

FOR THE ELITE OF THE DRYCLEANING INDUSTRY

## Are Cherry Pickers Picking Away At Your Profits?

*“Staying ahead  
of the competition”*



BY  
DENNIS MCCRORY

One of the things I love about my job is that it encourages me to find the answers to the many questions raised by our members while working with them to develop their marketing plans.

One question that always seems to pop up, with novice members, is, “Are there shoppers who habitually only buy the items featured in their

marketing coupons?” In theory, playing the system by short-circuiting the loss-leader concept. Additionally, they ask, “If there were a lot of such shoppers out there, could their actions have a measurable impact on a store’s bottom line?”

A recent study found that these “extreme cherry pickers” – shoppers who buy only sale items and nothing else – do not harm retailer profits.

The study was conducted by Bebabrata Talukdar, associate professor of marketing at the University of Buffalo School of Management, K. Sudhir, professor of marketing at the Yale School of Management, and Dinesh K. Gauri, assistant professor of mar-

keting at Syracuse University’s Whitman School of Business, and published in the Journal of Marketing Research.

The researchers looked at several variations of cherry picking to determine the impact on retailers’ profits and consumer savings. Some cherry-picking shoppers buy sale items at only one store over a period of time, while others visit different stores, within an area, solely to buy sale items.

So is all that effort worth it for the consumer? Apparently yes. The professors determined that cherry-pickers saved more money than shoppers who hadn’t actively searched for promotions (My guess is, this study was done without considering the current price of gasoline, not to mention the value of even a minimum-wage-worker’s time!). The extreme cherry-pickers averaged 76 percent of potential savings, while store-loyal cherry-pickers averaged 68 percent of potential savings in the marketplace. Cross-store cherry-pickers, over time, obtained 66 percent of potential savings.

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The bottom line is: the researchers found that extreme cherry-pickers barely affected profits. “Retailers fear of extreme cherry-pickers is overblown,” said Professor Talukdar in the article. “Extreme cherry-pickers make up only 1.2 percent of retail store customers and they only reduce profits less than 1 percent.”

I, and most long-time Golomb Group members, knew this from practical experience. It's the fear of first-time marketers that everyone who comes into their store, during the promotional period, will receive a hefty discount, and the drycleaner will be doing volumes of work, at no profit!

Yet, so many drycleaners have a fear of giving something away; of becoming a “coupon cleaners;” of reducing their price; even by a small amount; even for a short time; that they never experience the mega-growth their businesses are capable of.

Eventually, aggressive competitors come into the market, either with routes or drop stores, and begin to slowly but surely steal customers away from those too paralyzed by fear to take action.

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, “We have

nothing to fear but fear itself.” Fear of the unknown (to them) results of marketing they have never tried is what keeps most drycleaners from ever realizing the true potential of their business endeavors. They are afraid to spend the 3 to 5% of their sales necessary to get their message out to the public and, in particular, to

their best prospective customers, and they are afraid that any offer they make will be taken advantage of. The above-mentioned research shows that those fears are unfounded.

I've always been a fisherman. Fisherman are risk takers. They invest in small fish or shrimp or whatever bait they choose and risk the loss of their bait to catch larger fish. Sure, they could have played it safe, and eaten whatever they used for bait. But they don't. They take the chance that they will catch larg-

er fish and, ultimately, eat a much better meal. I like to catch big fish. However, in order to catch large fish (also known as “big tuna” customers), you have to make the commitment of putting smaller fish (also known as a reasonable offer) on your hook, as bait. You can't catch fish without bait. The more bait you put out – the more fish you'll catch.

O.K. that's it for today - I'm going fishing.◆

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**“We have  
nothing  
to fear,  
but fear  
itself”**

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# It's What's Up Front That Counts



BY ED ROTH

Many years ago, a cigarette manufacturer had a sales slogan that said, "It's what's up front that counts." They were referring to the famed new filter tip. It became a catch phrase in the sixties. It's as valid today as it was

fifty years ago, except we can substitute our CSR's for that newly invented filter tip. Our CSR's are the real backbone of our industry and our businesses. A good CSR can increase business and a bad one can destroy everything that we are trying to accomplish. In the dry cleaning world it is a truism that "It's what's up front that counts".

At one of my group meetings the subject of CSR's came up. It always does. Invariably there is some owner who is having a serious problem with one or more of his customer service reps. Whether it is attitude, or stealing, or lateness, or the old reliable "not coming in and not calling." There's always a

grandmother's house burning down or a daughter's boyfriend in jail who needs bailing out. It's truly amazing how many grandmothers' houses are burning down these days. Lately, a new excuse has surfaced. Relatives in Peru have gotten into a car accident and are in a coma. The amount of Peruvians going over cliffs in their cars is epidemic.

One of our members had gone to a seminar and upon conclusion of the seminar he turned to his manager and said, "This may sound crazy but I think we have to fire all four of our CSR's." The manager agreed. The CSR in charge was a sour puss. The others followed her lead, and didn't feel they had to exert any extra effort since the lead girl created such a bad example. A real cancer was spreading among their attitudes. This cleaner had remembered something from a previous seminar and put out the question to the group. He said, "Let's go around the table. Everyone answer this question. Tell us first, how many CSR's you have. Then tell us if each of your CSR's left you tomorrow, for how many of them would you be relieved, be disappointed, or be devastated." Most of the cleaners said that they'd be relieved if some left, disappointed for others leaving, and only a few would be devastated to lose others. That says volumes about the way we are running our businesses. This group is made up of some of the finest cleaners in the New York Metro area and many of the owners would be relieved if their CSR's left! Why aren't we putting our best foot forward? We all should know at this point in our business lives that "it's what's up front that counts." Why don't we follow what we know to be the truth, and make sure that our CSR's are the best possible workers we can get? Why don't we make sure that they reflect the excellent customer service that we expect them to give. One of the cleaners even complained that his CSR manager never even makes

*(Continued page 4)*

## Members Only

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(Continued from page 3)

eye contact with the customers. Even with the new ones !!!! Another said that he had to pull his manager off the counter because he got 6 or 7 complaints a week about him. This was a manager earning lots of money and still having an unacceptable attitude.

In the last two weeks two of my friends had similar encounters with their CSR s and handled them both differently. Both CSR s were the ones in charge, the top person at the counter. CSR "A" was disgusted with some of the other employees. She even castigated an employee for doing something that she didn t like. This was not part of her job and the owner told her in no uncertain terms that she should not have said that. The CSR was livid, and decided that it might be time for her to leave the job. My friend called her into his office and explained why her behavior was wrong, and told her that if she felt that she didn t want to work under those circumstances, then by all means, she should leave. Those were the work conditions; those were the rules of the store; and she exceeded the bounds and created disharmony. He didn t want her to leave, but if she could not abide by the rules, and get along with the other employees, it might be best if she left. She has a great job, she knows it, and she tested her power and the limits of what she was expected to do. Of course, you can guess what she did. She realized what a great job she had and relented and stayed. It was a power struggle and the owner did not back down.

Another cleaner had a very similar problem, except that he was about to go away for the Passover holiday, and visit his parents, who are in their 90 s. He did not want to miss the opportunity to see them, so he was kind of in a bind. When the CSR told him she would leave and actually walked to the door to quit, he called her back. They discussed her behavior,

and discussed that it would be more beneficial to both if while she looked for another job, he would look for another CSR. Unfortunately, the CSR won this power struggle and although my friend was able to spend Passover with his parents, there might be a price to pay when he returns. Did he do the wrong thing? Absolutely not! He did what was right for him, and his life, and his family, and I commend him for that. Remember that your business exists to give you a better life. Now he is taking the steps that will hopefully prevent him being in as vulnerable a position as he was that day.

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**“Once an employee thinks they have the upper hand, many bad things happen”**

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Once an employee thinks they have the upper hand, many bad things happen. Whether it s attitude, or stealing, or just doing more of the same bad behavior, it usually does not end up well. There s a Seinfeld episode where George loses the "HAND" with his girlfriend as she starts to break up with him. He asserts to Jerry that you have to get "HAND", meaning "the upper hand" in a relationship. It s a very funny episode and as all comedy is based on the truth it is a very revealing episode about relationships.

After this group meeting with my cleaner friends, I spoke to my manager and we decided to fire one of our CSR s. The one who we would be "relieved" if she quit. We put ads in the newspaper, we interviewed, and we were all set for the right day. Of course, one of our most competent CSR s grandfather drove over a cliff, and she left for Peru the next day. She was to return in a few days. Two weeks passed before we got so much as a phone call as to her whereabouts. Then, we looked at each other and decided we were firing the wrong CSR. It would really be funny if it weren t true.

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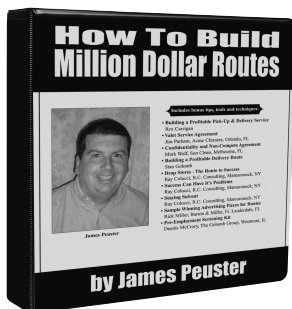
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# Are You Ready?

BY ED ROTH

We all go through our daily routines each day and rarely think of a “worst scenario” happening to us. Recently, one of our members went through one of these events and, hopefully, this article will help the rest of us understand that these things do occur and to help us prepare for an emergency in our own plants.

Dave Colehour is the owner of Best Cleaners in St. Louis Park (Minneapolis), Minnesota. He owns four stores and has a very successful operation. It's as stressful as all of our operations, but on March 25th of this year he had to deal with a little more stress than bargained for. No one was hurt, and everyone is okay, but literally inches or seconds difference could have meant more than one person's life.

In the evening, just after 8 P.M. one of Dave's customers was pulling up to the front entrance of his store. Dave has electronic doors that open up automatically when someone approaches. The doors are quite an operation in themselves and cost close to \$20,000. On this particular evening, the customer was pulling up in her car, and instead of stopping at the front doors, she accelerated and literally drove through the entire front of the call office thus creating another drive through in addition

to the one on the side of Dave's store. She pushed the entire front counter and call office furniture about three feet toward the back of the store. Luckily, there were no customers at the counter at the time, and no one was hurt. Dave can laugh about it now, but it could have been devastatingly disastrous. Dave's night manager, Steve, was there when it happened and luckily saw the event happening and made a life saving decision to move his body to the side of the store (instead of behind the counter) as the car was coming through the doors. This certainly saved him from serious injury and could have saved his life as the driver kept her foot on the accelerator and actually pushed the entire front counters three feet further back toward the rear of the store. Another woman had been waiting with her small child on a set of chairs nearby and was within a few feet from disaster. The automatic doors did not anticipate the event happening so fast and they were smashed beyond repair. Everything from the front of the store was pushed back and the glass and debris was scattered everywhere.

Steve acted very calm, cool, and collected. The first thing he did was to check on the woman in the car. “Are you okay,” he asked as he looked through the window. “Yes, I'm okay,” she said. This might seem like the

natural thing to do, but it is extremely important. Many people involved in accidents go into spontaneous shock where their systems shut down and they could die from the shock of an accident even without severe bodily injury. It is extremely important in a time of emotional stress to reassure the person that you are there to help them. A simple thing like asking the person how they are, can prevent them from going into shock and, literally, can save their life. Knowing there is someone nearby to take care of them is very important.

The next move was calling 911 to summon aid as quickly as possible. As Steve was dialing the phone, a passerby had already gotten 911 on the phone and handed their phone to him. Once the proper emergency vehicles were on their way, Steve called Dave. He assured Dave that all was well, considering the circumstances, and Dave was on his way. Dave arrived within a half hour, assessed the situation and called other employees to help. Plywood and planking was used to close the new drive thru and by midnight all was secured. With everyone pitching in, they were able to open for business the next day using the side entrance.

Ironically, this was the second time that someone had driven through Dave's front entrance.

*(Continued page 7)*

The first time it happened only the door was crushed. However, this has made Dave reassess the entire situation. It was a very, very lucky stroke of fate that no one was seriously hurt. No one was at the front counter where the car plowed through. At other times, during business hours, several people would have been there, and there would have been massive injuries, including probable deaths. To prevent anything like this happening in the future, Dave is installing cement pillars spaced in front of his store to prevent any vehicles from crossing the sidewalk.

So, what can other members learn from Dave's experience? I spent a lot of time on the phone with Dave to help put into words why it is so necessary to have a plan that can be taught to employees and implemented in an emergency.

First, assess your store and its parking facility. Is it worth the investment to install some preventive devices like short cement pillars? Should parking spaces be "head on" or is there another way to set up the parking lot.

Second, have a training session of what to do in any disaster. In this case the correct order of things would be just what the manager did:

- a) Check with any people who might be injured. Ask if they are okay, using a soft, calming, reassuring voice.
- b) Call 911 for emergency help.
- c) Call the boss.

- d) Get back to the job of helping with the emergency.

Of course, Dave experienced just one. There are many emergencies that can occur in a dry cleaning plant.

When the Masters of Marketing Group visited Milt Chortkoff, in Los Angeles, he showed everyone his "emergency plan" which is all spelled out (see display). It includes what hospital to take any injured employees, including travel directions. Of course anyone seriously injured should never be moved, but Milt's plan is self-explanatory.

Hazardous waste spills are handled differently and the NCA has an emergency sheet of how to handle that (see display). You also need a sheet that has all the emergency numbers to call (poison control, 911, fire, etc.). Another sheet should be available with all employees' telephone numbers and contacts. All of these are included in this newsletter and you should customize them for your store.

These systems should be tested and rehearsed periodically. Perhaps at the beginning of each new quarter. Also, each new employee should be trained in these procedures. Having them written in the employee handbook is great, but a separate emergency sheet beside each phone or posted in vital areas is better. You don't want employees searching for a handbook to find out where the best local hospital emergency room is, while some-

one is in serious condition.

The most important thing to remember is that we MUST have an emergency plan spelled out for our plant, for the safety of our customers, and employees. Does anyone know CPR? Is it beneficial to have your employees trained by a local emergency group? Where is the first aid kit? Should you teach employees basic first aid? Burn ointment, bandages, and the first thing to do in a burn situation is extremely important.

What about the procedures employees should follow in a robbery. I tell my employees to open the registers and then walk to the back of the store. From there they are taught the emergency exits. Of course, it has been awhile since I spoke to my employees about this plan, but you can bet that I'll schedule a meeting as soon as I can. Do they all know where the fire extinguishers are? Do they know how to work them? Have they been inspected and in good working order?

Dave was lucky. The timing was right and his manager maintained a cool head. Would the rest of us be so lucky?

Today, he can smile and laugh at the experience. Would we be so lucky? If we all take this article and the examples of some of the emergency plans, and implement them, then hopefully we can survive even the most severe situation. ♦

# It Starts With You

BY JAMES PEUSTER



In my ongoing pursuit of developing 21st century drycleaners, I am quite often discouraged about how often management and ownership get in the way of growth. My motto is “Developing Your People To Develop Your Business” and sometimes this starts

with you, the owner or your leadership team. The question is: are you willing to accept the fact that you may be the one who needs training and are you willing to make a 180 degree mindset change in order to succeed. Quite often the struggle is for me to “fix” you before I can move on to the ones that make it happen.

Let s start with the concept of customer service.

Too often I hear, “finding a good CSR or driver is hard to do.” Again, is this really true or are you not giving them the proper training, tools, incentives or leadership. Someone once said, “Take care of those who take care of your customers.” This doesn t mean pay them \$20 an hour, but I am amazed at the lack of training many customer service agents receive and then fail, trying to learn on their own. A driver who shows up everyday is great, but then he or she is asked to build the route by doing what the previous person did--it isn t that simple. Hourly-minded/driven employees have different motivational goals and your job is to identify them. Some are money-driven, while others strive to succeed. One might be motivated by job security more than one who has the desire to advance in the company. You must recognize which is THEIR number one motivational goal and use that to your advantage, by laying out goals and incentives based on their desires—not yours. Again, you don t have to give them the farm, but it will make your job seem more of guidance for the good, versus being a babysitter, like many of us end up being. In addition, your attitude towards customers affects how they react to them as well.

A second mindset change I work on is getting you to be “Constructive” minded versus “Productive” minded. Too often we are so focused on cutting costs that we get to a point where growth would be a bad thing. Plus we examine efficiency in all our work and are quite often unhappy with our marketing results. Building a route takes a little time, patience and investment. Many businesses cut their advertising budget when times get tough, but those who prevail and persevere, beef up their marketing efforts in order to reach

their goal. But again, if you drain all the blood out of your business by working on a skeleton crew, then it becomes harder to “muscle up” when you are weak. Be constructive minded by focusing on forward motion, growth, and potential and striving to have million-dollar routes. Yes, it takes money to grow, but your competitor is out there like a hungry lion, taking your customers away and nabbing other potential business. You either sit on your hands and wait, or get out there and build your business. Quite often I see ownership working IN the business, not ON the business. It is a shame that some of you value yourself as much as an \$8.00 an hour employee. If you keep up that mindset, your business will close and then your competition can at least hire YOU for that much.

Finally, many routes fail due to a lack of a system. The past 3 years I have had to re-lay a foundation for many of you in order for growth to occur. Unfortunately, many of you fail in this area and don t even realize that you are. As I continue to develop our management group, the number one focus is having a system that makes the management of the routes easier. “Organize or Agonize” is another way to put it. A system involves Operations, Customer Service, Sales and Marketing, and finally, Accounting and Billing. Too often I discover “uncollectable or forgotten” money. One client had to write off \$45,000 because of the lack of a system. They felt like everything was fine in the organization, but not-so-much.

A lot of the problems are really not due to a lack of money, but more of a lack of time and commitment. I feel for those second, third and fourth generation owners, since they have to deal with their father s mindset, “That s the way we have always done it.” Move into the 21st century by making some changes in the 3 above areas. The industry has changed and you must change with it. Separate yourself from your competition; maybe this will take YOU getting out of YOUR own way. I am becoming even more amazed at how many owners who have just gotten into the business are showing growth, while many who have been in it for years do not. I believe that it is because the new owners are not married to the way dry-cleaning was done in the past. In order for your company to make a change for the better, the first move may have to start with you. ♦

*James Peuster is a nationally known author, speaker, trainer, and coach who specializes in route development through Marketing, Management and Maintenance training. James has costs groups specifically designed for route costs and growth and his website is [www.theroutepro.com](http://www.theroutepro.com)*



She finally returned and apologized. I wasn't laughing during the process of not knowing if she would ever return, but I must admit it really is quite funny now. Not funny in the ha ha way, but funny that this kind of thing happens all the time. Here we were, ready to fire one CSR for behavior that another CSR started to exhibit. You can't make this up.

Obviously, it is a very difficult struggle in our industry: getting the right workers in the right place. Especially, getting the right CSRs. As Sid Tuchman, one of our industry's gurus, always says, "you must get the right people on the bus." My friend, who is advertising for a new CSR, has only gotten responses from people who are flipping burgers at McDonald's and are ready to make that career jump to manager of a dry cleaners. My friend doesn't think it's funny either. He is still in a quandary as to how to replace his main CSR. We have to convince ourselves that we must set standards and not settle for anything less. Once we start to settle, we end up with garbage. As the old computer saying goes, "garbage in, garbage out." It's great to be in the same position that my friend was in when he gave his employee the ultimatum, but we are all not willing to let a key person go when we know how hard it is to find a new person. We also know that we must fill in the missing hours of their shift, and that's not an easy task.

The alternative to not having the right CSRs is having a business where our customers are not served properly and our businesses are not growing the way they should. Even in this economy, where we would think that there are tons of people looking for jobs, the response that most of us are getting from our help wanted ads is pitiful. I'm not sure what the solution is, but certainly extended training and the right supervision are some of the keys. How many times do we hire someone and in a few days they are handling customers on their own? A handbook or job description and responsibilities are a good start.

Constant surveillance can also work. Trudy Adams of Cleaners Supply is a member of our group. She says, she listens in to the phone calls of her CSRs as often as she can, to make sure they are following the right procedures. Most of her business is done on the phone, so that's what she monitors. For many of us, camera systems and off-site surveillance are also great tools. However, surveillance is a double-edged sword. If you find out something that is wrong, are you willing to act on it? Of course the real problem comes when you find the CSR behaving so poorly that retraining just won't work. I truly don't think it's possible to change a person's attitude, and for me attitude is the single most important thing that a CSR can bring to the job.

It's extremely important that we examine our CSRs and really determine if we have the best ones possible. If we don't, we must make the changes necessary for our businesses to succeed and grow. If we take the first step of evaluating our front counter and customer service employees, then we will be able to take the second step of retraining, improving, or replacing them.

Good Luck!

*Ed Roth is the owner of U.N. Cleaners in Flushing, NY. He is an active member of the Golomb Group. If you have comments or questions about Ed's articles, please contact him by e-mail: [edrothun@aol.com](mailto:edrothun@aol.com) or tel:(718) 969-0207*

# THE GOLOMB GROUP WELCOMES THIS MONTH'S NEW MEMBERS

## **Craig Benedict**

Alpine Dry Cleaners & Laundry  
Longview, TX

## **John Layden**

Colonial 100 Cleaners  
Exton, PA

## **Brett Donaldson**

Donaldson's One Hour Cleaners  
Neenah, WA

## **Ed Longenecker**

Iris City Cleaners  
Mt. Pleasant, IA

## **Christian Nguyen**

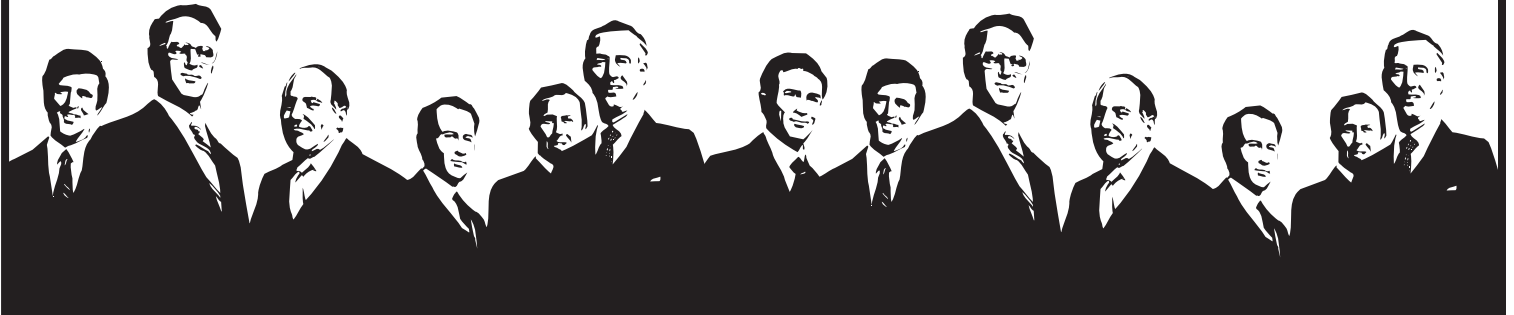
Kayla Cleaners  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

## **Mark Vaught**

One The Spot  
Wichita, KS

## **Seth Friedman**

Rye Ridge Cleaners  
Rye Brook, NY



## **Employees May Have The Answer**

As the city of St. Petersburg, Russia, was being laid out early in the 18th century, planners were plagued by the presence of many large boulders deposited by a glacier centuries before. One particularly large rock was in the path of one of the principle avenues, and leaders were looking for ways to remove it.

As officials pondered their options, a peasant worker offered to remove the boulder. Because they had nothing to lose, the officials gave the peasant the job.

The next morning, the peasant showed up with a crowd of workers, all carrying shovels. They began digging a huge hole next to the boulder, propping it up with timbers to prevent it from rolling into the hole.

When the hole was big enough, the props were removed, and the rock was dropped into the hole beneath the street level. The workers then covered the rock with dirt, and carted the extra soil away.

That's an early example of how workers can, sometimes, solve a problem. While the officials pondered how to move the rock from one place to another on the city's surface, the worker looked at the problem from a different angle.

The next time you're stumped by a workflow or production problem, consider asking employees, who may be closer to the problem, for help in finding a solution.

# Should you pay your pressers by the hour or by the piece?

## By Don Desrosiers

The majority of drycleaners that I have had the pleasure to meet pay their pressers hourly. In that group, there are pressers that press anywhere from 3 pieces to 60 pieces per hour. That is quite a spread. When the subject of production comes up, piece-work is sometimes mentioned. Sometimes by me, sometimes by the plant owner. There are 2 myths related to piece work: Quality suffers (not true) and that it fixes production issues (in certain circumstances, yes). Quality will suffer when you start paying by the piece if doing so simultaneously causes your inspector to go blind. That's about it. Shifting the way you pay someone – how you tabulate how much you owe an employee – has nothing to do with your expectations of quality from your pressers or from your inspector. I can barely acknowledge the connection.

The second myth, which suggests that paying by piece-work will boost your production, is only partially true. Suppose that you have a presser that presses 18 pants per hour, 35 hours per week. You pay her \$10 per hour. Effectively, that works out to be 56 cents per piece. You want to double that; 35 pants per hour. What do you pay her on a per piece basis? 30 cents? 60 cents? Somewhere in between? If you choose 30 cents, her pay will drop to, effectively, \$5.40 per hour. Good luck keeping an employee at that pay, but suppose that this is just the ticket that does boost productivity, and your presser does 35 pants per hour now, at 30 cents per piece. The problem with this is that we aren't making pants, we're pressing them. The fact is, there are only 630 pants to press (18 pants per hour for 35 hours). Sure, now it only costs you \$189 to press pants (630 pants X .30 each). Your pants presser works twice as hard to make half as much. It won't fly. If you decide to pay 60 cents per piece, you will pay the same as you're paying now with a dubious benefit. You will finish sooner, in theory. Perhaps there is a savings if the plant closes sooner, but the fact is, your presser can't make more money than before.

So does paying by piece ever make sense? Absolutely. Let's say Mary presses pants at the rate of 35 per hour, does a good job and all is well. Except when volume slips off. She still works the same number of hours and costs you the same number of dollars, but she can press 1400 pants in 40 hours, but will still work 40 hours when there is only 1000 pants. You have heard this referred to as "work expands with the time allowed." When volume dips and sales are down, the company takes a hit, but it's a double-whammy when the payroll doesn't drop proportionately. If you pay Mary by the piece, say 30 cents, it will always cost you 30 cents. Mary has proven that she can press 35 pants per hour. If she wants to slow down, she will not make more money while you are making less. She will make the same whether she works 29 hours or 40 hours. She is apt to choose the former. Paying by the piece helps to keep your labor proportional to your sales. **The secret is to start piece work pay when it is busy and production is good.** At that time, piece pay does nothing for production and doesn't save you any money, but the savings will come when it gets slow again.

***"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got."***

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# Give Them the Shirt Off Your Back!

I'm sure most of you have seen the Travelocity commercials featuring the gnome statue posed in famous places around the world. They're funny, but more importantly, memorable.

A fun-loving customer of Golomb Group Member Mark Payne's Vogue Cleaners in Lafayette, IN, came up with a similar promotion that any drycleaner could use, just for the cost of having shirts printed with their logo on them. I would forward this message to every customer for whom you have an email address, create a large in-store display (8' x 4') to post photos and feature it on the front page of your website.

Once you get the ball rolling, send out press releases to the news media with some of the funniest photos. If they pick up on it, you'll get thousands of dollars worth of free publicity. It's the kind of fun thing people will remember for a long time.

This is her email she's sending to her friends:

Hello All,

Here's something that may prove to be lots of fun!

Just before the holidays I ran into Mark Payne, the owner of Vogue Cleaners on Kossuth St., while dropping off my dry cleaning. I told Mark that if he gave me a Vogue Cleaners shirt, I'd wear it to holiday parties. He gave me the shirt and I wore it! That gave Mark an idea.....he wants to set up a web page and a bulletin board at the cleaners with photos of customers in Vogue Cleaners' shirts doing everything from daily chores to going on exotic vacations.

**When you go in to drop off your cleaning (whether you are a new or established customer) just ask for a Vogue Cleaners shirt and tell them I sent you. If you are a new customer you will receive \$25 in complementary cleaning, if you are an established customer you will receive \$15 in complementary cleaning! You must:**

- 1) Drop off a **dry cleaning order**
- 2) Identify yourself as a **new or established customer**
- 3) Ask for a **Vogue Cleaners shirt**
- 4) And tell them **Pat Rosen sent you**

Then have a digital photo taken of you in the Vogue Cleaners shirt doing something (work, gardening, mowing, partying, dining in or out, hunting, vacationing, meditating.....whatever) and send it to Mark Payne at mpvoguecleaners@comcast.net along with a tag line such as "Gave up the Hawaiian shirt for my Vogue Cleaners shirt in Maui", "Lit up Broadway with my Vogue Cleaners shirt", "Can't enjoy my frozen custard unless I'm in my Vogue Cleaners shirt", "My lawn always looks better in my Vogue Cleaners shirt", "The fish always bite better in my Vogue Cleaners shirt". Mark will post photos on a web site and on a bulletin board at the cleaners.

Send this message on to everyone you know. It will be fun seeing who shows up where, doing what in a Vogue Cleaners shirt! Let's get creative.....what does your pet do in a Vogue Cleaners shirt? Did you close the "big deal" in your Vogue Cleaners shirt? Are you "gestating" in a Vogue Cleaners shirt? Did you lower your handicap in a Vogue Cleaners shirt? I know lots of you are talented with Photo Shop, why not create something "out of this world"? Pix should be tasteful and appropriate, if you know what I mean.

This is real, not a joke! Call Vogue Cleaners to confirm the offer! Let the games begin!

Pat R.