The House Cleaning Technician (HCT) class is now being offered online. Limited to 20 participants, the virtual classes are held over two days – from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (EDT).

The House Cleaning Technician (HCT) training and certification program is a comprehensive overview of best practices in cleaning. The course is designed specifically for the HCT who wants to meet the expectations of a more educated marketplace of homeowners. Those who complete the course and pass the certification exam will be certified professionals who understand the value and methodology of proper cleaning.

The material presented in this course has been researched and peer reviewed, and presents the cleaning industry’s best practices. The HCT course takes approximately 14 hours over the course of two days to deliver. An opportunity to take the HCT Certification Exam immediately follows the conclusion of the instruction; an additional payment of $65 to IICRC/CleanTrust must be made at the time the technician attends to take the certification exam.

An Important Distinction: Certification versus Training

The HCT Certification validates an individual’s knowledge of the proper and safe removal of soil (cleaning), sanitizing and disinfecting. These outcomes can be effectively accomplished through a variety of techniques, cleaning procedures and solo/team cleaning models. The certification course makes no recommendations of procedures or products, and will not interfere with your existing cleaning procedure or technician.

In terms of business, the digital age has changed the way we all handle our work. With instant access to each other via Facebook, Instagram, Google and Yelp, there are so many avenues to reach out to potential clients and customers, receive feedback, and get a sense of how your business and services are being perceived by others. The question is, however, is it working and are these outlets equating into revenue?

So, when you boil it down, what people still want in terms of business, sales and customers, is the feeling of being heard, seen, understood and appreciated. That is why business owners and professionals are now digging deep to adjust their marketing plans and business structures to ensure that their focus continues to be centered around customer service first and foremost.

According to an article in Forbes magazine, more than 55 per cent of people still want to talk to a real human being. In the world of chatbots, automation and outsourcing, customers still want to feel like their questions, comments and concerns are being received by someone who genuinely cares about their wants and needs. The article also mentioned that a survey found that when people were faced with a phone-tree (push 1 for this or push 2 for that), 73 per cent of customers skip the robocall and go right to the human first. These statistics just go to show that human relationships are still a vital part of the business and are pivotal for any company looking to survive the digital boom. An article in the Harvard Business Review, titled Your Customers Still Want to Talk to a Human Being, says the same thing. While the internet... continued on page 2

How a focus on Customer Service Will Elevate Your Life and Business

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GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

House Cleaning Technician (HCT) Training

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How Focusing on Customer Service will Elevate Your Life and Business

has opened up new ways of communicating, humans still prefer to talk one on one. And an article in Retail Dive states 70 per cent of consumers still prefer human interaction.

This is a concept that Stan Valadzko, owner of SV Professional Cleaning, says works for him. By focusing on customer service first and foremost, he has found that his business is excelling in the digital realm. While all business owners are numbers people, he said he has made it a point to not lose sight of the real reasons he started his business, and that was to provide customers with optimum service.

“I found that by being available and responsive to my customers, listening to them, hearing them, and adjusting my business plan accordingly, I’ve successfully established recocurring customers who feed back into my business by sharing their satisfaction with others. Word of mouth is and will forever be your best marketing strategy,” he said.

Here are some ways you can choose to stick out by putting customer service first:

Making One-on-One Meetings a Priority

The time of hiding behind your computer is coming to an end. That might be how you connect with someone in the first place, but it is just the beginning. It is important to branch outside of your comfort zone, and make it a point to speak with potential customers and clients in-person. You can do this by showing up with your staff for an appointment. Even if you are the owner, it never hurts to go along and meet with the people funding your business one-on-one. You can assess the work of your staff and also hear feedback during the service in real-time. You can also ask your customers to fill out a survey (not via email) after the service is finished. Have one of your staff members give the customer or customers the sheet to fill out at the time of service so you can retrieve it in person.

Establishing Relationships

Like with all things in life, relationships matter and business is no exception. When you or your staff are meeting with a customer for the first time, make sure to evaluate your intention. Are you simply trying to close the deal, or do you want to get to know them, hear what it is they are looking for and how you can help, and go from there? We all love being able to feel like we know the person that we are doing business with so why should your service be anything different? Some practical ways to do this would be to join a local networking group. You can network with potential customers and build authentic relationships with them. You can also use your marketing to do so, by showing your support in your community by sponsoring local sports teams or causes that are aligned with your consumer base. In return, your brand will be seen by potential customers and you will have created a heart-felt connection with potential customers.

Creating a Safe and Trusting Environment

Trust is key in life. Without trust, a business cannot succeed in the long-term. By creating a space for your potential customers that evokes a sense of trustworthiness, you are leveling yourself up from the competition and building a foundation for your success. One way to do this is by creating a comfortable meeting place at your work where you can do business. Make your office a warm and welcoming environment with art, plants and open meeting spaces. Another way is by establishing guidelines in the workplace that will help you win the hearts and minds of your potential customers. Another way you can do this is by being a person of your word. Make sure if you say your service will only take a certain amount of time you follow through with that. If you’re a service company, consider implementing a two-hour service window (maybe not two hours necessarily but a timeframe that makes sense to your industry) to make sure you can create trust with your customers by not overselling and under-delivering. Be realistic about your customers’ needs and be honest with them about what is reasonable in their price range.

Having Integrity with Your Product

Customers value integrity and you should too. By investing back into your...
What Makes Commercial Cleaning Different From Residential Cleaning?

Many residential cleaning business owners want to expand into commercial cleaning but don’t realize just how different it is from their core business. The mindset is that cleaning is cleaning, whether it’s a home or office. This type of approach is the reason that residential cleaning companies expanding into commercial can falter and fail from the get-go.

So what makes commercial cleaning different from residential cleaning? Here are 10 things to consider before diversifying into commercial cleaning:

1. Residential cleaning is done during the day and most commercial cleaning is done in the evenings, late night and on weekends so it’s best to have two separate crews. This will require hiring additional cleaners, team leaders and/or promoting current employees to supervise the commercial cleaning crew. You may find hiring for your commercial crew more challenging compared to your residential cleaners since people are more willing to work day shifts as opposed to evening, night and weekend work.

2. You will need to re-train your current cleaning staff if they will be working the commercial cleaning crew also. Since residential cleaning is much more detailed than that of commercial, your commercial crew will need to clean much faster, and with less focus on detail and more focus on completing the required cleaning specifications of the facility.

3. Residential cleaning is done in the client’s personal space versus their workspace. Since you are touching their personal belongings they tend to be more sensitive and “picky” than commercial cleaning clients. They are generally more demanding of the small details (i.e. how you place the pillows on their couch and bed, how you hang or fold the towels, how you replace items you pick up to dust…). Commercial clients are more concerned with ensuring you complete the cleaning specifications agreed to on the contract.

4. When residential clients are in the home while you are cleaning they tend to watch every move you make. They expect you to be on time and may watch the clock to see how long it takes... continued on page 4
What Makes Commercial Cleaning Different From Residential Cleaning?

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to clean. Commercial clients are not watching the clock to make sure you arrived on time (if they are even on site when you arrive). They may, however, leave “traps” to make sure your employees are thorough in their cleaning.

(5) Residential cleaners have more interaction with the client so you want to hire people who have good communications skills, are personable, and are well groomed. Although these are qualities you want to have in ALL employees, commercial cleaners normally clean at night, after the building occupants have gone home, so there is generally less interaction.

(6) You will have to wait to get paid with commercial cleaning so expect a decrease in cash flow. Residential cleaning companies are usually paid the day the service is provided. Commercial cleaning companies are usually under contract with terms of payment. This requires an invoice be issued each month to the customer and results in a longer waiting period to receive payment. With that said, a lot of commercial cleaning companies are now invoicing prior to providing cleaning services versus invoicing at the end of the month for that month’s services.

(7) Pricing and profit margins are different. In commercial cleaning, the larger the account, the lower the profit margin. Also, chemicals, supplies, and equipment costs are higher with commercial cleaning which leads to lowered profit margins per client. However, the larger accounts can be easier to manage and the lower margin can be made up in volume.

(8) Production rates are different from residential versus commercial. The average production rate (how many square feet per hour one person can clean) for residential is typically 700 to 1000 sq. feet versus commercial which can range from 2500 to 4000 sq. feet per hour or more. Pricing commercial is also more time consuming. Commercial clients normally require a bidding process, a building walk through and an agreement drawn up to include the list of cleaning specifications, terms and conditions of payment, signatures and references.

(9) Marketing is different because residential cleaning is “business to consumer” and commercial cleaning is “business to business.” Also, there are many more potential residential opportunities out there than commercial businesses, so naturally there will be more competition for commercial accounts.

(10) You may have to change or alter your current residential company name or create an entirely new company. Your company name must fit the services you are offering. You will find it extremely difficult to lure new commercial cleaning customers with the name: Squeaky Clean Maid Services. Find a name that will be marketable to both residential and commercial clients.

As you can see, there are many differences between residential cleaning and commercial cleaning. If you are considering diversifying into commercial cleaning, start making a list of pros and cons in order to determine if this is the right thing to do for your business.

If you decide to take on this new challenge and move forward, start making a business and marketing plan to determine how you will fund and manage the expansion. Do your research and try to forecast every aspect, good or bad, of the new business expansion. This way you’re not heading out into the unknown unprepared, and you will be able to handle glitches, problems, and roadblocks as they arise.

- Steve Hanson helps owners of residential cleaning companies build a more profitable and successful cleaning business through his online community at MyHouseCleaningBiz.com. Steve also provides one-on-one coaching services.

SOURCE: MyHouseCleaningBiz.com
... continued on page 4

Running a Business: Take your own advice

other?" – you probably jump right in and want to offer advice based on your experience.

Your advice is good – after all, you’re successful, right?

But I wonder... are you taking your own advice?

Let me explain. When you are in a FB group and you see a question, often times you know what you would say whether you respond or not. The right answer is often clear – or at least generally so. It’s easy for you to comment on what you would do if you were them (since, well, you aren’t them).

But I wonder, how often are you not doing what you tell others?

How long are you going to keep that “crappy” tech who is dragging down your quality scores?

When are you going to start keeping yourself to a schedule?

Why haven’t you fixed your broken hiring process (when you have given advice to someone else to create their perfect system)?

Sure, there are probably plenty of reasons you have not. But try to be objective when evaluating your business and ask yourself – what would I tell someone else if this was their problem in their business?

Maybe it’s time to take your own advice...

For my business I have put off addressing our attendance problem. I basically know what needs to be done, would freely give a fellow cleaning business owner advice on how to fix “their” attendance problem, and yet I haven’t acted on my own. For me, fear has been holding me back. It’s just plain stupid at this point and it’s time to take my own advice.

Historically we haven’t had a major issue with attendance. We have always had a clear attendance policy, but have been a bit lax in enforcing it over the past six to 12 months. Now we have a problem. It seems staff know that we do not actually fire people on their fourth call out, and we have created a non-enforcement culture. Now is the time to take my own advice and

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Grow Your Residential Cleaning Business

By DEBBIE SARDONE

You did it! You have successfully started your residential cleaning business. You named your business, got all your equipment, and took the steps you needed to create your dream. You are an entrepreneur. But now what? You have a handful of clients and you want more.

That’s how it goes. You’ve tasted success and you’re ready to take the next step. So, where do you start? How do you take your small business and position yourself as the next great enterprise of the future?

This article is going to show you how. You are going to learn the steps to take to growing your empire to the next level. You are going to get more clients and start cutting those cheques to the new employees fueling your residential cleaning business. Are you ready? Let’s dive in.

IMAGINE THE KIND OF CLEANING BUSINESS YOU WANT

All of us begin organizations with an objective in mind, however as days roll into months and months into years, we frequently forget our objectives and dreams. As you think about growing your residential cleaning business, step back, and imagine what your dream business looks and feels like, and what’s included in getting to that point. How do you make this dream a reality? It begins with specifying your perfect consumer.

BE HONEST AND SHARE WHY YOU’RE DIFFERENT

Consumers desire to understand what it is you can do for them that other cleaning companies can’t. Start by examining your competitors – what do they do that’s distinct, not just in their messaging, what about in their actions?

From a service perspective, it may include a higher focus on green cleaning items, versatile cleaning schedules (weekends and nights), and so on.

FOCUS ON CUSTOMERS IN EVERY STEP OF THE MARKETING JOURNEY

You can become so associated with the daily running of the business that you seldom go back and consider how marketing can assist you in growing your residential cleaning business. What you require is a marketing action strategy so you can set out a course to follow. That may mean finding a great coach to grow your cleaning business.

To do this, you must specify your business’s purchasing cycle. It’s most likely you have potential customers and customers at every phase of the cycle – from awareness (clients learn about your company but aren’t sure what you need to provide) through to discovery and engagement, and all the methods on how to recommend you (when they are so delighted with you, they wish to inform
How to Safely Clean Up Broken CFLs

Do you use CFLs in your home? Not sure? CFL stands for compact fluorescent light. They’re the curly tube light bulbs that use less energy, are cost efficient and eco-friendly. The only downside? Cleaning up a broken CFL bulb can be a bit trickier than sweeping up a regular broken bulb because they contain small amounts of mercury. It doesn’t have to be a big production or require outside help, you just need the right tools and a few additional steps to do it properly.

What you need:
- Cardboard, stiff paper or plastic scoop
- Tape or damp paper towels
- Plastic bag or glass jar with lid.

STEP 1: Using a piece of cardboard, some stiff paper or a plastic scoop, remove as much of the broken CFL glass as you can.

STEP 2: Carefully, pick up the smaller shards of glass using pieces of sticky tape, a damp paper towel, or a piece of soft bread. Repeat this step until you’re sure the area is free of broken glass.

STEP 3: Wipe area with disinfectant wipes.

STEP 4: Put all materials (tools and broken glass) into a plastic bag or glass jar, and seal completely. A glass jar with a tight fitting metal lid is the best choice as it keeps the mercury vapour sealed inside.

STEP 5: Dispose of at your local municipal waste depot, a hazardous waste drop-off event or a business looking to properly dispose of CFL.

CREATE MORE BUSINESS WITH EMAILS

Email marketing isn’t foreign anymore. Organizations of all kinds have actually been doing it for many years. You might be doing it currently, however possibilities are, there are methods to get more mileage out of your campaigns. That’s one area to begin if you’re still sending out a single newsletter to all of your consumers rather than segmenting them and personalizing those projects by sector.

If you have not established automated email projects yet, why not make that your next marketing and client retention effort?

Email automation is simpler than you may believe, and it’s a very reliable method to transform a possibility into a client or to engage a consumer for repeat opportunities to use your services.

DO NOT BE AFRAID TO KEEP DOOR KNOCKING

From dining establishments to churches to medical practices, going door-to-door to make the sale can be a really reliable sales technique to grow your residential cleaning business.

Pitch your service to realty representatives. Lots of property pros use their customer’s complimentary cleaning company as part of the house sale, which can generate more service for you.

What about architects for homes? They often require sending out cleaning teams after a house is completed.

Invest mailing lists for brand-new homeowners and send direct-mail advertising literature every month to those individuals who reside in higher-priced homes.

Connect with a coach who has successfully trained individuals to grow their residential cleaning businesses for several years.

NETWORK LIKE YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT

Nowadays, there are likely numerous groups for your company-specific niche or market; you simply must discover them! Attempt searching for networking groups for your organizations, services, on LinkedIn and Facebook.

“MeetUps” provides fantastic locations to start searching for regional networking events if you’re interested in local events for business professionals and company owners like yourself. Consider joining BNI group.

Beyond going to meetups and local events for business owners, think about participating in marketing groups that deal with your dream consumer or target audience. It’s a fantastic method to meet more individuals and find out about what makes your consumer tick and how to get them to work with you.

DO NOT GET STUCK: ACTIVELY BUILD YOUR BRAND OFFLINE

The web is a terrific tool for getting the word out, however, it’s an excellent concept to market your brand name offline, too.

The significance of going out in the

Running a Business: Take your own advice

address this problem head on. I have typed up way too many warning notices and have started having conversations with staff explaining where they are at and what the next step will be if they call out once more. Yes, it’s going to be painful, and yes, I fully expect to have at least one tech quit in the next 60 days, BUT this is what is best for our company and I am taking my own advice.

I would encourage you to take an objective look at your business and take your own advice. I wonder – what place your business would be in (and more importantly, your life be at) if you took your own advice?

- Chris Fuhrman, owner, EverGreen Maids Philadelphia Inc.

SOURCE: Cleaning Business Today
How to Safely Clean Up Broken CFLs

DID YOU KNOW? There is no curbside pick-up for these bulbs. Even an intact but burnt out CFL needs to be recycled. Thankfully, many businesses will accept your CFLs and do the recycling for you – Ikea, Rona, Canadian Tire and Lowe’s to name a few. Visit www.takebackthelight.ca to find a business near you.

PRO TIP: There are better eco-friendly alternatives out there. LED’s or light emitting diodes contain no harmful mercury and use less energy to produce the same light output, which reduces their impact on the environment.

SOURCE: Molly Maid Cleaning Tips

Grow Your Residential Cleaning Business

neighbourhood to develop brand name acknowledgement offline is essential for growing your residential cleaning business. You want an excellent balance of online and offline direct exposure.

IN CONCLUSION

Growing your residential cleaning business doesn’t have to be difficult. Your have created a cleaning business that has outlasted the many that fold within the first year.

Let’s highlight what you have learned. We talked about how you can play to your strengths and show your customers how you are different and how you can use email to your advantage. You also learned how marketing offline is just as important as online and how networking can enhance your business easily.

Give yourself the lift you need by taking steps and putting them into action. Your residential cleaning business won’t grow by itself.

- Debbie Sardone is known as The Maid Coach and is America’s top cleaning business consultant. Debbie helps owners of residential cleaning companies build a seven-figure dream business, with a six-figure income and the freedom in their lives that they deserve. Contact Debbie at (972) 827-7837.

SOURCE: Debbie Sardone, The Maid Coach Blog

How Focusing on Customer Service will Elevate Your Life and Business

business to make sure your products and service are up to par, you will be showing your customer base that it’s not just about the money, it’s also about the work you can provide. If you don’t stand by your product, how can you expect your customers to stand by it? With so much going on in the world, we as business owners may want to make things easier from time to time, but by going the extra mile and ensuring quality in your work you will be establishing yourself apart from the competition. Some ways you can have integrity with your product is by upgrading your service company’s equipment, offering professional development education and certifications to your staff, and staying up to date with the latest trends and what the competition is doing so you don’t fall behind.

Those are some of the keys to customer service that will help you and your team thrive. As the digital realm continues to grow, it is important to view it as a tool and an extension of your business, but to stay grounded in providing ultimate customer service in the end. We cannot lose sight of our humanity as business owners and must be firm in our conviction in the end. Customers, in return will naturally be drawn to you and your services. So do your best to not lose sight of the big picture in the fast-paced world we all live in today. And that is to value your customers first because they are what make what we do possible at the end of the day.

SOURCE: ARCSI, a division of ISSA

Calendar of Events

AUGUST 11, 2020: Three Tricks to Improve Your Sales Close Rate Webinar – 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (EDT). Curt Kempton will share three things that you can start doing right away for free that will help you close more jobs at higher average prices. For more information and to register, click here.

AUGUST 13 & 14, 2020: IICRC House Cleaning Technician Certification Training - virtual classroom. For more information and to register, click here.

AUGUST 18, 2020: Surviving the Pandemic: Stories of How Others are Pulling Through Webinar – 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (EDT). These are trying times. Every one of us has been impact in some way. We all feel victimized. Don Phin, a street-wise hero from the Bronx, will share some of the message he has been passing along to business owners around the country. No rocket science, just common sense. For more information and to register, click here.

SEPTEMBER 24 & 25, 2020: IICRC House Cleaning Technician Certification Training - virtual classroom. For more information and to register, click here.

NOVEMBER 16 - 19, 2020: ISSA Show North America, Mandalay Bay Convention Centre, Las Vegas, NV. Join over 16,000 successful professionals from around the world for the one show for cleaning and maintenance solutions. For more information, click here.

House Cleaning Technician (HCT) Training

model, though it may inform revisions toward greater effectiveness, improved productivity, and even increased revenue.

The HCT online training will be held August 13 and 14, and September 25 and 25. Class registration fee is $275 (USD) for ISSA members and $420 for non-members (includes one year of membership). The class registration fee includes the two-day class, study guide and materials. An additional fee of $65 (USD) is charged for the actual certification exam.

For more information, please visit www.issa-canada.com.
Take the GBAC Fundamentals Online Course and become a Microbial Warrior for your organization.

This course teaches cleaning professionals to prepare for, respond to, and recover from biohazards in the workplace. Participants will learn infection and contamination control measures for infectious disease outbreak situations such as the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).

Individuals who successfully complete the course within 30 days will receive a Certificate of Completion from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC), a division of ISSA.

GBAC trains workers to be Microbial Warriors™, arming cleaning professionals with the planning, knowledge, and processes needed to respond to a biohazard crisis in the workplace.

GBAC-trained professionals bring increased value to their employers and customers because they demonstrate the competency to carry out their responsibilities and they have a commitment to the standards of excellence and continuous learning.

ISSA Online Learning Institute access includes:

GBAC Online Fundamentals Course
GBAC Webinar (free recording)
GBAC Forensic Restoration Guide (free download)

Online course includes:

- Preventative, response, infection control, and contamination control measures to known or potential infectious infectious disease outbreak situations. This section includes emphasis on the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).
- Importance of proper cleaning and disinfection for health.
- GBAC protocol for response and remediation.
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE), tools, and equipment.
- Cleaners and disinfectants based on the EPA’s Emerging Viral Pathogens Guidance in the United States.
- How international professionals can find information specific to their own countries.
- Key takeaways and frequently asked questions.
- Post-course test.
- Certificate of Completion awarded by GBAC, a division of ISSA.

Course Length: 2–3 Hours
$150 USD ISSA Members | $300 USD Non-Members

These fees provide a Certificate of Completion per individual. Contact us to learn more about volume-discount pricing for enrollments of 50 or more employees.

Visit www.issa.com/gbac-fundamentals for registration and information.