled

Microfiber wipes Large and small garbage can liners

Extension duster Assignment card and MSDS (laminated)

Pad and pencil Putty knife Gloves and safety glasses

## The Utility Specialist



The utility specialist is usually equipped with:

A backpack vacuum like the vacuum specialist A mop, bucket and wringer. A standard floor machine 175 rpm with pads and bonnets as required A high speed burnisher with pads, size to suit area serviced Carpet spotting kit Mop bucket and wringer bar towels or cloth wipes Large and small garbage can liners Extension duster, treated dust cloths Assignment card and MSDS (laminated) Pad and pencil Putty knife Gloves and safety glasses

## SECTION 7

### Training Specialists

Training specialists for a Team Cleaning program can be broken down into two main processes. The training of new, untrained staff and the re-training of existing staff.

### Training New Staff

New staff should be trained in three specialty duties at first, Washroom Specialist, Vacuum Specialist and Light Duty Specialist as these represent the less skill intensive functions of the cleaning process. Each Specialist duty demands special skills or characteristics which can be taught or selected for in the initial employment stage. When experience is gained in these specialties the staff can be trained as a Utility Specialist.

**The Washroom Specialist** should be trained to follow the ISSA procedure for washroom cleaning which is summarized on the following pages. The importance of following this procedure can not be over-emphasized. Much time will be wasted if the procedure is varied and results of the cleaning obtained will be inconsistent. The Washroom Specialist should be provided with the means to empty and refill the bucket with germicidal solution in the washroom so avoiding time wasting trips to the janitor closet. The type of mop chosen should be appropriate to the size of the washrooms being cleaned. Most washrooms can be cleaned with a small flat mop system such as the Taski Mini Mop which avoids the splashing of baseboards, doors and walls which results from the use of the larger “Kentucky” mop in smaller locations. The Washroom specialist should have an eye for detail, be methodical and meticulous by nature and have the physical fitness to be able to bend and twist while cleaning all around toilet fixtures in confined cubicles.

**The Vacuum Specialist** should be capable of continuous physical exertion, although this work does not involve as much bending as the Washroom specialist Duty. This Specialist should be trained in the use of a backpack or hip vacuum. The motion of cleaning using these vacuums should be a steady swinging side to side motion not unlike that of using a scythe. Using this method, with elbows tucked in to the body forces the operator to rotate the hips or backward. This type of motion in large open spaces or corridors is easy on the arms and shoulders and results in a very efficient method of vacuuming. When a conventional fore and aft motion is needed in confined area vacuuming the benefit of the lightweight vacuum wand over an upright vacuum will be felt by the operator. This Specialist should wear loose clothing as it can be warm work . The importance of following the vacuum manufactures instructions for wearing the vacuum is critical to the comfort and efficiency of the operator. The weight of the vacuum should be carried on the operators hips, with while moving forward any harness properly fastened and adjusted to suit the operators physique. An excellent free video on this can be obtained from Pro-Team, manufacturers of the “Coach” and “Super Coach” back pack vacuums.

**The Light Duty Specialist** as the name suggests does light duty work. The main duties are pickup of loose trash, emptying of waste containers, dusting and spot cleaning. A detail oriented person is best for this duty as the results of this work are visible in all areas of the room being cleaned. The Specialist should be trained to dust from high to low areas, look for and pick up trash from areas where the vacuum may not reach and to use spray cleaner and cloth to spot clean marks from all surfaces. The ability to make notes of areas needing repair, or the services of the Utility Specialist for wet mopping, shampooing or for project work is a feature of this work.

## **Training Existing Staff**

While the training will be the same as for new staff, the focus must be on unlearning old routines and ideas. The tendency to stop one type of activity to do another must be corrected by persistent training, to the point, if necessary of removing access to equipment not essential to the specialist duties being carried out. Skill training is not usually an issue when retraining existing staff, procedure training is the key. Existing Staff will usually possess all of the skills to perform the Utility Specialist duties, the training should be focused on knowing all of the four Specialist routines and not reverting to zone cleaning procedures.

## **SECTION 8**

### **Developing the Working Plan**

#### **Measure First**

You can't manage what you haven't measured! Using the building floor plan make a list of each type of room and its area. This information helps to establish the time needed and the frequency of cleaning. Don't be tempted to "lump in" storage rooms and other rarely cleaned rooms with the classrooms or labs, keep them separate. For washrooms, count each fixture. Special areas like shower rooms should be noted.

#### **Determine Client Needs**

Meet with the Principal and any other people who are your clients and ask them to determine their expectations for the cleaning service. This should be based on what levels of cleanliness they expect rather than having the clients decide how often to clean or by what method. You are the expert and are responsible for producing the result the client needs, the "how" is up to you.

#### **Plan Frequency of Service**

Based on the expectations of the Principal and other users, you should decide the frequency of cleaning for each type of area and enter this in the cleaning frequency chart. This document can be sent to the Principal for review and for consideration when budget cuts are possible. Let the user take part in any cost cutting decisions!

## Assign Specialists

Make an assignment list for each type of work operation based on the four specialists in the Team Cleaning program. For example: The washroom specialist will usually be responsible for drinking fountain cleaning and shower room cleaning. Trash dumping is usually assigned to the utility specialist, etc. Don't worry about who they will be or how many people will be involved. At this stage you're planning the process not making individual assignments. Bear in mind that a person can work at different specialties at different times in the shift. The important thing to keep in mind is to do all of one kind of work at a time, not constantly changing from sweep to vacuum to mop to dust. Use the assignment chart following, or make up your own.

<i><b>Location/Room</b></i>	<i><b>Procedure</b></i>	<i><b>Frequency</b></i>	<i><b>Specialist</b></i>
<b>Classrooms, labs, music room.</b>	Boards, trash, dust, spot clean,	Daily	Light Duty Specialist
<b>Classrooms, labs, music room.</b>	Vacuum floor, chalk tray and vent grilles	Daily	Vacuum Specialist
<b>Offices</b>	Vacuum floors	Daily	Vacuum Specialist
<b>Offices</b>	Trash, spot clean, dust	Daily	Light Duty Specialist
<b>Corridors</b>	Vacuum	Daily	Vacuum Specialist
<b>Shower rooms, washrooms</b>	Fully clean and restock	Daily	Washroom Specialist
<b>Gymnasium</b>	Sweep and damp mop	Daily	Utility Specialist *
<b>Gymnasium</b>	Vacuum edges and ledges	Daily	Vacuum Specialist
<b>Kitchen</b>	Sweep, wet mop or scrub, empty trash	Daily	Utility Specialist
<b>Cafeteria</b>	Pick up loose trash, clear tables, spot clean, dust	Daily	Light Duty Specialist
<b>Cafeteria</b>	Vacuum floor	Daily	Vacuum Specialist

Cleaning Frequency and Assignment Chart

## Estimate Labor Times

Using your list of areas and room types, and the cleaning frequency chart start to estimate the total hours of cleaning by each Team Cleaning specialist based on the following production times.

**Vacuuming :** ..... 10,000 sq. ft. per hour for classrooms

6,000 sq. ft. per hour for offices The vacuum specialist usually follows the light duty specialist a few minutes later around the building. Time can be saved by having the light duty specialist let the vacuum specialist know if a room does not need vacuuming that shift. The vacuum specialist can also vacuum washrooms before the washroom specialist gets there, this often saves time sweeping before mopping. The use of a hip vacuum or backpack vacuum allows cleaning of grilles and chalk trays

**Washroom Specialist:** ..... allow 2.5 minutes per fixture, maximum. Actual experience suggests 2 minutes per fixture may be enough. For example a washroom with 5 cubicles, 5 urinals and two sinks should not take more than  $12 \times 2.5$  minutes (30 minutes) to fully clean, disinfect, restock and empty trash. Usually our staff beat this time but it always depends on how badly trashed the washrooms are. The procedure for washroom cleaning is the ISSA procedure, copy attached.

**Light Duty Specialist: (Classrooms, offices, labs).....**allow the same rates as vacuum specialist. 10,000 sq. ft. per hour in classrooms and labs, 6,000 sq. ft. per hour in offices . Picks up loose trash, cleans boards and re stocks chalk and erasers, empties trash, spot cleans walls and doors, dusts horizontal ledges. This specialist should be observant and let others know if there is extra work such as carpet spotting or spot mopping is needed in any area that can be done by the utility specialist or as a project on a project day.

**Utility Specialist:** Use ISSA 301 cleaning times to calculate most of this assignment. For schools this specialist would likely be responsible for hauling out trash from a pick-up point to the dumpster. Vacuuming or otherwise cleaning corridors and entrances. Wet mopping kitchen floors and similar duties. This person needs to be the most skilled custodian on the shift as they may need to use any or all of the equipment to deal with problem situations.

## **Testing The Estimate**

The next stage is to test the time allowances either with supervisory personnel or with a custodian who is open minded and not opposed to change. Train this person in each specialty and allow the person to meet the time targets using the proper equipment in actual work areas. During this process make notes about the best route to follow, where the most convenient power outlets are (mark them!) and any problems that need to be ironed out before putting the program into operation.

## **The Job Duty Card**

The Job Duty Card is essential to the success of a Team Cleaning assignment . The card is used to list the work to be done, in which location and for how long. The Job Duty Card should be made up after the testing process is completed and should include any useful hints or tips noted by the tester during the test phase. Typically the card will show the location, start time of an activity, the time allowed for completion of the activity, the location or area and the type of specialist duty to be done. Using a job duty card, (sample at back of manual, or make up your own) a routine can be created for each employee to follow through the shift. A typical example might be something like the samples following which show the job cards for a Team Cleaning program in a medium sized school.

## Vacuum Specialist Job Card

LOCATION OR ROOM	START TIME	TIME SCHEDULED	VACUUM SPECIALIST ASSIGNED TO ..... NOTES
<b>Start shift</b>	15:00	10 minutes	Pick up vacuum, vacuum custodians workroom, go to East wing start point.
<b>New Wing</b>	15:10	1 hour 30 minutes	Vacuum labs, classrooms, computer lab, speech/hearing room migrant room, New Wing corridor and washrooms. Empty vacuum bag.
<b>Cafeteria and Music Room</b>	16:40	25 minutes	Vacuum all areas
<b>Main Hall</b>	17:05	20 minutes	Vacuum offices, washrooms and work room and corridor
<b>East Wing</b>	17:25	1 hour 45 minutes	Vacuum classrooms, labs, lounge, washrooms, East Wing corridor and library. Empty vacuum bag
<b>Gymnasium</b>	19:10	10 minutes	Vacuum all perimeter of gymnasium floor and all ledges
<b>End of shift</b>	19:20	10 minutes	Clean vacuum filter, empty vacuum bag put away, check out

## Light Duty Specialist Job Card

LOCATION OR ROOM	START TIME	TIME SCHEDULED	LIGHT DUTY SPECIALIST
			ASSIGNED TO ..... NOTES
<b>Start shift</b>	15:00	5 minutes	Take equipment to New Wing, check area for major problems.
<b>New Wing</b>	15:05	1 hour 30 minutes	Classrooms, computer lab, labs, speech / hearing and migrant rooms Pick up loose trash, empty trash cans, clean boards and re-stock , spot clean walls and trim, dust ledges, clean lab sinks
<b>Cafeteria/Music Room</b>	16:35	15 minutes	Pick up loose trash leave trash containers for utility specialist, dust, spot clean walls and trim
<b>Main Hall East Wing</b>	16:50 17:00	10 minutes 1 hour 20 minutes	Offices, and work rooms. Dust, spot clean, empty trash Classrooms, labs and lounge. Pick up loose trash, empty trash cans, clean boards and re-stock , spot clean walls and trim, dust ledges, clean lab sinks
<b>Gymnasium</b>	18:20	1 hour	Pick up loose trash, sweep, spot clean, dust all ledges. Get mop & bucket from kitchen area, damp mop as required, return mop & bucket.
<b>End of shift</b>	19:20	10 minutes	Return to custodial room, re-stock supplies for next day, check out

## Washroom Specialist / Utility Specialist Job Card

LOCATION OR ROOM	START TIME	TIME SCHEDULED	WASHROOM SPECIALIST / UTILITY SPECIALIST  ASSIGNED TO ..... NOTES
<b>Start shift</b>	15:00	5 minutes	Take cart to start point, fill bucket with water and germicidal.
<b>Locker Rooms</b>	15:05	40 minutes	Clean showers, clean and restock washrooms, disinfect floors, empty trash from washrooms. Clean locker room. Empty bucket
<b>Washrooms &amp; D.F. New Wing. Main Hall</b>	15:45	3 hours 45 minutes	Fully clean and stock washrooms, clean all drinking fountains. End of Washroom Specialist duties. Put away washroom cart, restock for next day
<b>Break</b>	19:30	30 minutes	
<b>East Wing</b>	20:00	1 hour	Continue washroom cleaning
<b>Cafeteria/Music Room Kitchen</b>	21:00 22:15	1 hour 15 minutes 1 hour 15 minutes	Start Utility Specialist duties. Remove trash, damp mop or spot mop floors. Use Utility bucket and wringer and mop set. Sweep, remove trash, wash or scrub floors
<b>All areas End of shift</b>	23:30 00:00	30 minutes 30 minutes	Remove trash from drop points and take to dumpster Clean and put away equipment, check lights, set alarm, lock and leave.

### Combining Specialist Duties

In the Job Duty Card shown above the duties of Washroom Specialist and Utility Specialist have been assigned to the same person as neither duty will need all of the shift time available. Duties can be combined when needed as long as the amount of switching between duties is minimal, or the change over is made at a natural break in work such as a coffee break or lunch break.

## SECTION 9

### Implementation

Change, of any kind is always difficult to implement. The cleaning industry is no exception. While there are always some employees who thrive on change, most will view any change with suspicion, sometimes resentment and often, fear. It is essential to recognize this right from the start and to have a plan to minimize the negative effect change will have on employees. Each concern should be considered and dealt with, promptly, openly and fairly.

**Fear of the unknown** can be eliminated by providing all staff with clear information about the changes to be made and any effects that the changes will have on staff. Even bad news is better than no news!

**Resentment** is often a result of the disturbance of long established routines. Staff who have benefited from loose scheduling and minimal accountability will sometimes resist change that threatens their comfort and security.

**Suspicion**, that jobs will be eliminated or that workloads will be unfairly allocated may be noticed. This can be allayed by giving clear indications of the aims of the changes and the effects on staffing levels, if any. When rotation of specialist duties is demonstrated the fairness of work allocation can be demonstrated. If there are any light jobs, rotation shares them out evenly.

### Getting Started

Start small, use the best workers first and build on success. In a large institution a building by building approach works well. Start with a crew of workers who are more open to change if possible. Allow a percentage of additional labour at first while the routine becomes familiar, gradually reducing the help over a few days until the team is meeting the target times without assistance. Allow the team time to

discuss the work plan after a week or two and to suggest changes to make improvements to the work plan, which will now become “their work plan”. Modify the Job Duty Cards as required and move on to the next building.

## **Setting Up**

Setting up a Team Cleaning program in a building provides a first-class opportunity to clean out the janitor closets. The benefits of this move are significant. First, there is the symbolic sense of a “new start”. Old methods are being replaced with new. Second, the closets can be supplied with only the supplies and equipment needed for the Team Cleaning program, thus preventing staff from reverting to old procedures while unsupervised. Third, but not least the closets will likely have accumulated an amazing amount of material over time. Some of the material may include chemical products for which no MSDS are on file, risking potential fines from regulatory agencies.

Other “finds” are sure to be unused or underused equipment or parts of equipment thought to have been lost. This often happens in large institutions! When the closets are cleared they can be painted, a brighter bulb put in the light fixture and stocked with supplies for the Team Specialists.

## **“It Can’t Be Done”**

The manager may be faced with this statement from a resistant crew (not yet a team) . One solution which has worked well in several situations is to assign the resistant crew on a temporary basis to a work assignment which is already being successfully team cleaned. This work obviously can be done! The team being replaced, are now familiar with Team Cleaning procedures and benefits and will usually relish a challenge to prove that “it can be done”. If problems are found the

temporary team will be able to identify them and offer solutions more freely since the assignment is not “theirs” permanently. Often the suggestion alone of using this method will challenge the resistant crew enough that an effort is made to become involved and make the system “theirs” rather than be outdone by another team.

## **Rotation**

Rotation of specialist duties has three main benefits. First, it ensures that all team members know the full range of each specialist's Job Duty Card and can replace any other specialist when required. Second, rotation of duties discourages any attempt to hang onto a “good routine”, all parties benefit and fairness is achieved. Third, rotation prevents boredom and complacency. Team members who prefer one or more specialties have something to look forward to provided the rotation period is not too long. Rotations of one week up to one month are common. Any instances of “leaving a mess for the next guy” can be dealt with by establishing acceptance standards for work prior to rotation.

## SECTION 10 Follow Up And Team Maintenance

Management of a Cleaning Service is an ongoing process. The one constant factor in the life of a cleaning manager is that change will occur. In fact change **should** occur, if the cleaning industry is to achieve the respect to which it is rightfully entitled. No matter how well things are going now, if they aren't improving they'll soon be getting worse. The cleaning team needs regular maintenance to be able to function effectively. This involves human relations , technological upgrades for staff, improved equipment when available and constant education and training for all members of the team including supervisors and managers.

The work plan should be reviewed regularly with input sought from the team members, the supervisors and the clients. As circumstances change, (client needs, equipment performance, building materials) the work plan should be modified to reflect the changes and to take advantage of shortcuts the team will have found while doing the work. In the case of the last item, be sure to give full recognition to any suggestions from the team members. One sure way to turn off the initiative is to fail to recognize input from interested staff.

Document all changes to the plan and keep the original plans on file for future reference. Its very easy to slip back to where you started if you don't do this. Also the information is extremely useful to document staff efficiency to senior management when faced with a performance review or budget cuts.

# **SECTION 11**

## **Conclusion**

This manual has been intended to provide an introductory guide to the process of cleaning with a team, or Team Cleaning. Throughout the text an effort has been made to identify the methodology behind the use of teams in cleaning as well as to identify those management practices which bring increased efficiency, and are common to all cleaning assignment types. Naturally no two facilities are exactly alike, so unique solutions for the management of cleaning staff will always be needed. The general principles found in this manual will form a solid foundation on which to build that special plan.

In some cases professional help will be required to assist in plan development. This is understandable, after all the daily needs of the cleaning operation will still need to be met while planning takes place. Using this manual, a manager can set guidelines for the consultant assisting the planning process and be better able to judge the quality and practicability of changes proposed by others.

Like the cleaning industry, this manual will be constantly revised and updated to meet the needs of cleaning managers. Input from readers is always welcome and will be acknowledged in future editions.