



Executive Director Report

By Jon Meijer



What a difference a day makes!

Just a few days ago, the Midwest Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (MWDLI) was preparing for several group events, such as the Professional Wetcleaning Seminar, Pacers game and an onsite meeting of the MWDLI Advisory Council. Obviously, the impact of the Coronavirus-COVID-19 has changed everything and the way we live and communicate with one another. As you know, all our group gatherings and educational seminars have been canceled. The health and safety of our members, their employees, their

families are of utmost importance and canceling these events comes as the world looks to slow down the spread of the virus. The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute continues to put out critical information regarding the virus that comes from the Centers of Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and others, making sure that critical information is sent to MWDLI Members. The most recent information about COVID-19 and the drycleaning industry can be found in the magazine.

MWDLI will work to reschedule future events as soon as further information becomes available from the various agencies in the U.S. and around the world. Now is the time to keep our families safe and hope that the virus is controlled sooner rather than later.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. We are here working for you.

Your MWDLI team can be reached at 765-969-5745 or 800-638-2627.

March/April 2020

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Coronavirus-COVID-19 Guidance - March 13, 2020

Published by the Drycleaning & Laundry Institute

The information developed for this guidance was taken largely from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov>. It is important to note that the information is still developing as world health officials learn more about this strain of virus. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust any guidance as needed.

Coviden 19 Stats

The virus is transmitted from person to person by exposure to large respiratory drops (by sneezing!), and by direct contact. The infection itself takes place in the respiratory tract. The recommendation at this point is to take the same precautions as a flu outbreak. Wash hands frequently or

use hand sanitizer and when sneezing do not cover your mouth and nose with your hand but sneeze into the crook of your arm.

- Transmission of Covid-19 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through objects or materials which are likely to carry infection, such as clothes, utensils, and

furniture. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials, according to the Centers for Disease Control. At this time testing has only been done on hard surfaces, as more information regarding textiles becomes available we will be sure to get information out to you.

Risks To Drycleaning & Laundry Personnel

The risk when transporting and cleaning linen from the general public is considered very small at this point. General standard hygienic procedures that you have outlined for your plant are appropriate such as:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Cough and sneeze in the inside of your elbow.
- Use tissues.
- Routine cleaning of hard surfaces with a disinfectant.
- Availability of hand sanitizers throughout the plant and counter area.

Drivers should routinely use hand sanitizers and wipe down the steering wheel and other hard surfaces frequently handled.

Cleaning Garments From The General Public

There is no need to take any special precautions AT THIS TIME. The CDC advises that the drycleaning process, which includes cleaning and pressing, is effective on most viruses.

As is true with other viruses, laundering in hot water, 160oF and with chlorine bleach is the most effective method for sanitizing laundry. If hot water and chlorine bleach are not safe for the items then laundering with a disinfectant product is an option. The CDC states the laundering with detergent alone is an effective method.

Cleaning Linens Suspected Of Being Contaminated With Bodily Fluids

Follow Blood borne Pathogens Guidelines for handling and laundering. See DLI bulletins OSHA 4 & 5 and R & L 10 for further information.

- The customer or care institution can or must supply the linen marked and packaged separately.
- Other guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) on the handling of linen need mentioning. If linen is to be transported on routes, then the soiled linen must be separated from the clean linen. Any containers used to transport clean linen, if previously used for soiled linen, must be properly decontaminated. Containers need to be labeled appropriately.
- Personnel should wear protective clothing if there is a risk of direct contact with biological agents (for example in the event of splashing). Replace and launder protective clothing in the event of contamination.

- Washing should be done at high temperature, 160oF, for 25 minutes with chlorine bleach.
14700 Sweitzer Lane Laurel, MD 20707
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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: "Can the virus be transferred from someone else's clothes to my clothes?" From Customers

A: There is little chance of this type of transfer occurring. First the virus only lives for a short period outside the body. Second the cleaning process kills the virus on any garment and all garments.

Take time to reassure your customers on the hygienic measures you are taking in the store. They will appreciate that you are wiping down the counter and having staff wash their hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.

Some cleaners are having counter staff wear disposable gloves. This not only gives peace of mind to your staff but also sends a signal to your customers that you are aware of the situation and taking precautions.

Q: "Can I get the virus from handling the general public's garments?" From Staff

A: The virus only lives for a very short time outside the body, so there is little chance that your employees will contract the virus from touching people's garments. Any case, reassure your staff that there are disposable gloves available and allow the time to wash their hands and use hand sanitizer as frequently as they need to.

Q: "Can I get the virus from handling the general public's linens?" From Staff

A: There is little risk from handling any type of linen from the general public.



Reassure Customers During the Corona Virus Pandemic

Published by the Drycleaning & Laundry Institute

As the Corona Virus pandemic sweeps the globe, customers need reassurance that your services are available and capable of eliminating the threat. **DLI cannot write this message for you as one size does not fit all in this case.** Instead, we are sharing a [gallery of screenshots of Facebook posts](#) from fellow DLI members about the virus and their services. Use this gallery as inspiration to write your own, personalized message to customers about the health crisis.

This message can be posted online, emailed, printed and hung in your store window, placed on telephone answering services, sent via SMS text, used in advertisements, or placed anywhere you are able to communicate with customers.

When writing your message for customers here are some things to consider:

1. Short and simple is preferred.
2. Include a visual element to draw attention.
3. The health and safety of customers and employees is your top concern.
4. The temperatures and chemistry of drycleaning and professional laundry kills germs.
5. Pickup and delivery services are available (where applicable).
6. Parking lot drop-off and pickups are an option.
7. Your business is and will be open until mandated to shut down by local authorities.
8. Stress the importance of washing hands for 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer and staying six feet away from others.
9. The CDC advises wiping down frequently-touched surfaces once each day. Wipe down your countertops between each transaction and tell customers you are doing this.
10. To avoid overwhelming the healthcare system the CDC advises people to stay home when possible and avoid gatherings of 10 or more people.
11. At risk people in your community desperately need support. Invite customers to consider donating to their local food bank.

12. You will continue to update them as more information becomes available.
13. Hope for the best, prepare for the worst.

If your facility is in compliance to handle blood borne pathogens, consider volunteering your cleaning services to pick up and deliver items from local nursing homes or elder care facilities. Also consider alternative hours to accommodate at-risk customers such as elderly or immuno-compromised customers.

As this crisis expands know that it will eventually fade. Show your support for customers and your community by offering a reassuring message and stand firm against panic and misinformation.

DLI is here to help. Email your message to Harry Kimmel at HKimmel@DLIonline.org if you need some help with editing a message for your customers about the pandemic.

National Clothesline
19 hrs · 🌐

Your customers have questions. Know the answers, or find them. Confusion will only confound forward progress at this point. Here is a good read from John Rothock of Yale Cleaners. Even if your customers aren't using you much right now, they need information and we all must carry on as if the world will continue to spin.



YALECLEANERS.COM
The Value of Drycleaning in the Wake of the Coronavirus - Yale Cleaners

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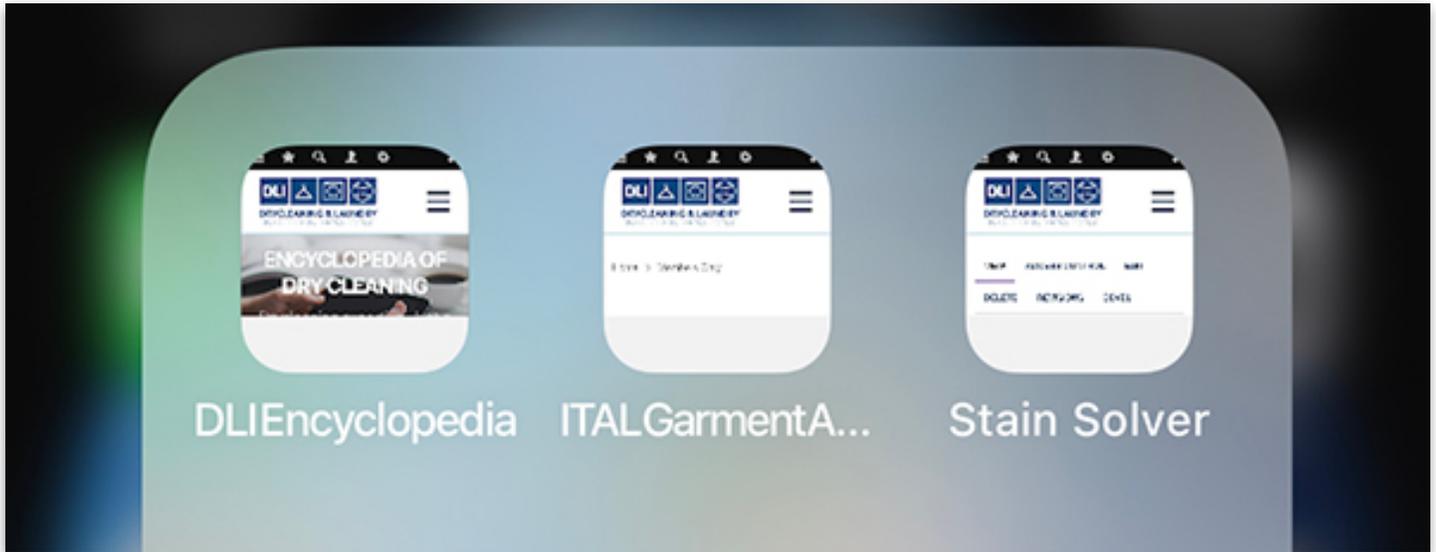


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DLI's apps and online services are now available in the Members Only section of DLionline.org. This includes DLI's Stain Solver, Drycleaning Encyclopedia, and Garment Analysis App, along with all of DLI's online membership services. To access these online services, members are invited to login to the Members Only section of DLionline.org.

On January 30th all DLI members should have received an email message containing a link to create a new password from DLI's new service provider, Fonteva at implementations@fonteva.com. Some members reported finding this message in a Junk, Spam, or Clutter inbox. This is normal and no cause for alarm. Simply search your inbox for Fonteva and it should appear. Open the message and click the link to set up your new password.

If you aren't able to find the message, click Login on DLionline.org, then click "Forgot your password" on the login screen. Type the email address you registered with DLI and follow the instructions. You'll receive a new password reset email.

If you encounter any issues with this process, please contact DLI at 800-638-2627 and a membership representative will help you access the online services.



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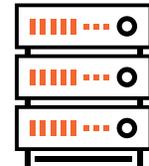
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A New Year, A New Plan

Written By Dan Miller, CEO Mulberry's Garment Care (originally submitted to American Drycleaner)



THE END OF THE YEAR IS ALWAYS A DIFFICULT TIME FOR US AS BUSINESS OWNERS.

We're frantically trying to make sure we meet our 2019 goals. In addition, there's usually a bunch of year-end paperwork and other filings that seem to gobble up the hours.

Finally, the holidays always seem to sneak up on us and next thing you know the year is over. It's a classic case of the "urgent" crowding out the important.

With the end of year chaos going on, it's very easy to postpone, delay, or outright cancel the most important thing you can do at the end of the year: strategic planning. Yet, taking the time to craft, execute and communicate a robust, coherent strategic plan is arguable the most critical step you can take as a business owner to make sure your team members know where your company has been in the last year and where it's headed in the year to come.

There are countless ways to develop a strategic plan for the new year and everyone has their own opinion on how it can and should be done. At my company we have a process that we've used for over a decade that works well for us, but at the end of the day I would encourage you to find whatever approach works best for you and your team. My preferred strategic planning approach is built on four core tenets:

YEAR IN REVIEW

Before you can even begin to think about where you want your company to go, you must first force you and your team to take a hard look at where you've been. To guide this approach I recommend

using the strategic plan that you created the previous year (if you have one). Specifically, go one by one through the goals that you laid out last year and check off the goals you've achieved and highlight the goals that still remain.

This enables you to refresh your memory regarding what you were hoping to accomplish this year and to what extent you've succeeded in reaching those goals. I also recommend that you begin this year in review process at that start of Q4 because it will give you time to get laser-focused on completing the goals from the previous year that have gone unaddressed. you and your team have accomplished. But when you sit down and take the time to do a year in review you and your team will realize how much you've done and be reenergized about completing whatever is left undone.

COLLECTION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Once you've completed a comprehensive look back, now it's time for you and your team to look forward to the year ahead. At the core of any good strategic plan is one word: improvement. A year in which we're not improving is not a year worth having, so the driving theme of your strategic plan should be one question: how do we improve?

In my experience, the greatest difficulty in this part of the process is collecting an authentic list of the company's opportunities for improvement. This is the case for a number of reasons: Employees may not want to be seen as criticizing their current colleagues or management. They may fear change. They may have never been taught how to identify and solve problems. They may be just shy.

To counteract these challenges I recommend formally soliciting opportunities for improvement from your staff, but in a totally anonymous way. This can be as simple as handing out notecards and collecting them in a box or sending out a Google forms or Survey Monkey survey.

The key here is making sure that staff understand that their opinions will be confidential, and to ask probing questions to maximize the likelihood of insight. For example, “What makes your job more difficult than it needs to be”, “what annoys you about working at our company”, “what would make your work experience better”, “how can we make our customer’s experience with us better.” “How could we improve quality”. “What do you wish you knew more about”.

Asking these questions and giving folks a safe space to communicate their thoughts will give you a laundry list of opportunities for improvement, which you can then synthesize into a plan.

CREATING THE PLAN

Now that you have a clear understanding of what your company needs to do, it’s time to make a plan on how to execute on that in the coming year. In order to ensure execution it’s important to first synthesize your list of opportunities for improvement into larger tasks. There’s countless ways to do it, but in my experience I’ve found a few categorizations are critical. First, It’s extremely helpful to differentiate between truly complex problems and “quick wins”. The quick wins like “getting a new coffee maker” or “new paint in the front lobby” should be assigned out and allocated to whoever is responsible right away. For the complex problems, I recommend setting aside some significant time at your strategic planning to make sure you are all able to dig in and come up with preliminary ideas on how to go about solving them.

After you’ve taken that first cut at categorization the other critical piece in strategic planning is accountability. Every task should be clearly assigned to someone in your company with a specific timeline and metric to make sure it is achieved. In addition, you should be sure to confirm that that person has the resources necessary to achieve their objective. Without accountability, clear deadlines, and the resources to achieve your goals, a strategic plan isn’t worth having.

COMMUNICATING THE PLAN

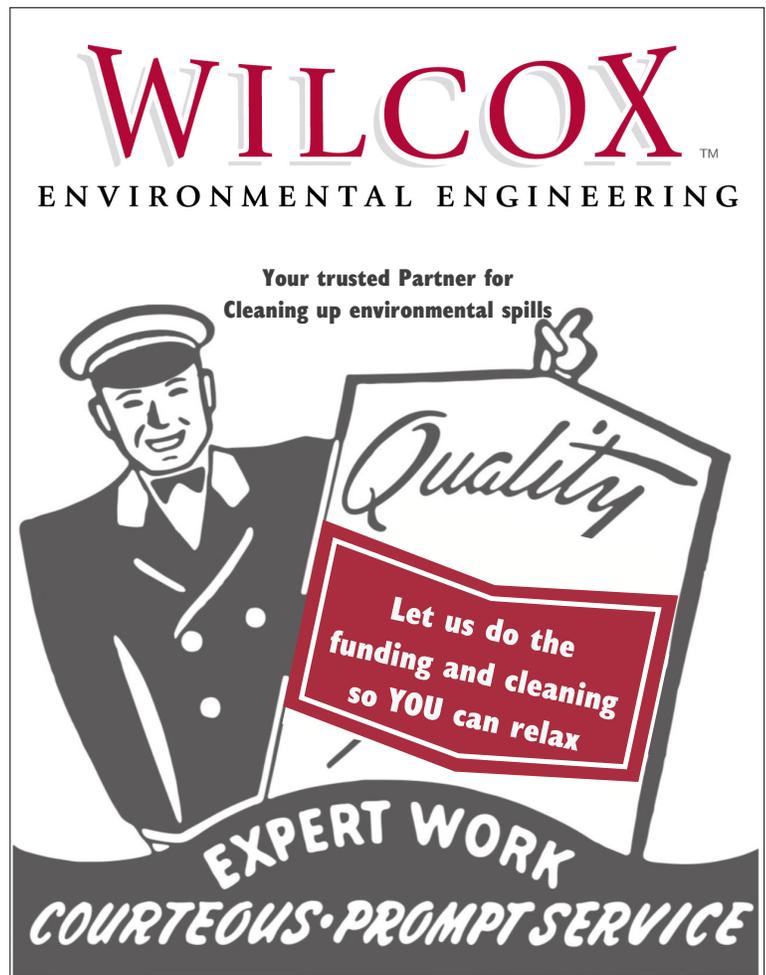
If I had a dollar for every time I’ve seen a company craft a strategic plan and then fail to roll it out, I could retire. A strategic plan can be an

incredibly powerful tool in driving the culture of your company in the coming year, but in order to do so it must be communicated to every single person in the organization. Otherwise, it’s a ghost.

In our company we communicate our strategic plan through an all-staff annual meeting. At the meeting we spend time reviewing the previous year; where we succeeded and where we came up short. We then allow different team members to present our priorities for the year and where we hope to go. This ensures that every single person, from the presser, to the store associate, to the President of the company are all on the same page as to what we’re trying to achieve.

This year, do yourself the favor of setting a course for your team by creating a comprehensive strategic plan. It’s a lot of work, but I promise it will pay off in spades.

As they say, a year is a terrible thing to waste!





MWDLI is always looking for ideas and suggestions for things that matter to you.

What are your training needs? What types of education opportunities would you like to see? MWDLI's advisors are working hard to develop the best training opportunities for members.

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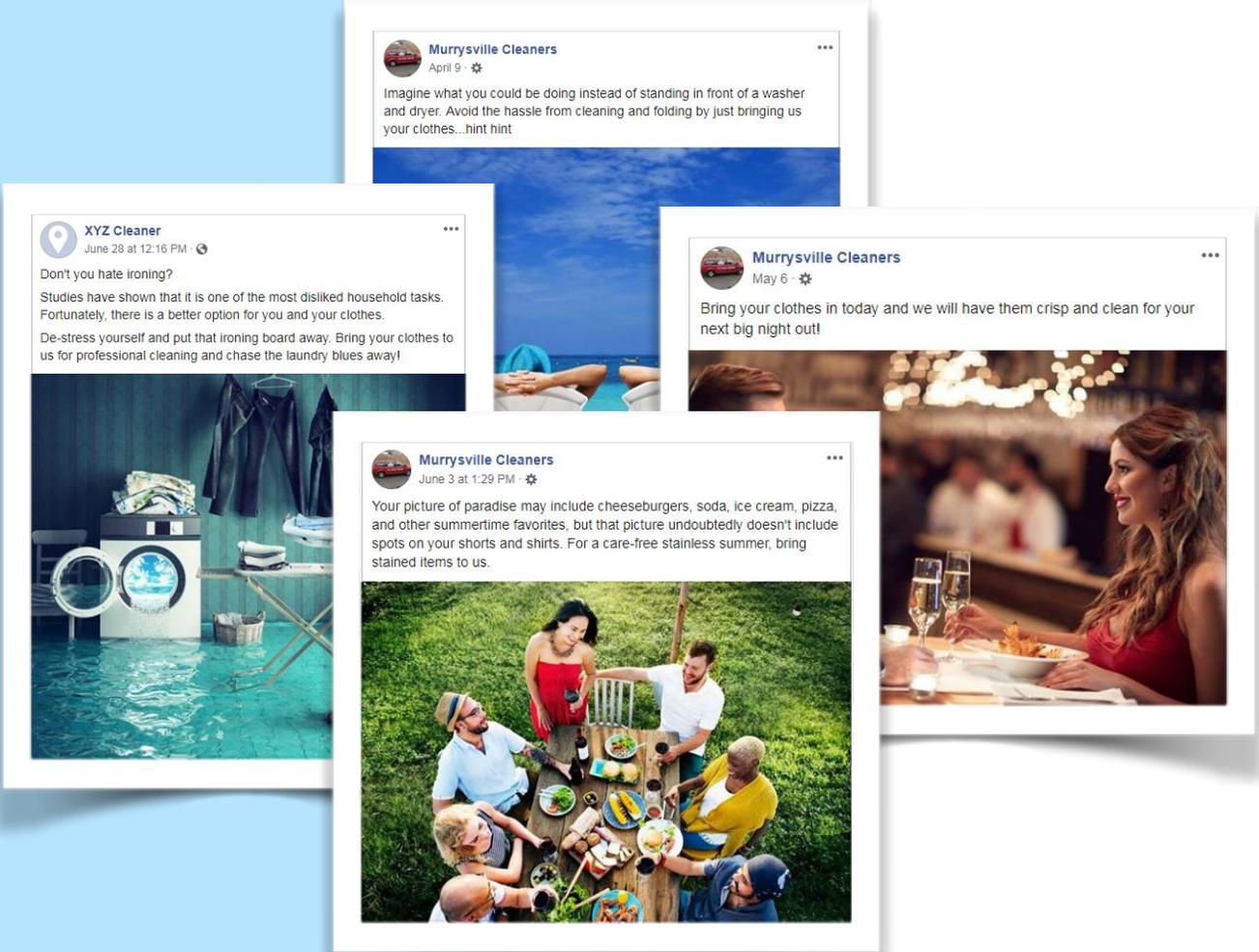
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