

CLEANING BUSINESS GOLD

HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL DOMESTIC CLEANING AGENCY

By

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CLEANING BUSINESS GOLD BLUEPRINT

General Information

I would like to congratulate you for making the right decision and purchasing this “business in a box”. It will give you an opportunity to be financially independent if you are prepared to put some work into it.

Hi, my name is Anna Ajina and I am behind this manual. For many years I have been involved in running this business myself so I actually know what I am talking about.

My parents have always told me that to be financially independent and not to live every month from hand to mouth you have to run your own business, no matter what. Taking this on board I have always done this and have a lot of experience of running different businesses, including this one.

Why do you think that I believe this business to be the best business in the world? Most businesses require you to have some money in the bank or to take a bank loan, and employ staff. Not this one. From my own experience I found this business to be the cheapest to start with, very flexible and easy to run and a potential of making you a lot of money. It is a repeat business – which means that for an initial effort of finding a client **you get money coming in every week**, every month and every year.

The business is very easy to run and requires only basic skills of reading, writing, adding up and communication. You will only need a telephone, a computer and printer and a couple of hundred pounds for printing some advertising leaflets. That is all! You will be your own boss – there is no one to answer to but yourself.

So, let's start. **Your destiny is in your hands.**



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION – THE BUSINESS

a) The business overview

b) Understanding the business

The business is run part time from home by investing **about 9 hours every week**, checking over the bank statements and answering calls. If you work during the day you can use a secretarial agency/ answering service to handle all your incoming calls during office hours or employ your wife or your husband.

New enquiries are fed through to you. You then can interview prospective workers (cleaners), allocating new and existing clients to workers as required and working mostly in the evenings for a few hours a week. If you wish, all this work can be delegated to part-time coordinators, each of whom is self-employed and has his/her own accountant. It makes especially good sense if you want to take this business into a franchise operation later on.

For any business to be viable in the long term it must have a wide and accessible and above all, sustainable level of demand. For any ‘opportunity’ to succeed, to make money and give satisfaction to its participants, it must sell to the end user.

This one does, it works, and it is enjoyable to run. Also, as you will learn, it is ‘delegateable’. In the earlier months you will be doing everything yourself. You have to learn. In the longer term you will be training others, and delegating most of the tasks you will learn in the first five months. This will enable you not exactly to sit back and do nothing, for there is no such thing as a completely ‘passive’ income. Yet this operation is one of those that most matches the description of a passive income. You can, if you wish, end up a manager of others rather than a ‘doer’.

At the moment there are a great number of people wanting work. So obtaining workers will be a lot easier than before. Now let us consider the ‘demand’. There are still a lot of people in full-time employment. They earn more per hour than a worker. As both have full-time careers, there is less time available to them – and they want to make the most of that time. A cleaner can be employed at a fraction of their hourly earnings to manage their home, handle the household chores, look after their children when they are out, sort out their cleaning, their ironing, babysitting, gardening, even taking their children to school.

Yet where do they obtain such a worker, someone who will come just for a few hours per week? They can't afford someone permanently, or live-in – they want someone part-time, someone inexpensive. Who do they get, who do they turn to? They haven't a clue (and they haven't got time to find out).

So where do they go for assistance? Your competitors? But they don't provide such a service. Aside from client's ignorance where to go, and the lack of any competition providing this specific service, what is even more interesting to note is that most of your potential clients won't even bother to look.

Fine, if a company happens along that will offer them what they require, they will use it. But they won't always go actively looking for someone to provide the service.

This is of **critical importance**, for you. For when you 'happen along' in the form of a leaflet through the prospective clients door, you will get a call – even if the potential client hasn't actively considered getting someone to help in their home before.

And if they already have a worker, they know full well their current helper may leave. From previous experience they know how difficult it is to get a replacement. So what do they do if they do if they already have someone? They keep your leaflet till the time when they need it.

So you are presented with a unique market. A service no-one else offers, or if they do, their charges are astronomical to cover their office overheads, PAYE, National Insurance, accountancy fees, advertising costs and numerous other expenses. A service no-one actively promotes, for they don't know how to make money at it and so do not consider it worthwhile. A service, which, when offered, arouses an immediate and a continuing response from interested customers precisely because they have never been offered the service before.

You are going to operate a domestic cleaning agency. Within two years you may have approaching 300 clients paying you each about \$69 per month, that is about \$20,800 a month, which means **\$249,600** a year paid **quarterly or monthly in advance by standing order**.

This depends entirely on how much time and effort you put in, but let's look at some basic average figures. For this example let us say you charge a rate of \$11 per hour and the cleaners are paid \$7 per hour, your profit is \$4. Most customers will book 4 hours per week. Using this as a basis, the table below will give you a rough idea of the potential earnings you can generate.

Month	Clients	Hours per week	Monthly income
1	16	64	\$1,109
2	32	128	\$2,218
3	48	192	\$3,328
4	64	256	\$4,437
5	80	320	\$5,546
6	96	384	\$6,656
7	112	448	\$7,765
8	128	512	\$8,874
9	144	576	\$9,984
10	160	640	\$11,093
11	172	688	\$12,202
12	188	752	\$13,312

Yes, there are other agencies around. **Yet this one is unique**, for no one offers this service in quite the way I do. I have got the system right. Because of this, you will be able to undercut the competition by half, at least.

How?

Because you will be operating as an agency, **not as direct employer**. You will have many workers clamoring for more work, referring other workers, and working directly for your clients at a fraction of the cost of an agency employing its own workers direct.

Unlike such an agency, which employs its own workers, you will have no PAYE or NI problems, because you will not be the employer. **Your clients** will be the direct employers.

Our competitors may be operating moderately successful business. Yet they are failing to watch their margins. Business is about one thing only at the end of the day – profit.

1. **You will be running this business from the comfort of your own home.**
2. **You will have no direct employees, so no PAYE or NI hassles.**
3. **You will have no office to rent, so no office overheads or rental charges – though you will be able to get a good accountant to legally avoid tax on part of your profits by counting “use of home as office,” as a legitimate business expenses.**
4. **Your advertising costs will be kept to the bare minimum – I will show you how to create client demand with attention grabbing leaflets costing only 1 pence each to have printed, yet securing a response ratio of one per hundred.**

This business could easily be run by one person, but a supportive spouse (male or female) would be an invaluable aid to you. You could share out the work represented here.

While others around us bemoan the recession and continue doing the wrong thing, trying to operate a business that just won't wash in the present climate, you sit quietly back and exploit the market place as it stands.

A small monthly agency fee is nothing when compared to the saving clients will make. And they know it. Meanwhile your own finances are sound as your **agency fee is paid quarterly or monthly in advance** (discourage payment by cheque, which is too much hassle) – no debt recovery or cash flow problems ever!

When calculating your hourly agency fee it has to be right. It is a question of balance. If you up the price of the clean you will get more staff wanting to do it but less customers willing to pay. Equally, a lower price will get more clients but no one will be able to afford to work for you.

Chapter 2 Domestic cleaning and beyond

- a) Cleaning for homeowners
- b) Managing your expansion

Domestic cleaning is a huge part of the cleaning industry and is our main focus, at least to start with.

Domestic cleans are usually categorized as follows. Cleaning provision for:

- homeowners
- letting agencies
- housing associations

We concentrate on cleaning for homeowners. It is a significant slice of the overall industry. Current estimates suggest that domestic cleaning is worth \$3 billion per year and that the sector is continuing to grow.

One reason this sector is growing is that more and more people have demanding careers – women as well as men. There is also more disposable income now, and people are less inclined to clean their own homes.

You will have to carry out some local market research to identify the target homeowners who may require this service. For example:

- upper/middle-class professionals
- young executives and professionals
- affluent elderly people.

The easiest and best way to attract business initially is through leaflet drops. I remember walking down the chosen road alone or with my son or daughter and putting leaflets through the door.

Later, when you want and are ready to expand you can go for cleaning offices, pubs and leisure premises, builders' cleans, cleaning new-build homes or commercial premises, cleaning for letting agencies or housing associations. You can also add other services like window cleaning, cleaning carpets and upholstery or specialist cleans.

Chapter 3 Starting up

- a) Becoming self-employed
- b) Naming your business
- c) Choosing your legal entity
- d) Working out the initial costs
- e) Decide where to base yourself
- f) Forget profit – chase success
- g) Using the telephone

There are many reasons you decide that you want to run your own business, for example:

- to improve your income significantly,
- be your own boss,
- to change your career path, or
- to take advantage of an opportunity.

This business is not a complicated business. Keep it simple. Remember, you are the key to your own success. Have faith every step of the way, think positively at all times and success will be yours. If you follow this course and get your business model right, the sky *really* is the limit.

It may sound a little extreme, but choosing the right name for your business really can make or break it. If you have a vague name, clients will not understand what it is you are offering and will naturally contact a company that ‘sounds’ like it offers the service you require. Try to avoid choosing silly or comedic names. This is bound to give impression that you are unprofessional and are not entirely serious about your business intentions. Also consider the Internet. Check that you can get an appropriately matched domain name. It will appear odd if your company’s name and the address of your website or email are completely different.

One of your important first decisions you have to take is to decide what type of legal entity your business will have. The options are:

- sole proprietor (or sole trader)
- partnership

- limited company or
- limited liability partnership (LLP)

Sole Trader

A sole trader is basically what the term itself suggests, a business owned and operated by a single person. As the sole owner of the business, you will have responsibility for the debts and liabilities accrued by your business. You will also retain ownership of the business's assets. The sole trader is generally regarded as the easiest of the four main entities to set up and operate because it does not need to constitute a special legal form. As a sole trader you are not governed by any special rules or regulations.

Partnership

A partnership comprises two or more individuals working together to run a business. Each partner has a specific role in the business and owns certain parts of the business and its assets. They also share responsibility for the company's liabilities. The allocation of ownership, responsibilities and liability should be set out in a partnership agreement because creditors have recourse to the personal assets of each of the partners, should they pursue debts owed by the partnership.

Limited Company

A limited company is a legal entity that exists under authority granted by statute. It has its own legal rights and duties and it carries its own debts. It is also liable for the tax on the income it generates and it must therefore file a tax return. In most cases the company's owners or shareholders are protected from the liabilities the company has. A limited company must adopt and file a 'memorandum and articles of association'. This governs the company's rights and its obligations to its shareholders, directors and officers. A limited company must also file a corporation tax return.

From the owner's point of view, the legal protection afforded by limited company status can be beneficial – you are not personally liable for the company's debts. Limited companies also have a number of other advantages, such as the ease of raising additional capital through the sale of share capital or by allowing individuals to sell or transfer their interests in the business. Limited company status also provides for business continuity – when the original owners retire they can choose to sell their shares, thus effectively selling the business on.

Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)

The limited liability partnership is a relatively new form of business entity that became available for use in 2001. The LLP offers not only limited liability but also tax benefits and great flexibility in its organization. It remains a separate legal entity from its owners/members. It is, therefore, responsible for its own liabilities and assets. This avoids the problems that can be experienced in a normal partnership whereby all the partners must be included in formal decisions and in signing legal or binding documents or agreements. What you gain in limited liability, however, you lose in terms of public information about your financial status. You are required to file audited accounts on an annual basis to Companies House, which include information that could potentially be considered private (such as profit share, etc.). The names and addresses of owners/members must also be filed.

Working out the initial costs of your business is very easy, especially if you base yourself at home, which is the most cost effective way to start your business. When you work from home, you should try to apply yourself to ‘work time’ without too much ‘home time’ creeping in. Set yourself a start time, a lunch period and a finish time as you would have in a normal job, and try to stick to these times.

If you prefer a virtual office, they are widely available and start from as little as \$40 per month. Contact your local business centers to find out their rates or contact a national business centre chain, such as Regus. Business centers also offer the additional option of you being able to hire their facilities, such as training or meeting rooms, when your home won’t quite give the right image.

If you are going to be working from home, you will require the following: a computer, internet access, a printer, a separate telephone line and a dedicated area to work in, such as a spare room.

Forget profit: chase success. Don’t be alarmed by this statement. While the focus of any business is ultimately profit – pure and simple – if you forsake any of the key requirements of running your business just for an extra couple of pounds profit, then you will not last long.

If you keep an eye on costs and make customers happy and focus on becoming the best and most successful at what you do, then profits will follow. There are a few tips for success when starting up a new business:

- Set yourself realistic targets. Break down longer-term goals into targets for this year, this month, and this week. Have a checklist of things to do each day.

- Think positively – congratulate yourself on all the things you have achieved rather than the few you haven't, and remind yourself that you have achieved something each day.
- Visualize success – think in terms of what you want rather than in terms of the obstacles in your way.
- Identify what really motivates you – money, independence, a fresh challenge? If it is money, then concentrate on the projects that give you the greatest returns. Likewise for challenge or independence.
- Take a step back. If a problem seems insurmountable, ask for advice from someone who works in a different industry. This should give you a different perspective on the problem.

First things first – naming your business. It may sound a little extreme, but choosing the right name really can make or break your business – if you have a vague name, clients will not understand what it is you are offering and will naturally contact a company that ‘sounds’ like it offers the services they require.

Try to avoid choosing silly or comedic names. This is bound to give impression that you are unprofessional and are not entirely serious about your business intentions. Please avoid using ‘Your Name Cleaning Services’. Using your own name as part of your business name is over done by many house cleaning businesses. Brainstorm and come up with a name that helps you stand out of the crowd.

At some point you can create your company's logo, which you can display on your letterheads, compliment slips, leaflets and business cards. Always remember that **YOU** are the best advert for your business. Meeting people and being polite, professional and presentable are simple things that will help people associate your brand with quality.

Using the telephone

There is nothing worse than calling a business only to be answered by someone who simply says ‘Hullo’. First, you will be unsure whether you have actually called a business at all and, secondly, you will be left feeling unimpressed and uninspired by the ‘company’ you were calling and potentially offering some business to. Think about what happens when clients call your business. How do you, or your staff (if you have any) answer the phone?

- First is the greeting. When answering the phone, make sure you identify yourself and your company.
- Secondly, consider keeping a phone diary – a simple pen and pad near the phone to jot down notes during conversations. This will help you to listen actively and you will also have something to refer to later.
- Employ active listening noises, such as ‘yes’, ‘I see’, or ‘great’. This lets the other person know that you care about what they have to say.
- Recap at the end of the call using your notes, and repeat any resolutions or commitments on either side to make sure you are both ‘on the same page’.
- End the call on a positive note. Thank the other person for their time and express an interest in speaking with them again. If not, just let them know you appreciated speaking with them and end the call.

Almost everyone has a mobile phone these days. You could, therefore, provide a mobile number on your business card or even as a secondary contact number in printed materials. However, to have a mobile number as your main business contact number looks a little unprofessional, and gives your clients the impression you are a ‘one-man band’ who probably does not have the resources to meet their needs.

When your company grows, consider purchasing a proper business telephone service. When your clients call, your phone will not ring: your clients will go instead to a welcoming automated message that will provide them with a few options. For example:

‘Thank you for calling The Cleaning Company. If you would like to speak to the office, press 1. If you would like to apply for a cleaning job, press 2. If you are a current client and would like to place an order, press 3. If you would like to leave a recorded message, press 4’.

It is more than likely that, whatever option is chosen, the call will go to the same person. But that is not the point. The first impression will be that your company sounds extremely professional and perhaps larger than it actually is. The other facilities this service offers include a musically backed ‘hold’ facility, as well as voicemail and call transfer, etc. These are all small things that will help to create the right image for your company and that will promote your brand.

Chapter 4 Keeping your clients happy

- a) Ensuring clients satisfaction
- b) How clients regard cleaning
- c) Anticipating typical complaints
- d) Keeping your clients informed

This chapter looks at your potential clients. It should help you to understand them better because each client is different and will need to be treated differently.

The term ‘client satisfaction’ may be something of a cliché, but it is an inescapable fact that satisfying your clients is your **main goal**. Without clients you will have no business, staff can be replaced and profits can eventually be made or increased but, without clients, you have nothing. So what are the key things your clients will expect of you as a service provider? You will:

- be presentable and attentive in all your dealings,
- make time for them as and when they require you.
- listen to their concerns with both genuine interest and empathy,
- be proactive in dealing with requests, complains and all correspondence,
- provide feedback or follow-up to them about anything you are working on,
- be quick and responsive with all the dealings with them.

Because cleaning is regarded a cost burden by most clients, the service you provide should be perfect. Different types of cleaning will generate different types of complaints. Before you take on a client, make sure you have considered the following:

- the job requirements
- the client’s pet hates and annoyances
- that you have gone through all the above with your cleaners.

In order to anticipate problems on an ongoing basis you should regularly obtain feedback from your clients and cleaners. You may be surprised to find that some clients will have a long list of complaints

they have not called you about. These situations warrant careful attention because clients who have lists of complaints but who have never contacted you regarding them are generally the clients who cancel completely out of the blue.

When you receive a new enquiry and the potential client is interested in your service you take her/his name, address and telephone number and say that you will send her information pack. This will consist of the Introduction Letter, the Agency Terms of Agreement forms (2), the Information for Clients and the Domestic Cleaning Checklist as well as a monthly and quarterly standing order forms filled by you – your client will choose one and discard the other. The chosen form and your part of the agency terms of agreement form signed and dated by the client should be send back to you as soon as possible.

It is very important keeping your clients informed about any changes to cleaning routines and changes in cleaning staff due to sickness or holidays.

Remember, the whole point of keeping your clients informed is to show both you and your business in a good light. It is a demonstration of the effort and application you are providing to your clients to give them your best possible level of service.

Chapter 5 Managing your cleaners

- a) Engaging cleaners
- b) Finding cleaners
- c) Motivating cleaners
- d) Conducting interviews
- e) paperwork

The most important thing to remember here is that the cleaners working in your domestic cleaning business will be **self-employed cleaners** working as freelancers. In this way you do not have to worry about paying them and dealing with their insurance contributions and tax or sickness and holidays. At one swift stroke you get rid of a huge headache and a big problem. Imagine, you do not have to see them every week and pay them their money. Your client does this by paying them every time they clean their house or once a week or whatever arrangement they agree. You see your cleaners only **once**, when they come to see you to be interviewed and fill the company Application Form. When you arrange to see them and fix a date and an appointment time, ask them to bring with them:

- their ID (passport, driving license),
- proof of their current address (utility bill),
- 2 written references with clear name, address and a phone number,
- one passport photograph,
- Police check
- \$20 for a key deposit (optional). Quite often a client will give a cleaner a key to his house. If a cleaner loses his key, this money would be for replacing a lost key. When the key is never lost and the cleaner doesn't want to work for you any more, this money would be returned to her.

You will have a sample of a company Application Form, which you will find at the end of the manual, as well as a sample of cleaning personnel database.

You have to photocopy their passport or driving license and proof of their address but retain their written references and the photo which you attach to the application form. If you do not have a

photocopying machine, ask them to bring an original document as well as a photocopy. At some point you have to check their references by telephoning the person who gave reference and ask a few questions about their standard of work and reliability.

During an interview you ask them to fill an Application Form and talk to them about their work experience and their preferred working hours and areas. Ask them also if they want to do some ironing for a client if he/she wants this to be done as a part of our service. You can also talk about the expectations you have of the staff who work for you.

The best motivation for the cleaners, from my experience, is the right hourly pay. To attract good workers in the first place offer them 20% above the going rate. The more they get, the less you will have problems with retaining them. You tell them that the client will pay them either each time they come or once a week or whatever they arrange among themselves. Because the cleaner sometimes will have to travel some distance to the client and pay for the public transport, I suggest a minimum of working time should be **at least three hours**. When you have a potential client for your cleaner, you inform the cleaner about her first engagement – it could be just a short visit to the client's house where the cleaner could see the house and arrange first cleaning day, or to come and perform first time cleaning. Remember this work is a general domestic cleaning and in some cases some ironing as well, performed every week. Some clients will require a cleaner just once a week and some clients will want cleaning done twice or three times a week. How many hours a week one job takes will be pre arranged at the start between yourself and a client.

You have to insist that after a cleaner goes for the first time to see our client she calls you and tells you about the outcome of this meeting. If the client wants her to start there, which days and hours she will be working there. If the client doesn't want her to start, you have to know this and offer this client another cleaner. So keeping in touch is very important. Tell the cleaners that if they move or change their phone number, they must notify you about this straight away!

Finding cleaners is not a big problem. Advertising in the area where your new business is located is perhaps the best way to find cleaners. Very few cleaners will drive to their cleaning shifts and fewer still will travel long distances on public transport for what, more than likely, will be a short (minimum of 3 hours) cleaning shift.

Local shops and post offices have notice boards or card boards for adverts, as do some supermarkets. You should target all these. In most of these places you can advertise for free and the ones that do

charge are normally quite cheap – about one or two pounds for a couple of weeks’ or a month’s advertising. You should receive a good response if you advertise this way.

Your advertising card will probably be handwritten and may look something like an example given below. Make sure it is general and informal – just the basics to create some interest and to persuade potential staff to phone you. When they do phone, ask them where they saw the advert. This will help you to assess the best locations to place adverts in the future.

Example of an advert:

Cleaning Staff Required

Local area – immediate start

Monday to Saturday

\$X.00 per hour starting rate

Must be reliable and hard working

Contact Y for more details on:

0101 777 0000

Very often, cleaning staff know other cleaning staff. You will be surprised how successful word-of-mouth recruitment can be and, of course, it is free.

Should all the above fail, you could consider advertising in local newspapers and on the Internet. Most newspapers run a jobs available section that includes small classified adverts. While there will be a fee to pay to advertise in a newspaper, your advert should be seen by a large number of people,

There are various websites where job adverts can be placed. Some of these are expensive whereas others are free. The best thing to do, therefore, is to surf the Internet to find out what types of classified and community based websites are most appropriate for your needs.

Choosing the right place for an interview

While your business is small and growing, you will most probably still be working from home and may be uncomfortable with the thought of interviewing people there. If this is the case, consider holding

your interviews in a public place, such as a coffee shop, café or restaurant. Starbucks and Brewers Fayre are ideal meeting places and can come across as both informal and professional.

Chapter 6 Organizing your first cleaning account

- a) First telephone conversation
- b) Sending an information pack
- c) Follow up conversation
- d) Arranging the start day and payment

When a potential client telephones you for the first time, try to find out about their needs and wants. How big is their house or flat? How many hours a week they might need a cleaner for and when, as well as whether they would like some ironing done for them? Remember, for the reasons mentioned above – 3 hours a week in one session is a minimum you can accept. Ask them, how soon they would like someone to start. Take their name, address and telephone number and say you will send them a pack of information and all the forms needed. Tell them how much the cleaning will cost per hour, how it is paid and the options of payment. Tell them about our insurance in case of damage by the cleaner. If they would like a cleaner to start soon, arrange the day and time of the first meeting with a cleaner and ask the client whether this meeting is going to be just a chat or a full cleaning shift.

Send an information pack and forms as soon as possible. All the forms are included in an appendix. The pack will consist of cleaning agreement with your agency – 2 copies, one is yours and one is theirs, general information and forms related to payment. **The main point to remember here is as follows:** if the hourly payment for cleaning or cleaning and ironing work is for example \$11, the client will pay \$7 per hour directly to a cleaner each time she comes, or once a week if she comes twice or more times a week, whatever is agreed. The remaining \$4 per hour will be paid to the cleaning agency (you) by **standing order, monthly or quarterly**. If they want to pay monthly it would be slightly more expensive. Paying by cheque every month is discouraged as it is too much hassle for you to keep an eye this. Make it much more expensive.

If you haven't arranged for a cleaner to start shifts – because a client wanted more information before deciding whether to subscribe to your services – a few days after posting your information pack you should telephone a client to find out if she/he is still interested in your offer. If a client is interested in having a cleaner, arrange the first meeting between them. If not, ask a client to keep your details handy just in case she might need a cleaner at some point in the future.

Chapter 7 Ensuring quality of service

What clients want and cleaning checklist

Dealing with problems - insurance

As mentioned before, clients are your business. Keeping your clients is equally as important as finding new ones, and you can only retain your clients through good and consistent levels of service. Most clients only require the following from a cleaning service:

- Clean premises.
- A competitive price.
- An understanding of their needs and expectations – you understand not only your own business but also theirs.
- A consistent cleaning service: same cleaner, no days missed.
- To be kept informed.
- That comments, queries and complaints are dealt with and rectified the first time of asking.
- Support and attention, when required.

In most cases, if you attend to these requirements, you will retain your clients. Despite your best efforts, however, there will be occasions when your relationship with a client breaks down: unreasonable and demanding expectations, change in financial circumstances, the client does not tell you about the problems they are having with your service and cancels out of the blue without giving you an opportunity to rectify these problems.

It is a good idea to have a domestic cleaning checklist (a sample copy is in a bundle of supplied documents). The householder can tick boxes of work required to be done and the cleaners can tick them when completed.

Always insist, that if a cleaner for any reason cannot get to their assignment, they will let you know about it or telephone a client and offer their explanation and a different time or day as a substitute for the time missed.

Arranging insurance

You will need to have insurance cover for your cleaning service. Shop around through brokers to get the best quotations. The insurance will provide you with Public Liability and Employer Liability (called combined) and should cover against accidental damage caused by your cleaners. Some policies have a flat fee but you may find that this is not possible and the premium you pay may depend on how many cleaners you have and anticipated number of clients. Arrange for your payments to be monthly to spread the cost. Watch out for the **excess** on the policy. If you expect the excess to be paid by your clients in the event of a claim, then you should make that clear in the documentation you send to your clients otherwise you would need to absorb the cost of any excess. Usually the insurance will cover damages over \$100 but not below \$100.

Chapter 8 Sales, marketing and advertising

- a) Marketing and advertising
- b) Referrals
- c) Stationery and promotional material

You may consider this is the most important chapter in the manual, for without clients you have no business. This business and the system I am introducing to you are certainly the right things, inasmuch as they will help you increase your income, but only if you ‘pace’ yourself. Allow yourself time to get into the rhythm of things. Take one step at a time, pausing to backtrack every time you feel the need. Above all plan your activities, hold on to your objectives. Have a weekly and daily plan. Never rush your progress. A learning curve is normal – we all take time to learn something new. Some take longer than others; they are the ones that normally go the distance though. In your own case you may be quick, or you may be a little slower. Never be afraid to slow down if you need to – though don’t confuse a brief pause with giving up, either. Above all be patient and have a plan. You will only succeed at this business, really succeed, if you know where you are going. If you have an objective. Millions don’t; you, I hope, do. This business is a means to an end, but you must have a clear idea of what you want that end to be.

This chapter is all about the marketing strategy you will need to adopt quickly to acquire the right number of clients to cover your initial expenditure and realize your future profits. Unlike many businesses, which take anything from three to five years to make a real profit, we are looking at one year start-up plan. This does not give you a great deal of time to break into profitability. Nevertheless, we are more ambitious than most businesses, and so you should be. Ambitious yes, dreaming about making it, no. Working along a constructive plan of action, yes. Just thinking about it, no.

I have over the years looked at and experimented with various methods of advertising. What has worked for me may not work for you and conversely, what has failed to work for me, may be good for you. In the final analysis I have found **only one method works – leaflet distribution**. In all advertising it is **targeting** that counts. Our requirement is to target the right people accurately, at the right time. This is a need that only door-to-door leafleting can really answer.

The response from a professionally produced, well targeted and above all, **attention grabbing leaflet** is far and away the best you will obtain for your money across the whole of your advertising spend in this business.

I would not recommend you rely on photocopies. You will need to encourage your prospective clients to hold on to your leaflet for as long as possible. My research shows the thicker the card, within reason of course, and the better quality the leaflet, the longer the prospective client will hold on to it. Subsequent research has revealed which leaflets had the longest ‘shelf life’; the better quality ones won through each time.

Dropping off leaflets is a tedious task. I know, for I have done it. Remember, I started this business totally on my own. I would go out and deliver those early leaflets myself or with my son or daughter. This task is the most vital and the most proactive marketing task, so you cannot delegate it to someone you cannot trust.

You also must be able to perform fully and to perfection every task that you will ultimately delegate to others. For without personal, first hand, experience of everything you intend to delegate, you cannot honestly hope to instruct others below you to perform the same tasks to maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

You were told at the start of this manual that you would be running this business from the comfort of your home, but you must understand, first you simply have to get out there and deliver the cards yourself, personally. Only then can you hope to train others – and judge whether or not they are doing a good job.

Once you have learned how long it really takes to deliver a stack of leaflets in a particular stretch of road, both sides, up one side and back down the other, as one person on your own, you can begin to judge whether a workers claim to have delivered the leaflets in a particular area, and their claim for hours worked, is valid or make believe.

As a general rule, you should not expect a leafletter to be effective for more than two hours leafletting – three at the most. Also, it is unusual for much more than 100/150 leaflets to be delivered by one person in an hour, assuming one or two leaflets at most are dropped into each flat or house, and assuming the properties are reasonably closely standing.

It is not enough for you to learn all about leafletting techniques yourself, you have still to train your leafletters. Yes, you will know what to say, you will know what to do to monitor their performance, but you will not have covered the most vital aspect of leaflet distribution. What is this? It’s motivation.

Only when you have incentivized your people to learn from you will they do so.

To learn, your workers must be encouraged to want to learn. Before I can get the man to listen to me, to learn from me, I have to show ‘what’s in it for him’. You have to motivate your leafletters to learn from you. You have to motivate them. Make it quite clear what’s in it for them. Tell them the response ratios and conversion ratios that you enjoy – keep records so you can back up your claims.

Explain how if they get the same response ratios, they will earn an extra \$xx.xx per y leaflets dropped. They can also claim x pounds commission for each new client brought by their leaflet. They will come back for more and subsequently they will make sure that the ‘drop’ is not only done, but done selectively.

That’s the ‘carrot’ – don’t forget the ‘stick’ also – make quite clear that you know what response level to expect, and you know how long it should take to deliver the leaflets; you’ll know if they aren’t delivering. If you work to an estimate of just 1% as a success rate your 10,000 flyers will deliver 100 paying customers. **Persistence** is the key to your marketing being a success.

In the first year (if you aim at being a big business) you should be delivering around 4000 leaflets/flyers a week, this rises to 5000 in the second year and 6000 in the third year.

Later on, after learning yourself “the art of leafleting” you can consider using other businesses which let you piggy back on their own distribution network for a small fee which will save a lot of time. Try your local newspaper or ask the local takeaway to put a flyer in with every delivery. You can also use specialist firms which just deliver leaflets to homes (JogPost).

Referrals

For an established agency, there is even larger source of clients – referrals.

Once you have built up your client base to a reasonable level you should expect to get a larger proportion of your new clients from referrals. It is worth making some sort of special offer to existing clients to encourage them to give you referrals at an early stage. You can offer some money for any referrals that lead to business, provided that both the referred and the referring client are both paying the agency fee and have been doing so for at least three months.

So, referrals represent the best value in three ways:

- 1. They have already been pre-sold on the agency and how it works by a friend in whom they have trust.

- 2. They know about the agency fee and other terms in advance and so do not need to be told – or ‘sold’ to, again.
- 3. They cost nothing to obtain, other than what you decide to pay the client in referral bonus.

Organizing stationery and promotional materials

Anything that carries your company’s name, services and contact details may be regarded as promotional material. If you have the budget, pay a printing company to produce your promotional material for you, but avoid ordering too much. Alternatively you can design and print your documents from your computer as and when you need them.

The following are some of the business stationery and promotional items you might require:

Business cards

Letterheads

Complements slips

Flyers and leaflets

Website

Chapter 9 Managing finances

Creating a business plan

Choosing a bank

Bookkeeping

Managing finances is a crucial part of your business. You should try to develop a head for figures in order to manage your business properly, both on a day-to-day and long term basis.

You should open a separate bank account for your business. It is often not the best decision to stick with the bank that holds your personal current account: business banking is extremely competitive, so shop around and compare the products and services that are on offer. Also remember that you are not committed to a bank for life. Changing banks after your business is well established, however, is a quite difficult task, so take your time and choose wisely.

Online banking should be considered because it saves time and allows you to pay your bills and set up direct debits.

Overheads are the operational costs of running your business (for example, accountancy fees and advertising costs). Because overheads do not yield any direct profits, how you manage them will have a direct bearing on how profitable you are. You should, therefore, monitor your overhead costs and continuously look for ways to reduce them.

Bookkeeping is the recording of all the financial transactions you undertake in the running of your business. It can be performed using pen and paper but, with the growing complexity of tax regulations and to minimize errors, accounting software is increasingly being used. You may also think about using the services of an accountant/bookkeeper.

It is very important to create your business plan. It allows you to put your ideas on paper so that you can start to allocate costs and draw together the information you require to set off on the right foot. One of the reason you want to have a business plan is that part of it looks at the goals aimed for (how many clients you want by the end of month three, month six, month nine, end of the first year etc), resources required and the development expected – in other words, where you want to go and how you are going to get there. This will help you to understand the challenges ahead and to find success.

Chapter 10 Tax

Income tax

Claiming capital allowances

Working out your business expenses

Each year you will be required to complete and return a self-assessment tax form. Self-assessment returns are issued in April each year and cover the year from the previous 6 April to the current 5 April. You will normally receive a tax return through the post. However, you are legally responsible to make sure you have one if this does not happen. To start with, you will receive the basic self-assessment form (SA100), which contains a great deal of information applicable to everyone. Further to this, you will require supplementary pages that are based on your legal entity. The most common supplementary pages are as follows:

Employment (SA101): if you are an employee or company director.

Self-employment (SA103): if you are a sole trader.

Partnership (SA104): if you are self-employed in a partnership.

If you fill in your return on paper and you want HMRC to work out how much tax you owe, you must send it back to HMRC by 30 September. If you send it back later than this, you will have to do your own calculations. If you choose to complete and file your return online, however, the system will work out and immediately show you how much tax you owe or are owed. In any case, your return must reach HMRC by 31 January. If you miss this deadline, you will be liable to an automatic penalty of £100. You may also be charged additional penalties and interest on any overdue tax payments.

Do not worry overly about completing these forms – your accountant should be able to assist you, if required. They seem very long but are actually quite straightforward, once you understand which sections apply to you. If you do your best to keep all your deduction records, this will help you enormously.

Working out your business expenses

Whichever way you set up your cleaning business, whether it is a limited company, a partnership or sole trader, you must consider which business expenses are allowable and should be reported.

Your business expenses will fall into one of two categories for the purposes of self-assessment: allowable and non-allowable. Broadly speaking, you can deduct from your turnover all the costs you incur for the sole purpose of earning business profits. These are known as allowable expenses. The following are some examples of the types of cost that are allowable as legitimate types of business expense:

- The rental of business premises.
- Electricity for heating, lighting and manufacture.
- Vehicle expenses.

If you claim for vehicle expenses, you must remember that, if the vehicle is also used for private use, only the business proportion of the use counts as an allowable expense.

Chapter 11 Controlling debt

Managing credit

Pursuing debt

As it is a cash business you will very seldom encounter a situation that you are owed money. But sometimes it happens. If you are in the right, you simply write a letter to your client pointing out politely the dates and an amount owed, and ask for the money to be paid to you. If they don't respond you could send a second letter giving them 10 days notice and telling them that you are prepared to go to small claims County Court to get your money. In most cases such a letter is enough to get your money back.

Chapter 12 Managing your expansion

- a) Retaining your clients
- b) More clients
- c) Property services
- d) Offering additional services
- e) Franchising

Client retention is extremely important for success. Poor retention means that any new clients that are added are simply replacing ones lost, with the result that you are merely trading water, not growing.

The following, therefore are the tips on retention clients:

- **Market to your existing clients:** your current customers are already doing business with you. Focus most of your time, efforts, and resources on better serving your current clients.
- **Be consistent in your approach and interactions:** treat your clients with honesty, humor and respect – and maintain this over time. If you are consistent with them over time, they will see you as dependable, credible and trustworthy.
- **Follow through on your commitments:** if you promise to send information or to follow up, do it. You will gain loyalty and trust by always doing what you say you will do.
- **Connect with your customers:** find out about their lives, their hopes, goals and desired outcomes. Ask questions that encourage a deeper sense of shared understanding. The greater the level of connection, the greater the mutual satisfaction.
- **Have fun:** it's easy to get caught up in goals, outcomes and deliverables. Of course these are important, but clients also want to work with people who enjoy what they do. The more fun you can have while providing strong outcomes, the longer your clients will stay.
- **Position yourself as a resource for life:** let your customers know you will be around for a long time. Let them know they can get back to you whenever they need you. This can help to differentiate your company from your competitors, who may just be in it for the short term.
- **Ask them for feedback and input:** at some point in the working relationship, solicit feedback. Ask your clients how they feel about working with you and ask if they have suggestions for how

the working relationship or outcomes could be improved. Asking for their ideas shows that you care about their opinions and value their contributions.

- **Share resources:** do you know of a good book your clients might benefit from reading? Tell them about it. Do you have the name of someone who could help a client move ahead on their business plan? Tell them about it. Sharing resources is a terrific way to build loyalty and satisfaction.
- **Reward them for staying with you:** consider implementing a loyalty scheme where long-term clients are rewarded for staying with you. You might offer them gifts, products, or services for a certain level of ongoing participation with your business.
- **Keep learning:** the more you focus on gaining new knowledge, skills and experiences the more you have to offer your clients. The more you have to offer, the more they will benefit. The more they benefit, the longer they stay. Keep focused on your own professional growth and learning. Both you and your clients will benefit.

Finding more clients

More regular leaflet drops in appropriate areas.

Additional services

I am talking here about the opportunities beyond domestic cleaning. Using the same cleaners you could target estate agents or letting agents. Or to improve your profit margins you could use the same clients but different services.

To provide a cleaning service, you do not need to be a cleaner yourself. Similarly, to provide an electrical service you do not need to be an electrician. When you deliver multiple services to your clients you will find you are:

- tapping into much greater profit margins;
- receiving additional work and income; and
- expanding your knowledge and abilities outside cleaning.

Most of your clients will have experienced difficulties in finding good and reliable tradespeople. Such problems cause anxiety and, even though a client may use one company for all their servicing requirements, they may still experience difficulties. You can offer your clients various add-ons that will not only provide them with a better service but will also yield high profits.

As you develop this side of your business, you should try to provide the following services:

- General reactive and planned maintenance services- a handyman service. For this service you can charge anything from \$20 to \$25 per hour, but you need to pay your directly employed general maintenance staff only marginally more than the minimum wage.
- Window cleaning
- Electrical and plumbing services.
- Flooring, partition wall and suspended ceiling services.
- Portable appliance testing.
- Small building and civil work.
- Refurbishment work.
- Blacksmith and welding services.
- Roofing maintenance and repairs.
- Painting and decorating.

This may seem like a big list but, once you have found the right subcontractors, you will find it is not difficult to manage.

Franchising

Once you have a successful cleaning business model you might want to take it up to a franchising stage nationwide. Each franchisee will be paying you a percentage of his/her earnings each month and every month and, in most cases, there will be various other fees to pay, such as:

- the initial investment and intellectual property fees, let's say \$10,000;

- monthly royalties on net turnover – generally 10-15%;
- advertising and marketing fees; and
- management fees.

Franchising is a very popular way of starting up in business: those people who are concerned about their expertise in a specific business area appreciate the security a franchise can offer because they are buying into what is already a successful business model and sometimes there are no sales requirements or the need to find new clients.

Chapter 13 - Selling Up



Even when you are just starting your own business it is good to think and plan for a time when you would like to sell it. You may not be planning to sell but things can happen that will change your mind. You might like to start another business or never have to work again? Running a business is exciting , but you might find you get bored. Your business will not flourish if you are bored!

Even if you cannot imagine selling your business, make sure it is attractive to buyers. There are lots of factors that buyers will use to work out the value of your company. Here are some things you can do to make your company look better to someone who is shopping for a business.

Profits – It is obvious that a potential buyer will want to buy a profitable company. They want to see that you make money consistently and that if they take over, those profits will stay consistent. They also want to see there is potential for profits to grow.

Staff – If you run your business yourself you will have the blueprint of how to run your cleaning business already written down. The new owner will have every procedure written and you can train and motivate him yourself.

Repeat customers – If you have created an army of loyal customers that is very valuable. As long as your buyer maintains your levels of service then it will not be hard work keeping those customers.

Location – If you run your business from home this will be a great asset which means that your potential buyer will save money from day one in not having to invest capital in some expensive premises.

What type of buyer?

So who are your potential buyers? Anyone could be a prospect. A buyer can come from your employees, your customers or competitors. People buy businesses for different reasons, and this will affect how you pitch your business to them.

Finding a buyer

You may end up in the very lucky position of being approached by a buyer. If they come to you that's great. But what if they don't and you want to sell? Start with informal chats with people in your network – your workers or your competitors. Talk to your accountant or your banker. They will have large networks and deal with all kind of businesses. They may make a good matchmaker for you. If you have grown enough to worry your competitors then you could approach them directly. If spending money on you gives them more space in the market and more control it may be worth their while.

If you don't strike lucky with those routes you can approach an agent or a broker that specializes in selling businesses.

Once you sold your business and have the money, enjoy it, enjoy your family, and move on!

Appendix – Useful forms and documents

1. Agency Introduction Pack

- a/ Introduction letter
- b/ The Agency terms of agreement forms
- c/ Information for clients
- d/ Domestic cleaning checklist

2. Bank Standing orders

- a/ Monthly standing order
- b/ Quarterly standing order

3. Forms relating to cleaners

- a/ Cleaner's terms of agreement
- b/ Cleaner interview & allocation form and section for agency use only form
- c/ Information for cleaners
- d/ Cleaner record form

4. Other forms

- a/ Client record form
- b/ Leaflet drop report sheet
- c/ Sample leaflet – if preferred you could have some picture or graphics on the front of the leaflet and everything else on the back. At the bottom of the back side you could also add: If you know anyone who would like cleaning or ironing work please have them call our WORKER INFORMATION LINE on (your phone number).

Agency Introduction Pack

a/ Introduction letter

b/ The Agency terms of agreement forms (2)

c/ Information for clients

d/ Domestic cleaning checklist

Your Agency Name

Address

Tel :

Thank you for your recent enquiry for a cleaner from (*Your Agency Name*).

I understand that you now employ, or will shortly be employing, one of our cleaners for general household duties. I hope that you will find the arrangement satisfactory. If you are not happy, or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above number.

Our workers' terms are ----- per hour. This is paid to the worker direct.

Membership of (your Agency name) is ----- per month for ----- hours a week service (----- per hour) - provided our fee is paid by quarterly standing order mandate. The fee is ----- if paid by monthly mandate and ----- if paid by monthly cheque in advance.

You will find various enclosures with this letter. Please could you complete both copies of the Terms of Agreement Form, retaining one copy for yourself and sending the other, together with the completed Standing Order Mandate of your choice, to me at the above address. The Mandate can be cancelled at any time and represents the most convenient way of remitting the monthly agency fee.

Please note that it is often advisable to write down in detail exactly what work you require so that your cleaner can follow a regular routine. Also we are very happy to receive referrals.

May I take this opportunity to welcome you as a client of the agency, (your agency name), (your town's name) most selective agency. I look forward to hearing from you shortly. Please return the enclosed forms within seven days - thank you.

Yours sincerely,

(Agency Name)

(YOUR COPY - RETAIN)

ADDRESS:

THE (Agency name) TERMS OF AGREEMENT FORM

Please return this form within seven days of receipt. The details requested below are essential when the time comes to replace your cleaner as we can more easily match your requirements to the right type of worker.

MONTHLY CHARGE : This covers the agency fee and varies according to the chosen method of payment, as follows - please tick relevant method:

BY CHEQUE IN ADVANCE \$---- PCM

BY MONTHLY MANDATE \$---- PCM

BY QUARTERLY MANDATE \$---- PCM

The agency fee covers replacement of your cleaner when yours departs or goes on holiday etc. We would need at least a week notice. Insurances as per the '(Agency name) Agreement' are held by the Agency. Out of the agency fee we can fund advertising for new cleaners plus vetting, selection, telephone bills, clerical and myriad other costs that are involved in keeping you supplied with an honest, reliable and competent cleaner.

We do discourage clients from paying their fee by cheque as our clients would rather we spent our time servicing their needs rather than servicing our cash flow needs - invariably clients who pay by cheque forget about the fee and chasing up such small amounts is a slow and costly exercise likely to increase our expenses and, consequently, our charges.

Mostly our clients choose the quarterly mandate - as banks may make a charge for every transaction on some accounts this mandate not only reduces the fee but can save on your banks charges.

YOUR NAME:

YOUR FULL ADDRESS:

Tel:

DETAILS OF NEAREST TUBE STN, BUS ROUTES, DIRECTIONS:

DAYS AND TIMES YOUR CLEANER IS WORKING FOR YOU:

DETAILS OF WORK SCHEDULE/DUTIES OF YOUR CLEANER:

(Agency name) AUTHORISED SIGNATURE/DATE YOUR OWN SIGNATURE & DATE

(Agency Name)

(OUR COPY - RETURN)

Address:

THE (Agency name)TERMS OF AGREEMENT FORM

Please return this form within seven days of receipt. The details requested below are essential when the time comes to replace your cleaner as we can more easily match your requirements to the right type of worker.

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YOUR NAME:

YOUR FULL ADDRESS:

Tel:

DETAILS OF NEAREST TUBE STN, BUS ROUTES, DIRECTIONS:

DAYS AND TIMES YOUR CLEANER IS WORKING FOR YOU:

DETAILS OF WORK SCHEDULE/DUTIES OF YOUR CLEANER:

Agency name AUTHORISED SIGNATURE/DATE

YOUR OWN SIGNATURE & DATE

Your Agency NAME

Address:

Tel :

INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

ABOUT (Your Agency name)

(Agency name) is a domestic cleaning agency providing self employed regular cleaners for private residences in the (Your Area).

All cleaners and ironers are selected carefully and must provide proof of their identity, (passport) and references. Rates of pay are at ----- per hour inclusive of the Agency fees. Clients remit a monthly agency fee to the agency either via Quarterly or Monthly Bankers Order or by cheque. Clients should ensure the agency fee is paid one month in advance and that cleaners are paid no later than one week in arrears.

HOW TO CONTACT THE AGENCY:

It is very helpful if you keep in touch with the agency by phoning the telephone number above.

The following are the occasions when you will need to contact the agency:

1. Upon making an arrangement to interview a particular worker - please let us know to save us and you time giving your name out to others.
2. Upon taking on a cleaner - please advise us the hours and days she will be working - and of course the name of the person selected.
3. If at any time you decide you do not wish to continue with the agency – please give us two weeks notice in writing as we may otherwise continue to send workers to you unnecessarily.

On other occasions please contact your cleaner direct. If you need to alter hours, days or change arrangements in anyway please keep the contact number of your cleaner handy so that you can liaise with her or him directly.

DOMESTIC CLEANING CHECKLIST

AGENCY'S NAME Telephone number:

We supply these, as requested, for you to instruct your cleaner, and for her to let you know the completed tasks.

Householder: please tick boxes of work that you require completed. ☐

Cleaner: please tick boxes of work completed. ☐

ENTRANCE AREA

Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Polish brass ☐ ☐
 Wash door ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpet ☐ ☐

LIVING ROOM

Clean pictures ☐ ☐
 Clean mirrors ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Clean fireplace ☐ ☐
 Clean tables ☐ ☐
 Dust chairs ☐ ☐
 Dust surfaces ☐ ☐
 Dust lampshades ☐ ☐
 Polish brass/silver ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpet ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash radiators ☐ ☐
 Wipe window ledges ☐ ☐

DINING ROOM

Clean fireplace ☐ ☐
 Clean drinks cabinet ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Clean mirrors ☐ ☐
 Clean pictures ☐ ☐
 Clean tables ☐ ☐
 Clean chairs ☐ ☐
 Dust surfaces ☐ ☐
 Dust lampshades ☐ ☐
 Polish brass/silver ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpets ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash radiators ☐ ☐
 Wash window ledges ☐ ☐

KITCHEN

Clean hob ☐ ☐
 Clean oven ☐ ☐
 Clean inside microwave ☐ ☐
 Clean out fridge ☐ ☐
 Clean radiators ☐ ☐
 Clean sink ☐ ☐
 Wash up ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash window ledges ☐ ☐
 Wipe washing machine ☐ ☐
 Wipe dishwasher ☐ ☐
 Wipe tumble drier ☐ ☐

BATHROOM

Clean bath ☐ ☐
 Clean mirror ☐ ☐
 Clean shower cabinet ☐ ☐
 Clean sink ☐ ☐
 Clean surfaces ☐ ☐
 Clean taps ☐ ☐
 Clean toilet ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐

BEDROOMS

Bedroom 1

Change sheets ☐ ☐
 Make beds ☐ ☐
 Clean pictures ☐ ☐
 Clean mirrors ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Dust surfaces ☐ ☐
 Dust lampshades ☐ ☐
 Polish brass/silver ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpet ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash radiators ☐ ☐
 Wipe window ledges ☐ ☐

Bedroom 2

Change sheets ☐ ☐
 Make beds ☐ ☐
 Clean pictures ☐ ☐
 Clean mirrors ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Dust surfaces ☐ ☐
 Dust lampshades ☐ ☐
 Polish brass/silver ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpet ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash radiators ☐ ☐
 Wipe window ledges ☐ ☐

Bedroom 3

Change sheets ☐ ☐
 Make beds ☐ ☐
 Clean pictures ☐ ☐
 Clean mirrors ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Dust surfaces ☐ ☐
 Dust lampshades ☐ ☐
 Polish brass/silver ☐ ☐
 Vacuum carpet ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐
 Wash radiators ☐ ☐
 Wipe window ledges ☐ ☐

STAIRS/COMMON PARTS

Vacuum ☐ ☐
 Polish handrails ☐ ☐
 Clean skirting ☐ ☐
 Wash floor ☐ ☐

IRONING

Iron all articles ☐ ☐

Bank Standing orders

a/ Monthly standing order

b/ Quarterly standing order

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO
(YOUR BUSINESS NAME) - THANK YOU

**(YOUR BUSINESS NAME) MONTHLY
STANDING ORDER MANDATE**

To (Name of Your bank) _____ Branch _____

Branch Address _____

Please Pay: (Your Bank and address)

Sorting Code Number

Beneficiary's Account Number

Beneficiary's Name

Reference to be quoted

YOUR NAME T/A YOUR BUSINESS NAME

First Payment

\$

Date of First Payment

Now

Usual Payment

\$

Start Date

Frequency

Monthly

Expiry Date

OR

Until Further Notice

Enter Name of Account to be Debited

Account Number

This is a new instruction.

Signature(s)

Date

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO
(YOUR BUSINESS NAME) - THANK YOU

**(YOUR BUSINESS NAME) QUARTERLY
STANDING ORDER MANDATE**

To (Name of Your bank)_____ Branch_____

Branch Address _____

Please Pay: (your bank and bank's address)

Sorting Code Number

Beneficiary's Account Number

Beneficiary's Name

YOUR NAME T/A YOUR BUSINESS NAME

Reference to be quoted

Usual Payment

\$

Start Date

Frequency

Quarterly
on the of

,

,

,

Expiry Date

OR

Until Further Notice

Enter Name of Account to be Debited

Account Number

This is a new instruction.

Signature(s)

Date

3. Forms relating to cleaners

a/ Cleaner's terms of agreement (2)

b/ Cleaner interview & allocation form and section for agency use only form (2)

c/ Information for cleaners

d/ Cleaner record form

CLEANER TERMS OF AGREEMENT FORM

STATUS:

You are a self employed sub contractor working for clients of (Agency name).

(Agency name) CLIENTS – RESTRICTIVE COVENANT CLAUSE:

The clients we provide you with are clients of the agency – (Agency name). They are not your clients personally. As a self-employed ‘contractor’ for (Agency name) you are expected to respect the wishes of the Agency as to how you deal with our clients.

You will not at any time seek to deal direct with our clients, nor do anything to cause the agency to lose clients, during your association with us or thereafter.

You must not without (Agency name) prior consent directly or indirectly

1. During your association with us trade in equipment, ancillary equipment or services in which the Company trades without the written consent of the Company. Any worker trading in such a manner without consent will no longer be supplied with clients.
2. During or at any time after termination of your association with the agency make use of any business, corporate or other name which in any way suggests a connection with the Company or any of the Company’s clients.
3. During our association and for a period of six months after its termination attempt to solicit or entice away from the Company any workers of the Company.
4. During your association or for a period of six months after its termination, finance or otherwise be engaged or interested in any business activity competitive with all or part of the business carried out by the Company or work for any of the Company’s clients with whom you had direct contact, within a radius of ten miles from where employed.
5. During your association and for a period of twelve months after its termination attempt to solicit or entice away from the Company any of its clients. For the purpose of this provision a client of the Company shall mean a person to whom it has supplied professional services within a period of two years prior to the material date.

Each proviso of this clause is separate and severable from all other provisos. If any proviso is found to be unenforceable it does not affect the validity of those remaining. If the agency fee is not paid by a client for whom you are working, we would have to require you to cease working for that client. In this respect there must be a degree of trust and co-operation between us. In return we will keep you fully supplied with new clients and provide you with as much work as you would wish to have.

I have read the above Terms of Agreement Form and agree to abide by the above terms of association with the agency (Agency name) together with the notes and instructions contained in the ‘Information for Cleaners’ pack – which I have read and understood.

.....(Worker Signature).....(Date)

CLEANER COPY

CLEANER TERMS OF AGREEMENT FORM

STATUS:

You are a self employed sub contractor working for clients of (Agency name).

(Agency name) CLIENTS – RESTRICTIVE COVENANT CLAUSE:

The clients we provide you with are clients of the agency – (Agency name). They are not your clients personally. As a self-employed ‘contractor’ for (Agency name) you are expected to respect the wishes of the Agency as to how you deal with our clients.

You will not at any time seek to deal direct with our clients, nor do anything to cause the agency to lose clients, during your association with us or thereafter.

You must not without (Agency name) prior consent directly or indirectly

6. During your association with us trade in equipment, ancillary equipment or services in which the Company trades without the written consent of the Company. Any worker trading in such a manner without consent will no longer be supplied with clients.
7. During or at any time after termination of your association with the agency make use of any business, corporate or other name which in any way suggests a connection with the Company or any of the Company’s clients.
8. During our association and for a period of six months after its termination attempt to solicit or entice away from the Company any workers of the Company.
9. During your association or for a period of six months after its termination, finance or otherwise be engaged or interested in any business activity competitive with all or part of the business carried out by the Company or work for any of the Company’s clients with whom you had direct contact, within a radius of ten miles from where employed.
10. During your association and for a period of twelve months after its termination attempt to solicit or entice away from the Company any of its clients. For the purpose of this provision a client of the Company shall mean a person to whom it has supplied professional services within a period of two years prior to the material date.

Each proviso of this clause is separate and severable from all other provisos. If any proviso is found to be unenforceable it does not affect the validity of those remaining. If the agency fee is not paid by a client for whom you are working, we would have to require you to cease working for that client. In this respect there must be a degree of trust and co-operation between us. In return we will keep you fully supplied with new clients and provide you with as much work as you would wish to have.

I have read the above Terms of Agreement Form and agree to abide by the above terms of association with the agency (Agency name) together with the notes and instructions contained in the ‘Information for Cleaners’ pack – which I have read and understood.

.....(Worker Signature).....(Date)

(AGENCY NAME) CLEANER INTERVIEW & ALLOCATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE DETAILS ON THIS PAGE ONLY:

YOUR NAME		TEL;	
ADDRESS		AGE	
ADDRESS		D.O.B	
NEAREST TRANSPORT			

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

WHAT WORK HAVE YOU DONE AS A CLEANER BEFORE?	
HAVE YOU DONE IRONING FOR CLIENTS IN THE PAST?	
FOR HOW MANY MONTHS CAN YOU WORK FOR US?	
HOW MANY HOURS A WEEK CAN YOU SPARE US?	
STATE AREAS YOU PREFER TO WORK IN –	

PLEASE LIST BELOW TWO PEOPLE YOU CAN PROVIDE AS REFERENCES:

NAME		DAY PHONE	
ADDRESS		EVE PHONE	
ADDRESS		YOUR JOB	
NAME		DAY PHONE	
ADDRESS		EVE PHONE	
ADDRESS		YOUR JOB	

USING THE CHART BELOW, PLEASE NOW SHADE ANY TIMES OF THE DAY DURING WHICH YOU ARE **NOT** AVAILABLE TO WORK FOR THE AGENCY – USE A PENCIL FOR THIS:

HOURS	MONS	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRIDS	SATS	SUNDS
MORNING							
AFTERNOON							
EVENING							

BEFORE SIGNING THIS BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THE ‘TERMS OF AGREEMENT’ AND THE ‘INFORMSTION FOR CLEANERS’ SECTIONS AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENT:

AFFIX PASSPORT PHOTO WITHIN THE SPACE BELOW

<p>I have read the attached ‘Cleaner Terms of Agreement’ page and the pages headed ‘Information for Cleaners’.</p> <p>I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the agency (Name). I agree to notify the agency of any alterations to my hours of work with clients of the agency and to keep the agency fully up to date on my movements, interviews and jobs with agency clients. If I leave or go on holiday, I will advise my agency personnel by phone – giving at least one weeks notice.</p>	
SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____	

THIS SECTION FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

PASSPORT NUMBER	EXPIRY DATE
NEXT OF KIN NAME	NAME TALLIES
NEXT OF KIN ADDRESS	PHOTO TALLIES
NEXT OF KIN PHONE	COPY PHOTOS

TYPE OF PROOF OF IDENTITY		SATISFACTORY	
REFERENCES RECEIVED		SATISFACTORY	
APPLICANT INSURANCE PAID		ON DATE	
SIX MONTH PERIOD REFUND		ON DATE	

GENERAL INTERVIEW NOTES	INTERVIEWER	
	GRADE/10	
	NATIONALITY	
	WORK PERMIT	
	SOURCE	

DATE	ALLOCATIONS	AREA	INTERVIEW ON	PLACE DATE	START ON

DEPART DATE	DEPART STATUS NOTIFIED	REASON FOR DEPARTURE

GENERAL NOTES

Agency Name

Address:

Tel.:

INFORMATION FOR CLEANERS

1. WHEN TO CONTACT THE AGENCY:

It is essential to keep in touch with the Agency at all times.

Keep the Agency fully informed of any changes in your work schedule. Let us know if you stop working for the agency.

ALWAYS CONTACT US:

- a) Upon arranging an interview with a client.
- b) Upon starting with a client.
- c) Upon leaving a client.

If you are told by a prospective client they've already got someone, find out who, **AND TELL US**.

2. STATUS:

You are a self employed cleaner contracted by clients of the agency (Agency name) to work days and hours to be arranged between you, performing general cleaning duties.

You will be paid ----- per hour.

You are **not** at liberty to vary these arrangements without notifying the agency.

You will be paid direct by the client, not the Agency. As a self employed person it is your responsibility to arrange your personal tax affairs.

As a self employed sub contractor you are working directly for the client and so do not count as an employee of the agency.

Clients are secured by regular door to door leaflet drops. So when you get an enquiry to go after, bear in mind that a lot of hard work has gone into *getting* that client to come to us. You must **never** let us or our clients down.

If you do, you will not be allocated any additional work.

If ever you arrange an interview with a client, and find you cannot attend, you **must** warn the agency in plenty of time. We can then arrange a replacement.

As we cannot afford to risk losing a single client, should you ever let us down, we will not be able to allocate you any more work.

3. AFTER INTERVIEW:

You arrange an interview with the client. Or we arrange the interview time for you. You attend. Whether you get the job or you don't, let us know *either way*. *Don't assume the client will tell us.*

Once you confirm you are starting a new client we can then bill them for our agency fee.

4. SELECTION OF WORKERS

We interview many cleaners every week. Not everyone we see is prepared to **do** this sort of work. If **you** decide you are not interested, **tell us**.

Once you have proven yourself reliable with other clients, we will allocate more work to you. Also, the more you keep in touch with us, the more likely you are to get work from us.

Before you are given clients to go after, we require proof of identity, such as passport, proof of address such as bill to your home address, two written references, two passport sized photographs, \$20.00 insurance deposit, and a commitment that you will stay with the agency for at least three months.

The clients you will be given are either existing clients whose current cleaner has left, or new client enquiries who have agreed our agency's terms and wish to try our service.

When attending interview, remember that you may be the first person they see from the agency – so it is important you make a good impression. Look professional, be neatly dressed, and have on you a copy of your references just in case a client wants to see them.

If you get given a new enquiry who doesn't want anyone after all, let us know to save us wasting everyone's time. (Sometimes prospective clients change their minds after they have agreed to interview our workers, but they don't let us know).

5. CANCELLATION GRATUITY:

There is a cancellation gratuity (non-obligatory) payable by the client should they give you less than 24 hours notice of cancellation. It does sometimes happen that a client forgets to alter arrangements, or double locks a door – he should then pay you \$20.00 for your wasted visit.

6. INSURANCE:

There is a \$20.00 insurance deposit. This is returnable upon request after six months provided you are still working with the agency at that time and provided you have not broken anything. Some cleaners choose not to stay six months, in which case the \$20.00 insurance deposit is non-returnable.

Any unclaimed surplus is put towards Employers and Public Liability Insurance. This provides cover should you injure yourself while cleaning *within* the client's premises (not outside) and also covers any damage over the value of \$100 done by you, through negligence, to a client's property or possessions. Damage *within* this \$100 'excess' is either paid for by the client or funded out of any surplus \$20.00 deposits.

7. HOLIDAYS AND SICKNESS:

Let us know if you want time off. Check with your clients whether they want a temporary replacement while you are away. Never simply fail to show up without letting us and the client know.

8. UPON LEAVING THE AGENCY:

Give as much notice as possible if you intend to leave us. You should ideally give us at least a week notice of any change in your arrangements.

9. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND GENERAL CONDUCT WHILE ON A CLIENT'S PREMISES:

Our clients trust the agency and its workers to be careful, professional, experienced cleaners who are knowledgeable about household safety and what is expected:

a) SMOKING IN A CLIENTS HOME: don't. Non-smokers can smell stale tobacco smoke for days afterwards. If you are permitted to smoke, DO NOT flick ash into a waste bin – use an ashtray. Too often I have seen smokers flick 'live' cigarette ash into waste bins full of paper and other rubbish. This is an unacceptable risk.

b) IRONS: Switch off after use. Never place flat down, even when switched off. If you feel it has cooled down, still take care to position it on its end, upright.

c) COOKERS: Beware the flat topped cooker hobs. It's easy to brush against a switch and turn the hob on accidentally when cleaning. Be careful about this. A fire was once started by a cleaner this way. She left a dishcloth on a flat ceramic effect cooker hob and accidentally switched the hob on when wiping the knobs clean. \$6,000 of damage was done. Do not rest clothes, magazines or *anything* on these flat topped cooker hobs.

d) GAS: Gas hobs, gas cookers, and gas fireplaces can all be accidentally switched on or left on by someone unfamiliar with the controls in a strange house. Watch for smell of gas. Be careful when wiping or dusting any controls.

e) ABRASIVE CLEANER AND FLAT SURFACES: Beware of smart white sinks and white kitchen surfaces, or any smart surface. These can all too easily mark or chip. Clients do notice these things and some are very fussy – one client wanted a whole new kitchen because of one tiny little chip on her prized unit tops. So, *do* be careful.

NEVER use abrasive cleaning fluids or cloths on any surface – ask for Jif or an equivalent.

f) LOCK UP SECURELY WHEN YOU GO: Be sure to lock doors and windows upon departure. Push against a door as you close it behind you to check it is secure.

g) TAPS: These can easily be left dribbling slightly. This doesn't matter much – except when you have also left the plug in the plug hole. Many a flood has been caused this way, and when it happens in a block of flats you can bring down ceilings and floors for many storey's below. Water damage can run into \$100,000's and is as serious as a major fire. So be sure to turn off all taps firmly, and always leave plugs out of the plug holes.

h) NEVER give your jobs to a friend or relative. We need to interview everyone who starts work with a client. By all means refer any friends or relatives to us so we can interview them – then we will be able to give them work.

i) CONCLUSION: Switch off iron, gas and taps after use, make sure the doors and windows are locked when you leave, be careful, and never smoke on a client's premises.

j) DO'S AND DON'TS – A QUICK LIST:

1. Tell us when you arrange an interview if we employ the interviewers.
2. Tell us how the interview went.
3. Phone us if you want more work.
4. Always return clients messages – and any messages from us.

5. Let us know if you stop working for a client.
 6. Return clients keys when you leave – THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.
 7. Keep in touch with us – give us a call once a month or so.
 8. Don't overcharge clients.
 9. Don't let clients down – tell them (and us) if you can't make it.
 10. Let us know as soon as you know you are leaving the agency so we can re-allocate other workers to your clients. Failure to let us know may mean the clients go elsewhere – remember: workers coming into the agency after you will want the work as badly as **you** need the work now. Give new workers a chance and let us know if you are planning to leave.
 11. Don't smoke on client's premises – they can smell stale tobacco.
 12. Follow safety procedures. Be careful of cooker hobs and gas cookers.
 13. Notify us of any change in your address and telephone number.
 14. Don't give work out to friends – send them to us for interview first.
- Lastly.....*

BE PUNCTUAL

CLEANER RECORD FORM

Title:	First Name:	Surname:
---------------	--------------------	-----------------

Address:

Tel. Home:

Mobile:

Preferred Area:

Client Surname	First Name	Post Code	Commenced	Finished	Contact No

Notes:

Other forms

a/ Client record form

b/ Leaflet drop report sheet

c/ Sample leaflet

if preferred you could have some picture or graphics on the front of the leaflet and everything else on the back. At the bottom of the back side you could also add: If you know anyone who would like cleaning or ironing work please have them call our **WORKER INFORMATION LINE** on (your phone number).

CLIENT RECORD FORM

Title:	First Name:	Surname:
---------------	--------------------	-----------------

Address:

Tel. Home:

Mobile:

Requirements:

Worker Surname	First Name	Post Code	Commenced	Finished	Contact No

Notes:

(AGENCY NAME) LEAFLET DROP REPORT SHEET

LEAFLETTER's NAME				
NO:	DAY & DATE	TIME START	TIME FINISH	TOTAL TIME
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

TOTAL HOURS WORKED		\$ AMOUNT DUE	
--------------------	--	---------------	--

Please complete in full the details below **for each road you do**, up to the column marked 'MINS' – for minutes taken per street - we can then cross-reference replies and clients placed with roads delivered.

NO	Street Name	F	S	H	M	MINS	Replies from	Placed?
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								

F: Flat, S: Shop, H: House, M: Marionette

SIGNED BY LEAFLETTER:

DATED:

AGENCY NAME:

PAID:

!ATTENTION!

DO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO HELP YOU WITH THE CLEANING?

WOULD LIKE SOME HELP WITH THE IRONING?

IF SO:

HOW DO YOU GUARANTEE FINDING A RELIABLE PERSON?

WILL THEY BE HONEST, REGULAR AND SUITABLE FOR YOU?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE THE SAME PERSON – REGULARLY?

SPEAK TODAY TO '*agency name*' FOR THE BEST

© '*agency name*' 2014

1. Select as few or as many hours as you need.
2. **INSURANCE** for damage to property and possessions INCLUDED.
3. **TRAVEL** to and from your premises INCLUDED.
4. Screening, selection and vetting of cleaners.
5. Hourly rate from \$x.xx for regular cleaning.

EVEN IF YOU HAVE NO NEED FOR A CLEANER NOW,
KEEP THIS CARD FOR WHEN YOU DO.

**If you need a helper now, for ironing
or CLEANING, contact us by telephone:**

<Name> on 000 0000 0000

Weekdays 9am to 9pm

FOR A CLEANER HOME

© '*agency name*' 2014