



By: Dave Frank

# Power in the people

*Leverage your workforce to enhance organizational performance.*

A company's most important asset is its people.

It is the well-trained and customer-focused workforce that makes an organization professional, nimble, and poised for growth.

Organizations must invest in their "human capital" — from hiring to training to the actual delivery of services — to ensure their employees are prepared to support and execute the organization's mission.

It sounds simple, but managing your organization's human resources requires constant effort as workforce challenges are ever-changing with the economy, labor market, and human demographics.

Regardless of the size or type of cleaning organization, a human resources policy and supporting documentation make up the necessary foundation for effectively managing employees, staying consistently focused, and enhancing organizational performance.

## The human resources policy

A human resources policy is a written set of guidelines that act as the central reference tool in the management of employees.

Depending on the size of your organization, you might simply obtain a copy of the policy from your human resources department.

If your organization does not have a human resources department, or even a policy, there are resources available to help develop a policy.

The Society for Human Resource Management offers example policies that can be tailored to any organization on its website ([www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)).

Organizations that comply with ISSA's Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) can explain how they developed their policies and how they were implemented.

They can also show how their policies reflect their organization's goals and ethics.

In addition to this foundation, organizations should have supporting written plans for hiring and selecting quality employees, employee orientation, employee retention, worker training and education, and a documented timekeeping and payroll system.

## Hiring and selecting quality employees

Bringing the right workers onboard is essential for minimizing employee turnover and running a high-performing cleaning organization.

This starts with a written recruitment plan that specifies which recruiting tools, such as advertising, job fairs, and referral bonuses, are most effective for the organization.

It also describes the organization's recruitment strategy.

A separate employee selection policy details who in the organization is responsible for interviewing potential employees, the number of interviews required for each candidate, and how applications and backgrounds are investigated and verified.

## Employee retention, orientation and training

Equally as important as employee selection and recruitment, an employee retention program is a valuable document for encouraging and measuring worker retention.

This program includes a method for calculating and recording employee turnover and retention rates.

It also describes the tools and methods the organization uses for retaining employees.

Moreover, every organization and facility site is different and has its own challenges, so it's imperative to have a site-specific orientation program for employees.

Site-specific issues to be documented include: Safety, access, emergencies, and other unique requirements.

From executives to management to frontline cleaning workers, organizations must have training and education programs for honing leadership skills and developing new skills for employees at all levels.

Documentation includes certifications and education from industry associations and in-house written curriculums for technical and procedural training on cleaning processes as well as customer service training.

Organizations also should keep copies of training materials and track training as it occurs.

## Timekeeping and payroll system

Finally, every organization should have timekeeping and payroll practices in place.

Records of each can be obtained from the organization's accountant or payroll department.

Managing human resources effectively starts with a policy and basic documentation of your organization's human resources practices.

To really leverage your organization's most important asset, build on this foundation by reviewing policies annually and working to improve human resources practices and programs, such as training, recruiting and retention.

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*Dave Frank is a 30-year industry veteran and the president of the American Institute for Cleaning Sciences. AICS is the registrar for the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard certification program.*