

Cleaning W.I.S.D.O.M. Webinar Transcript

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Six Ways To Improve Your University Cleaning Program

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Good morning and good afternoon. Thank you for joining EnvirOx's first cleaning professionals webinar. My name is Jeff Van Kirk and this is Welcome to Cleaning WISDOM – 6 Ways to Improve your University Cleaning Program. To give you a little info about myself:

- 12 years in the Jan/San industry working for EnvirOx.
- Sold and implemented 100s of accounts, focused mainly on K-12 and higher education facilities in both the United States and Canada. I have trained 1,000s of custodian professionals on product, process and cleaning best practices.

Just a quick note about how this webinar will work. If you have any questions or comments, you can use the private chat window to send us a message. We'll be answering technical questions immediately and the rest after the webinar. Throughout the webinar we'll be asking you questions via polls. We'll also be offering you some downloadable resources. You'll see all of that pop up in the chat window.

Today we're here to talk about the cleaning challenges that affect many of our customers:

- Colleges and Universities often have work spread out over buildings of different ages and material
- Budgets continue to get tighter.
- Turnover in the cleaning industry is estimated at as high as 200%.
- Feelings of being unappreciated and general low morale in the workforce.

WISDOM

This is where WISDOM is going to come in. As you can see, it's an anagram for six areas within your organization we suggest you take a look at. As we go along, I'll be asking you questions and getting your input via polls. This will really help shape the discussion. At the end of it, we'll give you some next steps so you can start making a difference in your own organization. Starting with waste.

WASTE

"Waste not, want not" is how the saying goes. We start with this topic because sometimes waste can be almost invisible. You've got:

- Wasted Time

- Wasted Supplies
- Wasted Energy

It all equals Wasted MONEY. Money that could be better spent elsewhere for new equipment or for hiring new staff.

Our first question:

How much cleaning product do you use in a month? Does it feel like too much?

While we wait for the poll answers, let's just discuss why it's so important to have a basic idea of how much product you should be using per month. If you don't have that, then it's hard to identify whether you're wasting product or not.

If you're in the group of people who don't have a good idea of how much product you should be using a month, there are ways to tackle this.

- As the manufacturer for an estimate. Most manufacturers will have calculators based on our facility size or number of students on how much product you should be going through.
- Conduct your own test for a week. Make sure staff is carefully following cleaning directions and standard practices. Then see how much you've used after a week.

So it looks like currently about half and half of you are regularly measuring your cleaning product usage.

Another great way of handling waste is using a closed loop system. These help prevent:

- splashback and spills – which could possibly create worker comp issues and lost time.
- It also prevents staff from freely pouring product to mix the in use cleaner, because we all know “more is better”, right? NOT TRUE. Overuse and heavily mixing cleaning product creates leftover soap residue. That in itself can create MANY problems such as buildup, dirty grout, streaking floors and windows (I can see almost see you guys nodding your heads out there) not to mention creating potential slip and fall situations when water is introduced to the soap residue. Talk about creating an ice rink, right?

Moving on to the “I” in wisdom

INPUT

Encouraging feedback is critical to creating a good working environment. Everyone likes to be HEARD!

So, our next question:

How often do you ask for feedback from your staff?

A gentleman by the name of Ron Segura wrote about his experience working as a manager of custodial staff for Walt Disney. We're talking about a huge space. 750,000 square feet cleaned by 92 in-house custodians. But when he started, the staff was a bit of a mess. He had:

- Ongoing conflicts between workers and supervisors
- Clashes between new hires and more seasoned professionals
- A general lack of respect for each other and the company.

So how did he solve this? With a suggestion box. It seems so simple. But it worked. He looked at all the issues as they came into him and he addressed each and every one of them. In a few months, the box wasn't even needed. The important step here is to RESPOND to the issues that are sent in. Non-response will potentially create a situation that is much worse than it started. Remember people like to be heard and this is a good method for them to be heard.

Let's look at our poll results. It looks like, wow, quite a few of you are asking for input on a daily basis. We've got 21% daily. 43% doing once a week and 32% quarterly. Those are pretty impressive numbers folks. I encourage you to keep doing that because it's how you're going to get better and how your team is going to get better.

So if you don't have a suggestion box, then put one out. Be sure it's:

- Anonymous
- Checked regularly
- You address all the issues raised

Remember, non-response can be harmful.

Beyond that, think of other ways you can ask for input, and do it **regularly**. It's important to keep it regular and sincere. People will know when you're not being sincere.

SAFETY

Moving on, the next one we'll talk about is safety. There are a lot of ways to talk about safety. You should make sure your cleaning staff is working as safely as possible. But in this case we're talking about how a custodial staff **keeps STUDENTS SAFE**. This is about everything you and your staff do to make student life better.

So let me ask...

What would you say is the biggest benefit you and your staff bring to your educational facility?

It could be keeping the campus attractive looking. Or it could be student performance. Some of you might have annual review periods where you get to talk about the job your staff does. Some of you may not. It might be that you don't really hear anything unless there are complaints. And trust me that's probably the one thing you do hear—complaints.

The idea here is to really understand yourself how much your staff contributes to student life. And it's a LOT.

Let's look at the poll. It looks like the vast majority of you – the benefit you provide is helping fight disease. You are absolutely on target there. Absolutely on target.

So it's all this and more, right?

- Cleaning is the first defense against illness.
- The common cold and asthma are two of the top reasons for “chronic absenteeism” for students. Good cleaning methods combat both of these.
- 20% of schools report having unfavorable Indoor Air Quality or IAQ. This is not great. You want to be sure your school does not fall into this.
- Improving IAQ improves standardized testing. Reports have it by as much as 14-15%
- Instructors miss an average of 5.3 Days a year at a **cost of \$29 BILLION**. If you want to talk about waste and wasting money, right?

You need to be sure your administration knows about all of this. They need to understand how important your job is. Some people might not feel comfortable about this, worrying that it seems like bragging. But it's not. When I'm out there and I'm training these custodians there are two things I tell them I can't live without in my life. One of them is my garbage man. A lot of you are probably out there laughing because you can't live without them either. The second one is the cleaning professionals in our space. You are the first line of defense stopping people from catching the cold or the flu. You're one of the most pieces of that prevention. You're actually doing your part to protect students and the university. To help with that, we've got a PDF for you. You'll see a link to download that now. It has some of these facts and more on it. Share it with your school's decision makers. Hang it up so your staff understands why their job is so important. Next topic...

DOLLARS (AND SENSE)

And this is the common sense variety of sense. Everything comes back to money in the end, right? You're going to be asked to cut your budget and tighten corners. It's just going to happen. The key here is to make sure you're doing it with as much info as possible so you can make smart decisions.

So our next question for all of you:

How much do you spend on your current cleaning product per quart bottle?

A little bit of a trick question here. You'll notice I didn't ask you how much you spend on a gallon of cleaning product. Or a case. I asked how much you spend on a bottle. Let's say it's a standard 32 oz. bottle. The reason I ask this is that there are companies that are great at

obscuring the true cost of your cleaning products. They offer cheap gallons or case prices, but once you dilute it down correctly, you'll see it's actually way more expensive per bottle.

If you're using ready to use products, then you're almost certainly paying more for a bottle than if you were using a concentrate. The cost difference can be as dramatic as paying over \$3 for a bottle of RTU when you could be paying less than 10¢ a bottle using diluted concentrate.

Ask your suppliers what the in-use cost of diluted quarts and gallons is to start the conversation and obtain the information you need to make good decisions. Trust me when I say your purchasers and financial officers will thank you for your attention to detail!

So let's look at this poll. It's pretty much all over the board. Some of you've got between a dollar and \$3. You've got 28% less than a dollar and 31% less than 10¢. That 14% who say I'm not sure out there. I encourage to ask those questions. Get in front of the sales professionals coming to talk to you. Give the manufacturer a call. They'll have that information for you.

OVERTIME

So the O in WISDOM - Overtime. This can be the nemesis of many cleaning staffs. Not only does it cost you more money, but if you have to pay it out regularly then it can really wear down your staff over time.

So question for you...

How much overtime does your staff typically work within a week?

If you're not sure about this, that's fine. Just answer with that. This is just a way for us to find out how much people are looking at this.

So whether you're good at tracking overtime or not, let's look at what contributes to it. Because, once you do know how much overtime your staff is working, you'll want to find ways to reduce it. Again, this is about more than just saving money. You're saving staff from burn out.

So as the poll results come in... and it so much fun watching this guys. I wish you could see it and watch these lines move back and forth. It looks like 30% don't work any overtime at all. Which is good for you. Congratulations. You probably have good cleaning products and methods in place. About half working 1 and 5 hours and the rest between 5 and 10. For those of you over that 15-20 hours mark, you'll want to really look at some of these ideas. And again, it's about more than saving money. We're trying to help save your staff from getting burnt out.

Three areas to think about:

Accountability – It's a little bit of a strange one. Not something you normally think about when it comes to overtime. Are cleaning staff held accountable for not finishing their work on time? If

they don't finish something, are they asked why? It doesn't need to be a combative situation. It can be just a simple question. Don't put emotion into it. Just ask them why they're working overtime. You're trying to help them do their job better and more effectively. Are you looking at why things like this are happening? Is the reason investigated to improve the situation? Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the day to day activities and forget to examine these issues.

Morale – We'll cover this in more depth in a bit. But realize that it's just as important to recognize that staff with lower morale often work slower or maybe even sloppier. It's just human nature. It's going to cause a lot more work for you.

Cleaning Methods – Are your products the best they can be? If they don't work well, then it might require re-work or re-application or just plain and simple more manpower to clean— good old elbow grease, right?— and could be eating into a worker's day.

And now our last topic,

MORALE

So, morale. The truth is, you can have:

- The best cleaning product
- The most efficient procedures
- the best equipment

But it's not going to matter if your team is annoyed, frustrated, or de-motivated. The work will suffer. Morale is probably one of your most important pieces to take a look at with your team.

So let me ask you...

Is your staff's morale currently high or low? Do you know? If you're not for sure that's okay.

As we wait for the answers to come into that poll, I want to point out how interconnected all these areas are. For instance, one of the ways you can combat low morale is by making sure you're asking for INPUT. Remember that suggestion box? Remember just asking the question? If they feel if you're genuine about asking, you'll get genuine answers.

A study showed that "1 in 4 workers who felt no support structure for adequate work-life balance planned to quit in the following two years."⁵

That's a really important statistic. Especially when you consider how high turnover is in the cleaning industry (200%) and that it **costs an estimated \$1000 to recruit and train replacement staff**. Trust me when I say it is much more cost effective to keep an existing team member than replace them.

So, it looks like a good percentage of you—44%—have a team that's in a high morale situation. You must be doing some of these things and you must be doing them on a pretty regular basis to achieve those numbers. We've got 36% that are in the low part. These ideas can really help you folks. We talk about that suggestion box and we think it might be a little silly. But if you're responding genuinely and sincerely to your team members they will know and you can do something about that. And for those of you that aren't sure, ask questions. We're going to be having a questionnaire that will pop up on your screen.

Take that questionnaire, download it and give it to your staff. Compare the answers. Once you truly understand what's driving how your employees are feeling, you'll be able to do something about it. This is also in the E-book we'll be offering at the end of the webinar that goes over all the material we've covered. The lower the score, the more work you have to do. But at least you'll know where you're at and where to start, and what you can do about it.

So, if you DO have low morale, what do you do?

- **Keep wages and benefits competitive.** This is a hard one. And this is an area that may not be fully in your control. But hopefully by helping to show why your staff is so important, you can help to make a case to those who do have these decision-making capabilities.
- **Try to promote from within.** It's not always clear in an organization if there are opportunities for advancement. And if you don't promote from within, that can make people feel like they have nowhere to grow.
- **Recognize outstanding work.** This can be done so many ways folks. This can be simple praise, You can do an employee of the month certificate, or do an award. Just do it regularly and do it with sincerity. Again, your team will know the difference.
- **Encourage feedback.** Here it is again! The old suggestion box. Or whatever works best for you. Just make sure you're out there getting the input from the folks that matter. Make sure you know they care about their job and their happiness in their job.
- **Company outings.** This used to be more of a prevalent thing. I'm an 80s child I remember growing up doing these types of things. But it has fallen by the wayside some. Which is a shame, because getting everyone involved together for some team-building or just hanging out can be a lot of fun. And it can go a long way to connecting the team. You can do some real simple things whether it's a cookout or sitting down and playing games together. The important thing is building teamwork.

NEXT STEPS

Okay, so where do you go from here? We have plenty of tools to help you. First of all, we've got a checklist you can download right now. Take stock of your own staff. What needs improvement? What can you do immediately? If you have quite a few different things, pick one or two areas and tackle those first. Trying to tackle everything at once is almost a recipe for failure. Save the rest for later after you have successfully overcome the first ones. Those most important ones. Remember, all of this is really connected.

Also, we've got an E-book available. We're going to put that link up now. And don't worry if you missed a download during the webinar. We'll be sending you links to it all after the webinar. And you can always go to www.enviroxclean.com/CleaningWISDOM and you'll find everything there too.

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Thank you very much and have a wonderful afternoon!