

## **Report on Anonymous Feedback from the Cleaning Team and Proposed Action Plan.**

29/10/24

José García Oliva [JGO]

### **1. Perception and Treatment**

[JGO] The team feels often marginalised by both the general public and some of the high management team.

quotes:

- “They [general public] look at us like we are nobody.”
- “What a cleaner says, they don’t know.”
- “Sometimes, some of the management team talks to us as if we are ignorant.”
- “They think we are stupid.”
- “If something is missing, they [everyone] immediately blame us without proof.”
- “They always tell us not to touch anything, but we are not the only ones in this building. Why do they only look at us?”
- “We’re only here to clean, but they still lock us out of rooms and restrict our access without explanation.”
- “That’s the way it is.”

### **Comments**

Management should implement transparent communication policies, ensuring that all access restrictions or procedural changes are clearly explained to the cleaning staff, including the reasoning behind these decisions. In addition, accountability measures should be put in place to ensure that any incidents, such as missing items, are thoroughly investigated before assigning blame, using a fact-based approach, including CCTV reviews, to avoid unsupported accusations.

### **2. Recognition**

[JGO] The team expresses a desire for recognition, especially from higher management. They feel underappreciated, which negatively impacts their work motivation. There is also frustration over unequal working conditions compared to other shifts, despite equal pay.

quotes:

- “Thank you isn’t enough, but it’s something.”
- “I would like more appreciation from the high management team.”
- “It’s difficult to know that the morning team gets paid the same as us, even though our work conditions are different—everyone knows it.”
- “If we don’t feel appreciated, how do you expect us to work effectively? Why the threatening tone?”
- “We wish one of the management members would spend a night with us to understand what we do [this was a general comment of many].”

### **comments**

Management should implement a recognition program that highlights the cleaning team's contributions during company-wide meetings or bulletins, as simple acknowledgements can greatly improve morale. Additionally, a manager-shadowing initiative should be organised, where management members work alongside the cleaning team to better understand their workload and challenges. Finally, a reevaluation of pay structures is recommended to consider wage differentials that reflect the varying work conditions across shifts, especially for those working night shifts.

## **3. Work Conditions**

**[JGO]** There is a recurring theme of blame when something is missing, which is exacerbated by the restrictions placed on the cleaning team, including limited access to certain areas. This can easily stimulate feelings of mistrust and low morale.

quotes:

- “Every time something is missing, they look at us.”
- “They have CCTV. If I take something, the camera will see it, but they still come back to us, saying ‘please don’t touch this.’”
- “There is a room next door that we’re not allowed to enter. They closed it after something went missing, blaming us without proof.”
- “We are only here to clean, yet they restrict us as if we’re doing something wrong.”

### **comments**

Management should review and adjust access restrictions to ensure they are reasonable and clearly explain why they are in place. Additionally, security protocols should be improved by enhancing surveillance and logging systems to ensure no team member is blamed without proper evidence, helping to build trust, key between the cleaning staff and management.

## **4. Breaks and Rest**

**[JGO]** The team is unhappy about the restrictions placed on their breaks. They express frustration over the lack of freedom during unpaid break times, especially when working at night.

quotes:

- “If you aren’t paying for my break, I should be able to do whatever I want [within the common sense], even nap if I choose to.”
- “If we’re not paid for our breaks, we should be free to spend that time as we choose.”
- “Even during my break, they don’t let us close our eyes.”
- “I’m not allowed to sit where I clean.”
- “They ask us why we need to sit in a dark place during our break.”

- “Why are you sitting in a dark room? They don’t understand our situation. [what it means to work in the graveyard shift]”

#### **comments**

Management should revise the break policy to allow cleaning staff to use their unpaid breaks as they see fit, including napping if needed, ensuring the policy is fair and consistent with general workplace practices. Additionally, designated and comfortable rest areas should be provided where the cleaning team can relax without being questioned or monitored during their breaks.

### **5. Mental Health and Well-being**

**[JGO]** The team is concerned about the lack of mental health support, despite this being mentioned during training.

quotes:

- “We don’t have any mental health support. They said during training that we do, but we haven’t been offered any.”
- “At the end of the day, we don’t want to work in an environment where we don’t feel appreciated, which eventually affects our mental health.”

#### **comments:**

Management should offer accessible mental health resources, like counseling or an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and regularly remind staff of these options.

### **6. Communication and Expectations**

**[JGO]** There are concerns about poor communication and mismatched expectations regarding the team’s work.

quotes:

- “What we see and what we don’t see matters a lot [in the context of communication].”
- “Sometimes, the body language tells me what you don’t say.”
- “In all the ways you speak to me, I’m listening to what you are not saying.”
- “There are mismatched expectations about our work.”

#### **comments**

No further comments.

### **7. Impact of Robots**

**[JGO]** nothing to add here.

quotes:

- “They brought a robot, but it doesn’t clean tables or toilets and now it doesn’t work properly.”
- “Robots work for a few hours, then need charging for two full hours. We work all night without even being allowed a nap during our break.”
- “You can’t tell me that robots are better than me, because that implies I’m useless or not good enough for this job.”
- “Why are we even comparing robots to human beings? This only fuels feelings of inferiority.”

**comments**

No further comments.