Serving the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Industry Worldwide

The IKECA Journal is an industry publication for cleaners, fire marshals, insurance professionals, facility managers, vendors and other interested parties in the commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning and inspection industry.

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Letter From the IKECA President

From the Desk of the President
Neal A. Iorii Jr, CESI

Writing this letter is bittersweet for me as it is my last Journal letter as the IKECA President (bitter), but I know I am leaving my position with a great Board of Directors, and an amazing management team at the helm (sweet). Like most of my predecessors, my presidency (and tenure on the IKECA Board) has definitely had its share of ups and downs, wins and losses, successes and failures, but I have enjoyed almost every minute of it.

As many of you may or may not know; we have a new association management company: Stringfellow Management Group (SMG). The selection process took quite a bit of time, starting back in May 2018, between putting an RFP together, researching which companies to invite, and making the final decisions as a board. In the end, we picked a great one. The transition was arduous to say the least, but we are through it with so much work being done by the SMG team to get IKECA on track to do great things for IKECA and the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry in the near future. In case you did not know, the SMG team working directly with IKECA is:

Kathleen A. DeMarco - Executive Director
April Rose - Director of Membership & Meetings
Sara Duginske - Director of Certification & Standards
Rene Bonner - Membership Coordinator
Gina Gibson - Certification Coordinator

Although she is no longer working directly with IKECA, I have to give a big THANK YOU to Mary Connor of SMG. Mary was IKECA’s interim Executive Director during the transition, and I truly believe we would not have gotten through the transition so quickly without her. Thank you Mary!

It was great seeing everyone in Jacksonville, FL! What a wonderful conference and wonderful city! Thank you Kevin Pearson, the entire Conference Committee, and SMG team for all of your hard work, you made it look easy! If you were not there, there was definitely a safety theme. IKECA’s own Eric Scolari gave us his all with his seminars and let us know we can always be safer in the work place. I took away several things that I have already implemented in our business. It wasn’t just Mr. Scolari. The vendor demos did not disappoint. Seeing the latest and greatest in what is out there to help us continue to “clean to a higher standard” is one of the many great things about going to an IKECA conference. The rest of the seminars given by members were fantastic!

As we look forward to the Annual Conference in Charlotte, NORTH CAROLINA (throw your hands up!) in April, the Conference Committee has already been working diligently to put together another great show for all of us. I am excited to see old friends, make new ones and learn more about this incredible industry we have chosen to be part of. There is so much knowledge to gain in and out of the seminars at an IKECA conference from classroom setting to networking with other members to chatting with the sponsors about different methods of cleaning. But I have said it time and time again, the best part of an IKECA conference is the group therapy. You realize you are not alone in what we do. That is absolutely priceless.

Lastly, I urge you all to get involved. I have sat on the IKECA board of directors for 12 out of 13 years. I have worked closely with some of the brightest, hardest working and most influential people in the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry. Many of whom chose to continue to volunteer for IKECA on a regular basis, some of whom are no longer in the business, and some who are no longer with us. People with a passion for IKECA and the industry as a whole. Men and women who put differences, and competition, aside to do what was right for IKECA. I have built life long friendships with most, if not all, of them. People who, personally and professionally, have celebrated each other’s success (even if they were fierce competitors) and helped each other through their losses. I have grown in knowledge and wisdom because of the dedicated people I have worked with on the IKECA board. It has been worth every minute and every penny I have spent (and then some) to be a part of the IKECA board of directors. And believe me, it’s not ALL work. We have definitely had more than our share of fun together as well. OK, a lot of fun!

Thank you to everyone who has been part of IKECA! See you in Charlotte!
Transitions... and Foundations
Kathleen A. DeMarco, CAE / IKECA Executive Director

IKECA has made a significant transition in the past year, to better ensure the viability and future of the organization and its important programs. IKECA President Neal Iorio, in his President’s Letter in this issue, provides insight for the IKECA Members into the steps taken by the IKECA leadership to ensure a timely management transition, with minimal disruption. It is through that transition that I am honored to write my first “Executive Director’s Message” for the IKECA Journal.

All organizations go through transitions, with varying success. From my perspective, having over 30 years’ experience in trade association management, those trade associations with solid foundations are the ones which are able to best embrace transitions, and that has held true for IKECA. Had IKECA’s leadership not been as cohesive and collaborative in its leadership of the transition process... or, had IKECA been challenged by a lack of resources... or, had IKECA volunteers not been as engaged in ongoing activities... the management transition would have been exponentially more challenging—and costly.

These foundation “best states” – strong leadership, availability of resources, and the powerful engagement of volunteers – benefit IKECA and have helped form a foundation for growth, through the new partnership with Stringfellow Management Group, Inc.

For me, spring 2020 will also be my first opportunity to meet many of the IKECA Members in person for the first time, at the 2020 Annual Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. What a great event the Conference Committee and Board have planned. Please, if you are in Charlotte, come say hello!

As the new IKECA Executive Director, I’ve been spending these first few weeks getting to know the organization, its Members, and the benefits it provides to the KEC industry. I’ve had the pleasure of interacting with many of the Board members, Committee chairs and Members and am privileged to be working alongside a team of professionals who have excellent customer service as their number one goal. Together, we’ll position the organization to continue to fulfill its mission, and also to explore potential new initiatives to carry IKECA into this new decade.

SAVE THE DATE
Fall Technical Seminar and Expo
October 21 - 24, 2020
Hyatt Regency Milwaukee, WI
As we have all seen a great deal of changes in our organization over the last year, it has been my privilege to accept some new responsibilities within the organization that have been part of the changes that we’ve seen. Just prior to our conference in Las Vegas, NV, I was asked to serve as an interim director and chair of the IKECA Conference Committee. While we faced a challenge with the management company changes, there was a great deal of Board support as well as support from the membership and Conference Committee. The transition from Fernley & Fernley to Stringfellow Management Group (SMG) occurred right before the Fall Technical Seminar in Jacksonville, FL leaving us with a limited amount of time for planning.

It must be noted that with the time limitations facing us the Fall Technical Seminar as well as the trade show was a tremendous success. Much of this credit must go to our new management team, SMG, and those who participated on the Conference Committee calls leading up to the meeting. Additionally we should be very appreciative of our sponsors who helped the conference financially as well as provided valuable educational content about their products and services, along with sharing insights into our industry and upcoming changes.

The year 2020 will have some significant changes for the Conference Committee. As of the first of the year the committee is now co-chaired by Randy Russo (also new to the IKECA Board of Directors), as I will be retiring from the Board of Directors as of the 2020 Annual meeting. I will stay on as Co-chair to assist Mr. Russo with the transition up to our Fall Technical Seminar in Milwaukee, WI, and then remain on the Committee at the pleasure of Chairman Russo. I urge everyone on the Committee as well as anyone interested in joining the Committee, to support Randy as he assumes these new responsibilities.

As I retire from my short tenure as Conference Committee Chair, I would like to say thank you for this privilege and to note that we’ve had some high points worthy of mention. Considering previous management company difficulties, as well as the complexities of changing to a new management company, we’ve had two very successful conferences in 2019. We have established a much longer planning range to get dates and locations of conferences published to assist our members in early planning and budgeting. We have a stable conference team in the staff of SMG, as well as a fresh look at many of the aspects of our conference planning due to the insights that they’ve brought. As we look forward to the 2020 conferences and beyond, I am confident that we will continue to make improvements and bring to our membership conferences worthy of their attendance.

The IKECA Education Committee works to create valuable, education tools and resources for our members and kitchen exhaust industry professionals all over the world.

Most recently, the Education Committee has been working on updates to training materials intended to help Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) understand our industry and the intersection of what they do with fire suppression and the kitchen exhaust industry. Jim Roberts Jr. and myself presented to the Ohio Fire Code Academy in March 2020. Our goal is to develop training materials that will allow other skilled IKECA members to assist in providing education to AHJs around the country and world.

The Education Committee is currently working on an Inspector Top Ten List with information on fire, line safety and codes. We’re also planning to partner with the Certification Committee to enhance our examination study materials.

If you haven’t already, check out our online Resource Library: https://ikeca.org/about-ikeca/resource-library/

The Education Committee is looking for new members. If you’d like to know more about the Committee or assist with projects, please email info@ikeca.org.

The IKECA Marketing Committee is committed to collaborating with, supporting and encouraging the Board of Directors and the other IKECA Committees

Continues on page 07
CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE
CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CECT</th>
<th>10 hours (1.0 CEUs) every 24 months</th>
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<tr>
<td>CECS</td>
<td>20 hours (1.5 CEUs) every 12 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>CESI</td>
<td>40 hours (3.0 CEUs) every 24 months</td>
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Proof of appropriate number of CEUs completed must accompany your IKECA Certification Renewal. Payment of the renewal fee alone is not sufficient to renew your certification.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>CEUs/Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at the IKECA Annual Meeting or Fall Technical Seminar</td>
<td>Up to 2.0 CEUs</td>
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<td>Up to 20 hours of content available per meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting at the IKECA Annual Meeting, Fall Technical Seminar OR other</td>
<td>0.5 CEUs</td>
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<td>industry-related events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of a technical article for the IKECA Journal</td>
<td>0.3 CEUs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximately 3 hours of content per article</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at an industry-related conference, meeting or seminar *</td>
<td>Up to 1.0 CEUs</td>
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<td>Eligible for a maximum of 1.0 CEUs per meeting</td>
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<td>Presenting to local AHJs within your jurisdiction</td>
<td>0.5 CEUs</td>
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<td>Must submit official documentation signed by an AHJ on their letterhead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting to local AHJs within your jurisdiction</td>
<td>Up to 1.0 CEUs</td>
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<td>Eligible for a maximum of 1.0 CEUs per meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting at in-house training seminar, or one at another facility **</td>
<td>0.1 CEUs/Day</td>
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<td>0.1 CEUs per one hour of content</td>
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<td>Online educational training programs</td>
<td>0.1 CEUs/Day</td>
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<td>0.1 CEUs per one hour of content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop online assessment content with affiliate industry organizations</td>
<td>0.5 CEUs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximately 3 hours of content development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Code Committee Work (NFPA, ASHRAE, ANSI Consensus Body)</td>
<td>1.0 CEUs/Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Participation in an IKECA Committee</td>
<td>0.1 CEUs/Meeting</td>
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<td>0.1 CEU per committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>College courses - general and business management courses by accredited</td>
<td>0.1 CEUs/Meeting</td>
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<td>Only 25% of CEUs per renewal cycle may come from college courses</td>
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PLEASE NOTE: If you rely on attending IKECA meetings or conferences to obtain the required CEUs, attendance is tracked, and certificates of attendance issued based on actual attendance.

*Acceptable organizations include: NADCA, ASHRAE, NAFA, NFPA, NAFED, RFMA, NASFM. For all others, please contact IKECA to confirm eligibility.

**Must be taught by 3rd party instructor or certified to train the subject matter. (Qualifying topics include but are not limited to: ladder safety, PPE, fall protection, hood/system service, near miss reporting, defensive driving, etc.) Before pursuing a course, contact IKECA to ensure the course qualifies.
IKECA works with Laidlaw Group to manage the website, social media and event promotions. In 2019, Laidlaw Group provided regular monthly website maintenance and updates including a new policy to ensure our information is backed up weekly. Laidlaw Group also facilitated the migration to a new membership platform. You should have received your new log in information in Fall 2019. If you have any questions about logging into the website please email the staff at info@ikeca.org.

Laidlaw continues to do website updates including:

- Building mini sites for the meetings which include creating a meeting specific dash-board with links to hotel accommodations, conference events, speaker profiles, schedule and registration information
- Making updates and replacing old documents with updated versions.
- Updating the homepage banner with current content and design slides.
- Updating the news ticker
- Promotion of IKECA Events

Over the last year IKECA has seen substantial increases in traffic to the webpages particularly in certification. We have also seen over a 50% increase in social and organic traffic. Organic traffic are visitors that find a website after using a search engine like Google or Bing, so they are not “referred” by any other website. Social traffic refers to traffic coming to our website from social networks and social media platforms (See page 30).

Keep an eye out for upcoming promotions about the Annual Membership Meeting. The meeting will be held April 28-May 2, 2020 in Charlotte, North Carolina and will feature educational sessions, social events, and ample networking opportunities. Our 2020 Program will be centered around “Commitment to Quality” as we focus on businesses and how to provide the best service for the KEC industry, how to strengthen employment, problem solving techniques, and marketing best practices.
Update from the Membership Committee, continued

Dennis Poulin & Frank Mitarotonda Sr.

new kitchen exhaust cleaning industry or Associate member applicants. Looking forward, the Membership Committee is in the early stages of developing a demographic analysis of the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry that will better serve the understanding and direction of how IKECA moves forward.

Update from the Certification Committee

The IKECA Certification Committee has been hard at work to streamline and improve the credentialing process. We have taken on several projects in the last few months:

• Creation of free, downloadable Certification Handbooks for the CECT, CECS and CESI. These Handbooks including information on IKECA policies and procedures, the application process, what will be on the examinations, how to study for the exam and renewal requirements. Any and all interested candidates should download and read the Handbooks in their entirety. They can be found online: https://ikeca.org/certification/
• Updating the examination applications. The applications were streamlined for ease of use and made to be fillable pdfs. The new applications can be found online: https://ikeca.org/certification/exam-application-and-resources/
• Secured another year of administrating the Boston certification programs.
• Created Examination Content graphics to help candidates understand the breakdown of what is on each examination. These can be found in each Certification Handbook.

The Committee has much more to explore this year including updating the examinations and developing procedures that allow for easier candidate and renewal application processing.

We’re always looking for subject matter experts to join the Committee. If you’re interested in learning more about how you can participate in the development and maintenance of IKECA credentials, email us at info@ikeca.org.

Update from the Technical Standards Development Committee

James Shea & James Roberts

Greetings to all IKECA members! I’d like to wish you and your families all a safe & prosperous new year! The Technical Committee and Management Support Staff have been very busy this past year and felt it time to provide the membership with an update of what’s happening.

As many of you are aware, IKECA hired a new management company this past year, Stringfellow Management Group. As a part of this new group the technical committee welcomed its newest member to the executive staff appointed by Stringfellow Management Group. Sara Duginske has joined our team and she brings a great deal of knowledge and drive to our organization. If you have not met her yet, be sure to introduce yourselves at the Spring Meeting.

Sara Duginske is appointed as the Director of Certification & Standards and joins the organization with previous ANSI certification experience. I can speak on behalf of the entire committee when I say she is a welcome part of the team! Already hitting the ground running by inheriting the remainder of our ANSI audit for the C10 & I10 Standards with superior performance and immediate attendance at the committee’s fall meeting. Please feel free to channel any communications regarding Technical Committee matters directly to her. Her contact information can be found on page 13.

Other exciting Committee News includes the following:

• We have renamed the committee from the previous ANSI / IKECA Consensus Body to a more appropriate title to support the close working relationship the committee has with the International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Board of Directors and membership. Although the code body remains autonomous, we could not achieve the things we do without the positive support from IKECA Board Members, Association Members and the many individual contributions from IKECA’s membership. As we continue to

Continues on page 10
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develop and improve upon fire and life safety in commercial kitchens, the committee will now be recognized as the International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA) Technical Standards Development Committee.

• We are excited to welcome our very first AHJ and full-time Fire Official as a principal committee member. Captain Kenneth Asselin of the West Bend Wisconsin Fire Department has joined our committee and will help to provide insight into the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) challenges as well as strategies to support the execution and enforcement of our Standards. We hope to have more AHJ’s join our ranks and be sure to welcome Kenny to the team if you see him at one of IKECA’s events!

• On November 15, 2017 the committee through nomination and full membership voting support elected myself as Chair and James Roberts of Derby Fire Equipment as Vice Chair for a period of 5 years. Reaffirmation of Chair and Vice Chair was unanimously approved by committee during the fall 2019 meeting.

• Standards Update
  1. M10 Standard for the Methodology is now a Recognized ANSI National Standard! The committee is proud to announce the third part or our ANSI Approved Standards package. The M10 Standard, 1st Edition was approved by the ANSI Standards Council and is now available for distribution to your customers, Fire Officials, and insurance industry to aide in the support for better life safety. As true professionals in the field of Commercial Exhaust Cleaning you now have a 3-part series of ANSI Approved National Standards to lead your companies, communities, and authorities in support of our ultimate goals of protection of life and property. I am so proud to help lead this final document and carry-out Bernie Besal’s vision!
  2. The I10 Standard entered the 2nd edition cycle this year. We went through the cycle process and concluded that process at the fall meeting in Jacksonville Florida and will be submitting the 2nd edition of the I10 Standard for final ANSI approval soon following some final administrative process conclusions. The 2nd Edition I10 standard should be available for circulation early in the second quarter of 2020.
  3. The C10 standard is about to begin its 3rd edition cycle this year. A “Call to Action” was sent to all IKECA members, AHJs, and User Groups that we have email addresses for. In addition, it is also posted on IKECA’s website and the PINS announcement was published by ANSI on 2/21/20 to all affected parties. Remember these are your standards! They will only get better & more enforceable with the support, inputs, and help of contributions from our IKECA members.
  4. The committee will meet this spring on several agenda items including the public proposals to the new revision of C10, the recently completed ANSI audit on C10 & I10, and the technical committee’s Standard Operating Procedures updates. In addition, our sub-committee chairs will report on their perspective areas. Currently there are several sub-committees and they are always happy to hear from experts as well as seek members to sit on the committees.

The committees include:
• Definitions Committee – Chair; Nelson Dilg
• Emerging Technologies – Chair; Mike Rosenau
• Code & Data Collection – Chair; Neil Iorii
• Education – Chair; Joe Dalheimer

Jim and I want to thank all IKECA’s members for your support and participation. Please stay engaged to make our National Standards the Industry accepted practices through their use, distribution, education and adoption. It is only through distribution by IKECA members to the insurance and AHJ communities that they will truly become the “Best Practices” of the industry.
New Certifications

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO RECENTLY ACHIEVED THEIR DESIGNATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS!

**CECS Certified Exhaust Cleaning Specialist**
- Greg Moore / Fleetwash, INC.
- Gabriel De La Plaza / Fleetwash, INC.
- Jason Jones / Tecnaclean, INC.
- Bernie Braunwalder / Maximum Exhaust Cleaning
- Avi Shendy / United Hood Cleaning
- Chris Kim / GMB, Inc.
- Michael Knodel / US Vents
- Matt Haywood / Kingdom Fire Protection
- Patrick Hexaire / Grease Busters, LLC
- Trent Anderson / Fire Protection Specialists
- George Ulley / All Safe Fire Protection
- Aaron Theriault / Impact Fire
- Eric Armstrong / Fleetwash, INC.
- Darrell Gibbs / Fleetwash, INC.
- Anthony Cerda / Fleetwash, INC.
- Adolfo Cerda / Fleetwash, INC.
- Luis Corrales / Fleetwash, INC.
- Zachary Arnold / Kingdom Fire Protection
- Matthew Ellis / Assiniboine Fire Protection, Inc.
- Alexander Rodriguez / Restaurant Technologies
- David Watkins / Fleetwash, INC.
- Scott Hurley / Vulcan Fire & Safety Systems, LTD
- Francisco Ribera / Fleetwash, INC.
- Melissa Rocca / Neptune Powerwash

**CECT Certified Exhaust Cleaning Technician**
- Adrian Montez / Pro-Tech Fire
- Ken Brandon / R & K Maintenance, LLC
- Chester Paul / BCP Mechanical
- Andre McSwain / Restaurant Technologies
- Kayodi Whitley / Airways Cleaning
- Carson McDonald / The Steam Guy Inc.
- Anthony Impriano / Filter Shine USA
- Brian Harris / Clean My Ducts
- Jeremy Kilde / Northland Fire Protection Equipment Company
- Daejuan Walker / Northland Fire Protection Equipment Company
- Geoff Bishop / Silver Lining Hood Cleaners

**BCCS Boston Certified Cleaning Specialist**
- Richard Regan Jr. / Nelbud
- Frederique Markendy / Nelbud
- Richard Willard / Omni Pro
- Francis Carl / Omni Pro
- Deontae Manesis / Advantage Air Cleaning
- Matthew Galvin / One Call Ventilation
- Richard Schlessinger / A.S.A.P. Fire and Safety
- Andrew Hall / Omni Pro
- Michael DeStefano / Advantage Hood Cleaning
- Robert Castaldi / Air Duct Services division of BMCA
- Shannen Allen / Advantage Hood Cleaning
- Byron Lursen / Boston Hood Cleaning and Fire Protection
- Guy Grant / Air Duct Services Division of BMCA
- Lindley Grossman / Bay State Exhaust Services
- Joseph Trudell / Air Duct Services division of BMCA
- Kenneth DeRouche / Cochrane Ventilation
- Joseph Squatrito / Cochrane Ventilation

**BCSI Boston Certified System Inspector**
- Jonathan Sholik / CS Ventilation
New Members

Active Individual
- Courtney English / Performance Industrial
- Jill Graziano / Cochrane Ventilation, Inc.
- James Brown / Grease Proof
- Felix Cartagena / Lifestyle Cleaning Solutions
- Chris Hillyer / Fyr-ex fire protection
- Brian O'Rourke / Impact Fire Services

Active International
- Gilbert Haber / TGH sarl
- Kelvin Bruce / EPSCO Industrial Services Philippines Inc.
- Randal Kunimura / Best Way Cleaning Services
- Yonghoon Jung / Tomato Seven
- Ariel V. Lunar / All Clean Living Inc.
- Mike Creamer / Kitchen Hoods Express
- Jeremy Keller / Extreme Cleaning, Inc.
- Aaron Muller / Mr Hood Clean
- Teisha Eiler / Silver Lining Hood Cleaners, Inc.
- Joseph McLean, Jr. / Mintie, LLC

AHJ
- Ketty Fedigan / Sffd
- Jon Lodge / Casa Grande Fire Dept
- Banks Wallace / Harnett County Emergency Services
- Bart Meinhardt / Anchorage Fire Department - Fire Prevention
- Jeremy Work / City of Kalispell Building Department
- Craig Snyder / La Crosse Fire Department
- Kate Schramm / Bradford-West Gwillimbury Fire and Emergency Services Headquarters
- Dave Baker / Orillia Fire Station 1
- Clarence Simpson / Deerfield Fire Department
- Kris Scott / Columbia Fire Department
- Jay Wingfield / Hurlburt Field Fire & Emergency Services
- Jeremy Alldred-Hughes / Huntsville Fire Dept
- Jessica Yaniw / Grey Highlands Fire
- Mark Smith / Columbia Fire Department
- Chris Bryant / Mauldin Fire Department
- Sandra Duncan / Greater Toronto Airports Authority, Toronto Pearson / International Airport
- Mike Vadlja / Huntsville Fire Dept/Lake of Bays Fire Department
- Ron Matkowski / Aurora Fire Department
- David Hattinger / Tallmadge Fire Department
- Russ Holmes / Northshore Fire Department
- Chip Earls / CCFR
- Richard Chudy / Main-Transit Fire/NYS CEO
- Deidra Peterson / Virginia Beach Fire Prevention Bureau

- Kenneth Willis / Columbia Fire Department
- Jason Landis / City of Kalispell Building Department
- Chris Lance / Nassau County Fire Rescue
- Jeff Tresness / City of Tacoma Fire Department
- Paul Barritt / Orillia Fire Station 1
- Dean Holloway / Pleasant Prairie Fire Department
- Gary Hoe / City of Kalispell Building Department
- Anthony Marotta / Aurora Fire Department

Associate Individual
- Angel Tinoco / FireControl LLC

Associate Member
- Steve Bosworth / Zink Food Service
- Chris Abdelmalek / Academy Fire
- Aaron Theriault / Impact Fire/ Academy Fire

Food Service Industry
- Suresh Ankam / Mahatma Mandir Convention Center
- Valerie Jones / Optimum Management Solutions
- Melinda Keeffe / Wings Air Solutions
- Reygan Nery / RBN Kitchenworld Supplies
- Gregory Castle / Hoods Under Castles
- Michael Cavalieri / LCS Facilitygroup
- Adam Bliss
- David Shelby / Great Lakes Power Wash
- Edwin Cordero / BBL Hospitality
- Elliott Moore / Dolly’s Bar And Grill
- Mohammed Tariq / TriStar Hoods Inc
- Nathalie Maan / M.J.E. Ventilation

International Active Individual
- Seulgi Yoon / Tomato Seven
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Top 4 Qualities of a Positive Influential Leader
Brian Smith / IA Business Advisors

IKECA has been a leader in the kitchen exhaust industry since 1989. Their motivation to preserve the safety of life and property has led this industry into a new age, where safety and education are held paramount. As leaders of our own organizations, we can look to IKECA as a mentor to guide us towards being positive leaders for our teams. As a business consultant, I have recognized these top 4 qualities of being a positive, influential leader in IKECA, organizations around the globe, and people.

Composure & Self-Control
By losing composure or self-control, under most situations, it means having an inflation of emotion. Regardless of if those emotions are positive or negative, they do tend to compromise composure. Individuals who can stay composed and are thus operating at a more level baseline of emotion are able to get more done. By staying composed, one can stay focused. That level of focus is what allows individuals to be more productive and influential than their distracted counterparts.

It also means conducting yourself in a manner that, while you may be internally screaming, displays calmness on the outside. Having control of your language and tone, while still not feeling internally calm, shows a certain amount of self-control. It is fair to assume that people need to be offered a way to manage their composure. Since life can be stressful, which wears down composure and self-control, we need an outlet for those negative feelings so that we can maintain composure.

Composure is about being disciplined in a way where you don’t lose focus, control, or situation awareness. This doesn’t mean that we can’t celebrate, become angry, and express our emotions vibrantly. As a leader and when working with a team, it is important to maintain our ability to know what is going on around us both physically and emotionally. How we compose ourselves will have an influence on us and others.

One of the policies we have at IA Business Advisors is that we have an understanding for moments when our team members need to allow for a loss of composure and vent. Our policy is that if they give a warning before launching into a break of their composure, then they are free to do so. The policy was originally put in place to ensure nobody had a complete breakdown. Giving your team a space free of judgment will aid in your positive influence over them as a leader.

Open Communication
Communication is more than just speaking or providing information. It’s about listening and interpreting the ways in which others communicate with us. It’s how we analyze information and disseminate that information for others. If you can control how you communicate, you can control your influence as a leader. Our ability to keep our composure when communicating affects our influence greatly.

Our actions matter, and each time we lose our composure we risk tarnishing our character. Our actions have influence and how those actions are communicated and perceived by others matters, even if it is out of context. When we ignore the fact that our actions matter or allow them to be shared outside of our direct control, the influence of taking those actions out of context can damage our reputation and the advantages awaiting us.

If you want to have better communication with someone, ask them what they think of your communication style. Have—hold onto your seats—open communication with them. Approach them and ask, “I am trying to learn more about how I communicate, can you share with me some communication issues we might have?” You may be required to give some examples, because if the person you are talking to also struggles with communication, they may not know from what point of view you are requesting information for.

Ask them about your body language, tone, inflection, and ability to give context and information. You may also ask how you act when they communicate with you. Gaining a better understanding of yourself from another’s point-of-view will enlighten you to have positive influence. It will also help them understand how you communicate.

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Accountability
Accountability can be amazingly positive. When we hold ourselves and others accountable to the structures our organization has in place, especially as leaders, it’s not only kind, it’s vital to the strength of the organization overall. If leaders don’t hold others accountable, then there is no point in having a structure in place. Structure is vital to the success of any business; therefore, accountability is vital to the success of any business.

People don’t like to not know what the consequences are; by having structure in place and holding people accountable, your team will feel more comfortable and trusting in their organization. The best way to hold people accountable is to approach them openly and positively. Having clear communication about what went wrong and offering steps to rectify the issue usually gives leaders and employees, or peers, a positive interaction in accountability. Give them the benefit of the doubt and help them learn how to stay within the structure.

Being a positive leader means understanding the reasons behind why issues occur. Meaning, that when something goes wrong, we do not react impulsively and emotionally to the issue; we must slow down the moment and discover why it happened so we can prevent it from happening again. I have found that this approach towards accountability serves multiple functions. It resolves the issue in a positive way, teaches the person who may have caused the issue to slow down, and creates an opportunity for everyone influenced by the issue to experience how issues can be resolved.

Consistent
Positive influence requires consistency but not all consistency creates a positive influence. Most of us don’t consciously focus on being consistent. We may rely on autopilot to keep us on our path. However, one thing I learned while writing my thesis for my master’s degree in information management is that humans can have up to six different responses or actions to the same issue or challenge. Hypothetically, you could be faced with the exact same situation many times but depending on your perception of that situation at that time, your reaction is a spectrum.

Achieving consistency requires focus, patience, training, living in the present moment, and positive thinking. If you believe in what you do, at all times, you will perform with consistency. We need tools to support us being consistent. Sometimes, it’s just as simple as having standards and using policies and procedures to guide us. When we set standards for ourselves, we create a tool to follow that supports our efforts to be consistent.

One of the most frequent and condemning issues in business is a lack of consistency. Many leaders today don’t take the time to fully understand what their support staff is doing to support the organization. It is this type of leadership that creates chaos and disrupts business. Leaders should rely on their staff to get their work done. However, it should not be at the detriment of the business. They should listen to the input of their team and lead accordingly.

Conclusion
One of the things we lose perspective of as humans is that we all have influence. As a leader, our ability to maintain composure has a direct influence on those we lead. When faced with situations that test our ability to remain composed, we must be aware of the challenges that come with trying to have self-control. We can accomplish this through positive thinking and effective communication; only then will we have positive influence. Communication can solve nearly all the issues we face as leaders, and it has the capability of being our most effective way to influence positively. When we listen and speak to issues honestly and positively, we can lead effectively with positive influence.

Through our ability to maintain composure and communication, we can set ourselves up with the needed accountability of action that supports us in being a positively influential leader. Accountability also has the byproduct of helping us remain consistent, which is that last piece of influence that we often never think of. Consistency provides for us the basis for being a respected influencer and leader. If your objective as a leader is to inspire, empower, and mentor your teams, start now by being a positive influence.

Top 4 Qualities of a Positive Influential Leader, continued
Brian Smith / IA Business Advisors
Is Your Business Image Still in the 20th Century?

Bill Benito / CSC Services Hood & Duct

I started my business in 1982, over 38 years ago, and called it Connecticut Steam Cleaning. I wanted the company name to say where we were and what we did. The logo I had made up incorporated a pressure washing wand and the spray was washing the logo. It was done in the State of Connecticut colors, blue and white. Our vans were white and had the logos on both sides and back. I thought it was pretty cool and for 1982 and the 20th century, it was.

Fast forward to 2016, in the 21st century and me in my 60’s, it was time to think about retiring. I started the transition of my son, Philip, taking over the business. I decided to let him make certain decisions and would live with the results. For any of you in the process or thinking about turning the business you started from scratch over to a family member, it isn’t easy in the beginning.

Around 2015 we shortened Connecticut Steam Cleaning to CSC and answered the phone “CSC Services, Connecticut Steam Cleaning, how I may help you?” We also started to incorporate it in our advertisements and letterhead. We did so much more than steam clean and traveled to all of the New England, not just Connecticut.

The first thing Philip did was have someone design a new logo. Phil came into my office and showed me the new logo. I hadn’t asked him to do it, nor did I know he did it. It was “CSC Services” in blue and “Hood & Duct” in lime green with a swish on the top and bottom to tie it all in. Gone was my pressure washing wand! Phil could tell by my look that I wasn’t thrilled and he said “Dad your logo is tired and not with the way things are today.” I didn’t reply but thought, “Today? What’s wrong with what we have had for 35 years?” We are known by our name and the logo is recognizable. Phil

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went on to say that green was the latest thing and we needed to update. I agreed, reluctantly, to have the old logos removed and the new ones put on the vans. Since Phil has learned many things from both me and his other experiences, he said he could remove the old logos and install the new ones so we would only have the cost to print them. Well, that part I liked. The next thing I know the guys’ shirts, hoodies, signs on our building and our business cards all had the new green logo. It took me a little while but I realized he was right.

Another thing I realized was that a lot of my contacts had retired or left the companies and the new guys were in their 30’s and 40’s. I had little, if anything, in common with the next generation. Phil and I would go on quotes to long-term customers and I had no idea what the new generation was talking about with the new buzzwords, latest cars and movies. We now had updated logos and links to our company’s Facebook, Instagram (I know what a candy gram is) and a funny thing on our new pamphlets that looked like static on my old TV. My son’s generation customer scans the static with his smart phone and it goes directly to our web page. Wow! I guess updating our company image was working so I gave Phil more control.

We needed a car for our night supervisor/inspector and I found a Chevy HHR that would get great gas mileage. It was very close to Fire Engine Red. I wanted red so we could logo and letter it and get the customer to associate lack of hood cleaning and fire. I thought it was a great idea. Phil didn’t. The next thing I know Phil had the complete car wrapped with new colors, logos and what I would later admit, an updated color scheme that really made the car stand out. I asked what it cost and Phil just said “it’s not what it costs. It’s what it is going to make us!” Now he was using my own line on me.

We needed to add a couple of more trucks to keep up with the growth Phil was creating with all his new generation connections. Phil showed me a picture from the graphics company that he wanted to do to the new trucks. I asked how much, hoping not to get the, “It’s not what it cost answer” and he said $1,200. Based on what the HHR cost I was surprised and said, “OK.” When the truck came back from the graphics shop it was not only sharp and eye popping it had all of our services plus large before and after pictures on the back doors. The back and ¼ of the sides were
green and there was a swish of blue coming forward to the new company logo. When you looked at the new van next to the others even this 20th century old man knew the old logos and looks had to go.

Over the next year, as we updated trucks to replace our aging fleet, each one got the new wrap. The wraps were all done with the same graphics (as the HHR that I wasn’t so sure about) and different before and after pictures on each van. It wasn’t long before my friends and customers started calling me and said they had seen our vans on the road and they looked great. Our vans had been on the road for 30 years and no one had called me before. I knew that the updated look was the reason and so we just incorporated the additional $1,200 into each truck budget. Eventually Phil cut a deal with the graphics company for an even $1,000.

In January, 2019, Phil took 100% control of the company. It was time for me to step aside and let the 21st century take control. Over the next 12 months Phil kept updating and standardizing our vans. As of January 2020, we have 18 vans with only two left to replace and update. It seems to me that not only do the vans look great, the technicians are taking better care of them. The old vans always looked dirty and being a cleaning company it didn’t give a customer a good impression. When we send two or more vans to the same location the impression is so much better.

Your company image starts with the person answering the phone (who is never seen) but the real long lasting image is what your techs and equipment look like arriving at the job. If you are still in the 20th century take a look at your trucks. Are your logos outdated? Do the trucks attract attention? Does the lettering list your services? What image do you think your customers see? You may not be in the transition to retirement mode but neither should your company image.
I just returned from a tour of the U.S. performing numerous inspections in various states and, once again, finding many of the same results – “cleaners” leaving dangerous conditions with filter tracks loaded with stored fuel inside and behind from a recent service. I thought to myself, “Well, at least I see consistency.”

All of the cleaners Certificate of Performance (hood sticker) had reference stating in one way or another – “Cleaned in accordance to NFPA 96...”.

I was thinking to myself, “Don’t these folks understand this discipline and the corresponding Standard referred to on their sticker?” Even if one was to throw out the 96 and ANSI C10 Standard and just have a little common sense, doesn’t it make more sense to first and foremost remove the stored fuel closest to the fire source?

Of course, many reading this article can probably quote NFPA 96 Standard, Sec. 11.6.1 “If upon inspection, the grease exhaust system is found to be contaminated with deposits from grease-laden vapors, the contaminated portion of the exhaust system shall be cleaned...” (emphasis mine) So the real questions I asked is why? Why are these companies leaving these systems in dangerous conditions, misleading a customer into believing their hood and duct system is safe upon departing the property? (This opinion assumes there can actually be some danger in leaving stored fuel in the system.) So many of us will remember a most often quoted statement by Barney Besal, “There are two kinds of restaurants – ones that have had a fire and the ones who will be having their fire.” So yes, there is danger, even great danger leaving this fuel stored so close to ignition point and yet, I find it in many places. Stored fuel feeds the start of a fire and helps it grow.

Seems to me there are only a few answers to this question of why leave a system in this non-compliant condition. Give this some thought:

1. These companies do not believe in grease exhaust fires that grow due to stored fuel; therefore, they don’t require all fuel removed.
2. They do not have an audit system in place to look at their compliance workmanship.
3. The sales team has priced the job too cheap and gotten approval from leadership in order to get the sale and then force the technician to make up the difference.

Maybe there is a fourth but I believe these three say it all.

Here is the key question: Who’s ultimately at fault? Who is responsible?

I believe blame needs to start at the top. Leadership. Leadership leads. Period.

These other non-compliant cleaning companies need to change their methodology and accountability to achieve the required results or they should find another industry to be employed in not related to life safety. They should resolve to either follow these standards they often state on their hood sticker or remove the deception stating meets NFPA 96 Standard. By their deception, they are giving the customer a false sense of security - sleep well at night because their system is assumed compliant.

We need to continue to challenge our organization to be one of Integrity. We do what we say – clean to the NFPA 96 Standard every time.
Debt Steals Your Profit and Increases Your Taxes
Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

It happened again! A few months ago you had your annual meeting with your CPA and he, or she, told you the same thing they have told you year after year. “John, you had a great year. Your net profit was $88,000 last year... which you will pay taxes on.” Wow, that made you feel really good until you looked in your checkbook. The checkbook didn’t have anywhere near that amount of money on it. So where is it? That is what we are going to talk about today.

Debt, in the form of loan payments, is a silent killer kind of like carbon monoxide. You feel good while it’s sucking the life out of you. Every loan payment is made up of two parts. The first part is principle. That is the portion of the loan payment that actually applies towards paying for the vehicle, or piece of equipment, you purchased. The other part of the loan payment is called interest. This is the amount of money it is costing you to borrow the money from the bank or lending institution.

“Ok, I get that Tom, but how does that hurt my profitability and taxes?” The problem is that principle and interest are handled DIFFERENTLY from an accounting/IRS standpoint. The interest portion of the loan payment is treated as an expense in terms of your P/L Statement. The principle portion of the loan kind of goes off to never-never land. Sure it’s in your assists and liabilities but it does not show up in your P/L Statement...and THAT is what your profitability is based on for tax purposes.

Let’s walk through an example to make the point. Our sample company grossed a $1,000,000 in sales. At the end of the year the net profit shown on the P/L Statement was $73,500. This same company has the following loan payments:

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Debt Steals Your Profit and Increases Your Taxes, continued

Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

The Solution
The solution is really pretty simple. Stay out of debt! In order to do that the company needs to properly price their products and services. That covers two areas:

- Equipment Replacement vs. Depreciation - Depreciation is an accounting term that allows the company to write off a portion of the original purchase price, normally over a five-year period. But even that is looking at original costs, not future replacement costs. Equipment replacement cost deals with what it is “going” to cost you to replace it years in the future. For example, let’s assume an existing truck will last the company three more years and will cost a net $30,000 after trading in the old vehicle. You then take the needed $30,000 and divide it by the three years you have left before replacement. That means the company will need to set aside $10,000 per year, over each of the next three years, in order to have the money to replace the current vehicle with cash.

- Earn A Reasonable Profit - Be sure to price your products and services at a proper net profit, from a cash flow perspective. A well-run company should generate roughly a 12% net profit, or more. The net profit generated covers company growth. It will fund increased inventory and your growing accounts receivable while at the same time providing cash to purchase new equipment and vehicles. Generating a significant net profit will help keep the company out of debt!

Real Profit
Now back to our CPA’s annual review. Based on Uncle Sam’s rules the company made a $73,500 net profit. However, from a cash flow standpoint (real dollars in and real dollars out) the company made a $47,628 net profit ($73,500 - $25,872 = $47,628). This dollar figure should be somewhat closer to what you really had in the company checkbook.

Taxed on Money You Don’t Really Have!
The above helps explain the difference in the profit that your CPA and/or Uncle Sam say you have verses what’s really in your checkbook. However, it’s telling you something else as well. It’s telling you you’re actually paying taxes on money that is not in your checkbook! Double ouch! “But Tom, that is not fair.” I agree 100% but guess what...life is not fair.

What we discussed was loans. However, general debt repayment is even worse. By general debt I am talking about paying back money on a line of credit or a personal loan from you, a friend or investor. General debt also includes paying back money you owe the supplier or paying off a line of credit and/or credit card debt. These types of “loans” are pretty much all principle. That means any money flowing out to pay for these things is pretty much completely ignored in terms of being able to count it as an expense.

The total interest for the year is $5,592 ($466/month X 12 months = $5,592). Interest is treated as an expense by Uncle Sam and shows up that way on your P/L Statement. The total principle paid was $25,872 ($2,156/month X 12 months = $25,872) but it does NOT show up in your P/L Statement! That’s right. You wrote the check, and the money came out of your checkbook, but you are not allowed to count the principle as an expense. Only the $5,592 interest showed up in your P/L Statement. Ouch!

- Earn A Reasonable Profit - Be sure to price your products and services at a proper net profit, from a cash flow perspective. A well-run company should generate roughly a 12% net profit, or more. The net profit generated covers company growth. It will fund increased inventory and your growing accounts receivable while at the same time providing cash to purchase new equipment and vehicles. Generating a significant net profit will help keep the company out of debt!

Now you know where the profit dollars your accountant said you had, went. You also know how to stay out of debt. Remember, there is a huge difference in knowing what to do.....and doing it. The choice is yours. ♦
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Need a Loan? Two Questions That You Will Not Be Asked
Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

There are two questions every loan office wants answered before they grant a loan. The irony is that they will not verbally ask either one! These are the two questions.

Question #1 - Do you, the owner, understand what is going on within your company from a business perspective?

Question #2 - Do you have the ability to pay the loan back?

Those are the two questions they want answered....without their asking them. BEFORE you go visit your banker, do a bit of homework.

Step 1:
Your assignment begins with creating a budget for the coming year. Projecting sales, cost of goods and estimating future overhead costs can be an eye-opening experience. The final outcome of that process will tell the owner the results of their projected years' efforts...if everything goes perfectly. If there is a...
significant net profit projected, all is well simply do a Budget vs. Actual at the end of each month to ensure things are going as planned. If not, make adjustments.

Should your budget projections show an estimated loss, on less than desired profit, then it’s time to adjust your pricing and/or cut costs. The good news is that the basis for adjusting pricing is already in place. You already know your projected costs from the budget you have created so it’s simply a matter of dividing your cost of doing business by the billable labor hours and adding the desired profit to your breakeven rate. Ok, the process is a bit more detailed than that but those are the overall principles.

Step 2:
Let’s fast forward a bit. You have completed your initial budget and gone back through the process as many times as necessary cutting costs and/or increasing your hourly rates to project a desired net profit that you are comfortable with. A budget you can live with has now been created. Congratulations! Now let’s refocus on our original objective which was to be prepared to meet with our loan officer to secure a loan.

Step 3:
Step 3 involves doing a bit of math. How much money do you want to borrow from the bank? Let’s say it’s $50,000 and you desire to pay it back in five years. Fifty thousand dollars divided by five years is $10,000 a year. Now thrown in a bit of interest, perhaps $1,500 per year and after a couple of clicks we find out the monthly payment will be approximately $958/month ($11,500 / 12 months = $958/month). If you want to get a bit more accurate, which I would suggest, get a free loan App or call your local bank for an estimated monthly payment on a five-year loan of $50,000.

Now add the monthly loan payment into the finalized budget you created earlier. Are you still making a significant profit? If so, bingo, you are in great shape. If not, go through the adjustment process we talked about earlier until the pricing process meets your desired profit goals.

Step 4:
How it’s time for a couple “what ifs”. Pick different repayment terms. Assume the loan were paid off over 4 years or perhaps 6 or 7 years. Put the results of those differing monthly payments into your projected budget and see how it affects your monthly cash flow and overall profitability.

Now it time to go visit your loan officer. Set an appointment and take all your “what if” budgets with you. Explain your budgeting process to the loan officer and show him, or her, the results of their loaning you “X” dollars over this or that many years.

Guess what? You just answered the two questions the loan officer did not ask. First, “Do you understand what is going on within your business, from a business perspective?” The budgeting and tweaking process you just described to the loan officer provides a resounding yes!

Secondly, “Do you have the ability to pay the loan back? Again, the answer is a yes.

When you go on a sales call, and have correctly answered all the customers questions, what was the end result? Right, you got the job. Your visit to the loan officer is no different. You answered all of their unasked questions, right. Like your sales call the answer is yes. Loan approved!
Welcome to our first edition of the AHJ corner!

AHJ Corner
Don Pfleiderer / Environmatic Corporation of America

There is a large uptick of the number of cities requiring kitchen exhaust cleaning (KEC) reporting across the U.S. Many of these municipalities are now going through ComplianceEngine. Others are city Fire Department direct reporting. All so far are setting up portals where the cleaning reports can be uploaded. These include deficiency reports. Several AHJs have indicated the need for training KEC vendors on what a deficiency actually is. Numerous AHJs have noticed that many cleaners on the job sites, including certified companies, have no idea what the AHJ is talking about when asking for a deficiency report. They notice non-compliant wiring, lack of access plates, lack of proper hinges or broken hinges, heavy grease on roofs or leaking in ceilings, leaking or improper access plates, compromised fire wrap, etc. Due to these issues, AHJs are pushing to have a certified staff on each job site to mitigate the fire dangers.

As of May, 2018, certified staff has actually become law in Madison, Wisconsin. Madison implemented the ordinance in September of 2019. Madison now requires all cleaners to either have passed a proper certification test (IKECA certification is acceptable) or take a city test based on the IKECA C-10 standard. This applies to all individual cleaners and NOT to the actual companies. Each cleaner is to have a Madison license number and that individual license number must be affixed onto the hood certification sticker for each cleaning. Cleaning by non-licensed KEC staff is no longer allowed in the city of Madison.

Having licensed staff does not allow a company to allow KEC work to be done by non-licensed employees. This is the wave of the future so KEC companies should be working toward certification of all KEC staff. This also takes care of staffing on job sites, knowing and understanding the standards they are working under and passing a test to verify that. With the CECT (and even the CECS) CEU requirements are easily attainable, and very affordable. There is no reason not to certify all cleaning staff.

The AHJ committee is also working on a two-sided handout for all inspectors to follow for Kitchen Exhaust inspections. These will be a simple picture guide. This guide will be walking the inspector through the process. The guide will show what to look for, various grease thicknesses to compare to visually, what is acceptable for a cleaning, and what is not. We have the final guide almost complete so any suggestions would be welcome. Email info@ikeca.org.

The new Madison requirements are below.

The Madison Fire Department enacted a new fire prevention ordinance in May 2018 regarding kitchen hood cleaning and the licensing of individuals performing it.

The new ordinance language states:

34.607 - COMMERCIAL KITCHEN HOODS.

The following requirements are in addition to the requirements in IFC chapter 607:

(1) Licensed Cleaning Services Required.

Only qualified persons who have obtained a license in accordance with Sec. 34.105, MGO, for cleaning commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems shall perform the cleaning of commercial kitchen exhaust hoods and duct systems. The Chief shall issue such license after an applicant has either:

(a) Passed a written examination in commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems cleaning administered by the Fire Department. Upon successful completion of written examination, applicant will be issued a certification number; or

(b) Provided proof of certification or qualification in commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems cleaning from another jurisdiction or other recognized organization that that has a standard equivalent with sub (a) and has been approved by the Chief.
AHJ Corner
Don Pfleiderer / Environmatic Corporation of America

(c) The tag required by IFC 607.3.3.3.1 shall include the license number of the individual certified in accordance with this section.

Beginning September 19, 2019 individuals can come to MFD Fire Administration at 314 W. Dayton Street to take the exam, submit an application and pay the fee. Exam hours at Fire Admin are between 8:00 and 2:00. Please call 608-266-4420 to schedule.

Candidates who pass the exam and submit a complete application will receive their license within a week of their test date.

The closed book exam consists of 20 questions based on the current edition of IKECA C10. If an applicant fails the test, the applicant can re-take the test. IKECA C10 can be obtained through http://www.ikeca.org.

The license must be held by EACH individual that is cleaning commercial kitchen hoods within the City of Madison. As of November 1, 2019, an active license number must be visible on the sticker placed on commercial kitchen hoods when the cleaning is completed. An annual fee of $125.00 per license is required and must be submitted with the application for each individual. Group checks (payable to the City Treasurer) or credit cards will be accepted.

If you have any questions regarding this new license requirement, the Madison General Ordinance, or the event, and to RSVP, please contact Ann Blackdeer via email ablackdeer@cityofmadison.com or 608-261-9690. ♦
This article could apply to any person, in any position, but this month we are going to specifically focus on the technician that wants to move into management. Do all techs desire to move into a salaried position, with additional responsibilities, of course not, but some do, so what’s the process? The process is a lot simpler than you might expect. To move up you, your work ethic and your attitude need to catch the attention of the company owner and/or your manager. Did you notice “skills to do the job” were not on the list! It’s kind of like being a college graduate. That piece of paper you earned will get you through the door. However, once you are in the door, in most cases, someone within the company will teach you the specifics of the job you are filling. It’s the same for the individual in the technician role that wants to advance. You have to get in the door.

We have all been too fast food restaurants, right? If you are like me, every once in a while the employee behind the counter catches my attention for one of several reasons. It might be their smile, positive attitude and/or the way they made the extra effort to please you; which could happen in a variety of ways. The point is this. You instantly noticed they were different than most others in the same position. If my wife is with me, and we notice an individual like that, we usually have this little conversation at our table. It goes something like this. “You know what? That person that just waited on us will not be here long. With that kind of an attitude sooner or later a customer, like us, will contact them about working for their company.” Any guess what? When we return weeks or months later the person is gone!

Did you catch the above phrase “You instantly noticed they were different than most others in the same position.”? No one told you they were different. They didn’t have a sign stuck on their forehead that said “I am different”. No one at the door said “Notice John or Suzie behind the counter, he or she does an exceptional job”. You just knew they were different without anyone having to point it out.

That is the beginning point for technicians that wish to move up within the ranks of the company. The owner and/or manager needs to notice, without anyone saying anything, that you are different. Let’s look at a few practical ways you can stand out from the crowd, and be noticed:

Show Up On Time, Every Day – This might sound trite, but it’s not. Owners and managers notice when employees consistently show up on time day after day, week after week, month after month and yes, year after year. Showing up a bit early each day (so you are ready to start work when the clock hits 7:30 AM) is simply icing on the cake. Look around at your fellow techs. How many of them show up on time, every day? Those that do stand out.

• **Attitude** – Remember the person behind the counter at the fast food restaurant? Their attitude instantly said they were different, without a word having been spoken. A consistently good attitude will draw attention to an individual like bees to honey. Why? Individuals with consistently positive attitudes are rare and everyone wants a person like that on their team.

• **Appearance** – This is important. If you are a technician the first impression a customer has about you as an individual (which transfers to the customer’s perception of your abilities and the quality of work the company offers) is based on appearance. Is that fair? No. Is it real? Yes. Practice being a manager by dressing like one. Clean uniforms, combed hair and no visible body art all make a good impression. Your current look may be ok if you are a tech in the field. However, we are trying to catch management’s eye so start by being clean and neat in your general appearance. Believe me, management will notice.

• **Team Player** – Being a team player means putting other people’s interest, and the companies, above your own. The “all about me” individual will never be a team player so bloom where you’re planted. As a tech, help the other techs. Give them a hand when you see a need. Take care to return tools and/or unused parts to their proper shelf. If John needs help loading a truck, and you want to get on to your job, well it’s time to die to YOUR needs. That’s what being a team player is all about.
Moving from Technician to Management!, continued
Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

• **Paperwork** – It is highly unlikely you will instantly do an outstanding job on paperwork if you were promoted. The time to “show” management you can handle that portion of the job is by doing it properly in your current position. Practice makes perfect and it also forms a habit. Few techs do a good job when it comes to paperwork. If you do a great job guess what happens? Right, people notice!

• **Pointing Out Ways To Improve** – Owners and managers want things to run as smoothly as possible. That also means they are open to new ideas. As a technician you see how inventory is set up in the truck and probably have suggestions for improvement. You are constantly filling out forms, and paperwork, that could be redesigned to be more efficient. If you are assigned a specific truck, take ownership of it. Keep it washed, be sure regular maintenance is performed, drive it as if it were your personal vehicle and be sure it is properly inventoried so you can be as efficient as possible on the job. If repairs are needed be sure management is notified. Share your thoughts and ideas with your supervisor. It will make you stand out.

• **Taking Classes** – Trust me. Any owner and/or manager worth their salt will notice when you start taking the initiative to improve you education and skill level and therefore your value to the company. If they see you are making the individual effort to improve your skill set that WILL impress them.

In summary, if you want to move up within the company the best way to be noticed is to become an outstanding performer within the position you currently occupy. If you will take the initiative to excel in the above areas I promise you management will take notice and you will be seriously considered when an opening needs to be filled. ♦

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Don’t Miss In This Issue

Is Your Company Prepared for an Unexpected Storm?

Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

This article is being written less than 24 hours before hurricane Irma is set to make landfall in Florida. Just a week or two back hurricane Harvey hit Texas and Louisiana leaving many dead and untold damage. It would seem that the government has learned a few things from past storms and appeared to be (and in reality were) well prepared for those storms. Past mistakes can be very useful if we learn from them in terms of preparing for the future.

The business world has similar storms that hit, sometimes with warning and sometimes without warning. The weather can take a drastic turn causing the business to be super busy or perhaps experience an unexpected “slow season”. The general economy can rapidly change causing individuals to feel good, and therefore ready to spend more money than expected, or perhaps the economy turns sour causing people to hold onto their cash. A sudden change in interest rates can make borrowing more difficult and therefore cause unexpected cash flow issues. Smaller storms (raising medical insurance costs, a gasoline spike or a shortage of available techs just when business is picking up) can occur at any time. The question is the same one the government faced, are we prepared and do we have a plan in place...just in case the next storm hits us?

None of us can ever be totally prepared for every storm but we can take some logically steps to help prepare ourselves, should the storm come.

- Review Your P/L with Your CPA – Few small business owners meet with their CPA except at tax time. CPA’s are trained for taxes but good ones also have the ability to look at your numbers and offer helpful insights. Outside eyes often see things we don’t. My suggestion is simple. Meet with your CPA within 15 days of the close of each month to review and analyze your numbers.

- Create Cash Reserves – Few things help you weather an unexpected storm more than cash in the bank. As a matter of fact, cash in the bank can also help you sleep well at night. My suggestion. Build a cash reserve dollar amount into your overhead and therefore into your pricing. Each month take those dollars out and place them in a mutual fund or savings account. The goal is to have enough cash reserves to cover 3-6 months of fixed overhead.

- Pay off Debt ASAP – Debt causes pressure on the owner and especially on the owner’s wife. Fixed debt payments are just that, “fixed”. If a storm were to come those payments still have to be made. Take the pressure off yourself and the company. My suggestion. Accelerate debt repayment by building extra payments into your budget and therefore into your pricing.

- Focus on YOUR Business - When a storm arrives the tendency is to look and see what others are doing. Wrong... focus on YOUR business. Who cares what
Is Your Company Prepared for an Unexpected Storm?, continued
Tom Grandy / Grandy & Associates

Others are doing. You are only accountable for decisions YOU make concerning your business. My suggestion. Forget others and focus on what can be done to improve your situation.

- Minimize Overhead Costs – When sales are up year after year the tendency is to spend more. Why not, you can afford it? That is a great theory… as long as sales continue to go up. Increasing sales tend to cover up a lot of problems. When things are good, that is the time to reduce overhead while you can. My suggestion. Review your total overhead, fixed and variable, with the entire management team and set goals in terms of reducing the cost of overhead.

- Reward Performance You Want Repeated – When storms come, retaining employees can often be difficult. One of the keys is to reward behavior you want repeated. That means setting specific productivity and profit goal for every position within the company. If the employee exceeds their goals reward them for it. Most individuals will tend to meet, or exceed, goals when they are set and especially if there is a vested interest in doing so. My suggestion. Look at every position, management to techs, and set performance goals. Measure performance against those goals each month and reward those who hit them or exceed them.

- Understand the Business Side of Your Business – Most companies that go out of business, storm or no storm, go out because they don’t understand the “business side” of their business. The tendency is to think that bringing in a lot of money “must” mean you are making a profit. That can be true, but it doesn’t always happen that way. My suggestion. Invest some time and money into learning the “business side” of your business. If the storm comes, you will be prepared. If the storm does not come you will simply make a bit more money that you would have otherwise.

Weathering a storm requires planning and execution. I would suggest you seriously think about at least one of the areas we just touched on and get it accomplished. That will bring you at least one step closer to weathering the next storm no matter when it might occur.

SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMARY
(see page 07 for the Marketing Committee Update)

1. Followers:
The number of followers across all Social Media accounts continues to see steady growth. In the year 2019, IKECA gained almost 300 new followers. IKECA has amassed a total audience of about 2,000 followers across all platforms (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). These numbers represent substantial awareness growth and have resulted in a high level of engagement.

This number is 205 followers higher than the total audience over the same period last year.

2. Engagement:
Engagement is the sum of reactions, comments, and shares received by content associated with IKECA’s pages. For the year 2019, followers engaged with IKECA’s content 3,117 times, which exceeds the amount experienced over the same time last year.

3. Highest Performing Platforms:
Facebook continues to be the highest performing Social Media platform. The IKECA Facebook page has 923 followers and received the highest number of engagements out of the three platforms in 2019.

The IKECA LinkedIn page demonstrated growth in 2019. IKECA LinkedIn page saw the most significant number of new followers out of the three social media platforms. LinkedIn is a social network that focuses on professional networking and career development and should, therefore, be noted that IKECA’s content is attracting a professional audience because of its quality. The organization is now considered an influencer on the platform.

4. Traffic:
Traffic driven from Social Media posts to the IKECA website is trackable on Facebook and Twitter. The total number of users who engaged with the content and proceeded to the site through links provided in a social media post for 2019 is 1,698.
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