

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CLEANERS

This is probably the most important part of manual because your business hinges on supplying honest, reliable, pre-vetted part-time workers. Don't be tempted to take short cuts with the recommendations in this manual or there is a high probability that you will end up with egg on your face!

What Motivates People To Apply For Domestic Cleaning Jobs?

Let's face it cleaning someone else's house is not most people's idea of having fun or a fulfilling career. Yet there are some people out there that are very happy to be cleaners. What motivates them to do it? Let's look at some of the factors that may influence them:

- **Money**
They need money to supplement the household earnings. This might be for a holiday, treats for the kids or just making ends meet.
- **Part Time**
We are offering part time work which suits people who have to juggle running a home or picking up the kids from school.
- **Cash in Hand**
Your cleaners are paid in cash by the clients you allocate to them, so there is no need for a bank account or having to work weeks before they get paid.
- **High Unemployment / Competition For Jobs**
We live in times of high unemployment which makes it difficult to find regular work. You'll be surprised how many of your cleaners hold qualifications but have been unemployed for some time.
- **Cleaning Isn't Rocket Science**
Nearly everyone can quickly be taught to clean providing they are physically fit, methodical and motivated.
- **Boredom / Sense of Purpose**
Some people hate to be stuck indoors with nothing to do; they get bored and need to feel they have a purpose.
- **Recognition**
We all love to be praised and it is no different for cleaners. For some cleaners it means the world to hear their clients say 'I don't know how I would cope without you'.
- **Dislike of Supervision**
Many cleaners like the freedom of carrying out their work without a boss to answer to. Okay, the client is their immediate boss but they are often out of the house when the cleaner calls or just let them get on with things.

Who Wants To Be A Cleaner?

- Young mums whose children are at nursery or school.
- Mature women whose children have left home.
- Older women who can't find other work because of their age or lack of qualifications.
- Bored housewives.
- University students and young people trying to find their first job.

How To Find Cleaners

There is no shortage of people looking for the type of work you can offer, but your job is to find suitable applicants. The bad news is that on average for every 10 cleaners that make contact with your business, you will usually end up with 1 cleaner on your books. This is due to the necessary pre-vetting and filtering processes that exist to weed out unsuitable applicants. We cover this in a lot more details under the Cleaner Vetting section. Even when you think you have found a suitable cleaner they may leave at short notice because they don't get on with the client or just decide cleaning isn't for them. Why am I telling you this? Well I want you to understand that building your database of reliable and vetted cleaners is first and foremost a numbers game. It's like prospecting for gold - if you keep sieving you will eventually end up with golden nuggets. **These will be the cleaners that stick with you for years and become the bedrock of your business.**

There are many ways to advertise and find cleaners:

Local Newsagent Windows

This can be a good way to generate responses from a particular area. The rates may vary between 50 pence to a couple of pounds per week / fortnight. Here is an example of cleaner recruitment card:

CLEANER WANTED

- To clean private home in local area.
- Hours to suit, but must be reliable.
- Own car an advantage.
- Mature lady welcome.
- References required.
- £8 per hour.

Contact: Ann on 01234 567890

Top Tips:

- a) *In our experience this can be a little hit and miss, so keep records of where your responses are coming from so you can eliminate the newsagents that are not generating any leads.*
- b) *Once you know the outlets which are generating a steady flow of leads you should try to renegotiate the rate with the proprietor. Ask them what discount they will give you to advertise for a longer period, say one month or more. Your aim should be to reduce the rate by half, but if the agent usually has a full window this may be difficult to achieve.*
- c) *Ask the newsagent to position your advertisement at eye level if possible. Ads placed at the bottom of the window are less likely to be read.*
- d) *Try using luminous highlighter on your ad to make it stand out.*
- e) *Don't use your company name in the ad. Try to make it sound as it's a family looking for a cleaner.*
- f) *Experiment with using handwritten cards as this can work better in some areas.*

Local Newspapers

Compile a list of the local newspaper titles for the area(s) you want to target. Some of these will be free newspapers and some readers will have to pay for. Now go to the Job Recruitment section and take down the details of who to call at the newspaper if you want to place an advertisement.

<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Contact Name</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Circulation</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>Comments</i>

One thing you may notice is that some of the contact telephone numbers are the same. This is because many titles are owned by bigger groups. When you call you need to explain that you are just setting up a business and need some information. You need to find out the following:

- **The Distribution**
This is the area that the newspaper is delivered to or sold in, which should be broken down by town and postal districts, for example RH10 = Crawley. This information is important to you because you want to have a good match between the area(s) you cover and the newspaper's distribution.
- **The Circulation**
This is the number of copies distributed on average per period of time. In the case of local newspapers this is normally weekly. Circulation is one of the main factors used for setting advertising rates. Circulation is normally audited by independent bodies for

example ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulations) which provides a degree of comfort that the particular newspaper does indeed reach the number of people claimed by the publisher.

- **The Advertising Rates**

Ask the sales team to send you a 'rate card' which will detail out the cost of advertising per title under their control. With bigger publishers they may offer a rate for advertising in more title in their stable.

Top Tips:

- a) As with all advertising, you need to be able to pick out what works and what doesn't so when cleaners call you must try to find out where they saw your ad.*
- b) Drop any newspaper media that is not working for you.*
- c) Ask for discount if you commit to advertise for longer*
- d) Ask if the newspaper will run your press release for free if you advertise with them.*
- e) Find out the deadline for advertising copy. If you call them near to that time they will often slash rates if they have space to fill.*

Local Church, Parish or Village Magazines

This can be an inexpensive and targeted way to find cleaners. Contact the publishers, who might just be volunteers and tell them you are just starting your business. Ask if they can offer a special rate or suggest they come back to you if they have space to fill just before publication. You will be surprised how much discount you can get.

Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is a free and underestimated way to grow the number of cleaners on your books. Ask your friends and family to put the word out for you and make sure you tell everyone you meet that you are looking for good cleaners. Word will soon get round and it will pay dividends.

Recommendations From Your Existing Cleaners

Ask your cleaners if they know anybody who might want a job. This can be extremely powerful because they have first-hand experience of how your service operates and they are extremely likely to know people in a similar position as themselves. They can act as fantastic 'recruitment sergeants' for your business. I would go as far as offering them an incentive of say £20's worth of Marks & Spencer's vouchers for every cleaner they introduce to you that you start.

Nursery and Pre-School Groups

This can be a great place to find young mum's with a few hours on their hands who want to earn extra cash.

Immigrant Groups / Societies

The amount of immigration into the UK in recent years is well documented. Providing they can speak English to an acceptable standard, immigrant workers can make excellent cleaners. Just make sure you check their right to work in the UK.

Your Website

If you choose the subsidised website option, I provide you with a dedicated page to cleaner recruitment page.

Local Clubs & Groups

If you think there are local clubs or groups that may contain potential cleaners then ask them if you may display your cleaner recruitment card on their notice boards.

Public Notice Boards

If you have public notice boards in your area ask if you can add your card.

This above list is not meant to be exhaustive. Apply a bit of lateral thinking to your own area and you will probably find additional local places to advertise.