COVID uniform trends and what the future looks like

> For those in the commercial cleaning and hygiene space, it has never been more important to ensure your staff and brand are correctly represented.

Life as we know it has certainly changed thanks to COVID-19, and so too has the value placed on working in a clean, well sanitised and safe environment.

If you have ever worked an early or late shift, you will have inevitably crossed paths with the company engaged to clean your offices. Perhaps you paid them little attention as you went about your day, as they were providing a routine but vital service.

We are living through a time where infection control, the spread of germs and hygiene have never been so important. For those returning to the office after extended periods of working from home, it might be a bit daunting to go back to the commute and be in an environment where you are required to share facilities.

With that apprehension at the front of the minds of returning workers, comfort and security will be drawn from the partnerships your company has formed with those responsible for keeping their workplace SAFE.

For those in the commercial cleaning and hygiene space, it has never been more important to ensure your staff and brand are correctly represented, and what your team wear when on location is critical to that first impression around the quality of their work.

As the crew responsible for leaving behind a safe and sanitised environment, what they are wearing when on the job is critical. The uniform needs to not only look contemporary, trustworthy, and appropriate for the task at hand, but it needs to evoke a feeling of security for those in its presence.

Pre-COVID-19 uniforms for those working in cleaning and hygiene may have been an afterthought; a budget-based activity where the cheapest polo with a logo was usually the approach, or to my even greater horror, no uniforms at all.

For those few that took their branding and first impressions seriously, having a dress code and uniform policy in place ensured their team stood out and looked professional. These are the businesses that are thriving in a time where cleaning and hygiene services have never been in such demand.

If your team looks the part, then they are likely to be trusted by other businesses to keep their people safe. As demands for hygiene and cleaning services increase, as does the emphasis on branding and what to wear when working in these environments.

A great team uniform reflects the changing market, exudes confidence, has a contemporary feel and inspires employees.

A great team uniform in the cleaning and hygiene industry takes this one step further and ensures the staff wearing the uniform feel professional and protected, and that those

working with this team feel safe. Like any element of brand and marketing, a uniform design and implementation needs to be well thought out and take into consideration:

1. PURPOSE

Uniforms should always reflect a company's brand and purpose. This ensures a client can identify what the company is about through what the staff are wearing. For Cleaning and Hygiene services, your team need to look polished and put together to evoke feelings of trust.

2. PRACTICALITY

Depending on the client, we often find there is either too much of a focus on the look and not enough on practicality, or vice versa! There is a significant difference between weekend wear and work wear, and whilst uniforms need to be fashion forward, they also must be functional and fit for purpose.

3. PICTURE PERFECT

Tell the whole story from top to toe. If you spend time creating a look, it needs to consider all factors. Will staff need a winter wear option? What trousers are they expected to wear? Is there a requirement for a cap or beanie? There is no point creating a fabulous shirt or polo only to have it covered up by an off-brand hot pink jumper that does not communicate the consistent story of your brand.

4. POLICY

The devil is in the details. Ensure there is a company uniform policy outlining dress standards. Should the shirt be worn tucked in or out? What type and colour shoes are acceptable? What is the jewellery policy?

Unfortunately, common sense isn't always all that common, and when taking the time to create your team image through uniform, it is even more important to follow that through with the detail of how it should or shouldn't be worn.

The trend of hyper-awareness around hygiene and the emphasis of safety and sanitation in the workplace is here to stay, and the careful consideration of what is worn by those working in this industry should also remain a priority.

> As the crew responsible for leaving behind a safe and sanitised environment, what they are wearing when on the job is critical.

Pamela Jabbour is the founder and CEO of Total Image Group. www.totalimagegroup.com.au ■

ISSA
Advancing Clean. Driving Innovation.

Join your local industry association within a global community!

With more than 10,500 members worldwide — including distributors, manufacturers, wholesalers, building service contractors, in-house service providers, residential cleaners and associated service members — ISSA is the world's leading trade association for the cleaning industry.

The association is committed to changing the way the world views cleaning by providing its members with the business tools they need to promote cleaning as an investment in human health, the environment and an improved bottom line.

Contact the ISSA Oceania Regional Office to find out more:

issa.com/oceania
oceania@issa.com
1800 621 872
Search ISSA Oceania