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Selecting a Floor Machine with a KISS

By *Mike Schaffer*

Published: 07/12/2010



In the last few years, manufacturers in the professional cleaning industry have introduced a number of new floor machines, automatic scrubbers, and burnishers designed to make floor care easier, faster, and Greener. These new machines are being introduced in all sizes, designs, and price points.

However, some of the new machines are so new that many end customers are not sure which machine is best for them and their floor-care needs. Although it is exciting that new floor-care technologies are evolving, it must be admitted that at this time, it may also be causing some end-customer confusion.

Large facilities, such as correctional facilities are unsure if they should select some new technology now or hold off until it has been around for a while, waiting to hear what others have to say about the machine. And the severe restrictions on correctional facility budgets have made selecting any new technology, especially if it is a more expensive technology, all the more difficult.

The answer to the dilemma? Now is the best time to use the KISS formula when selecting floor-care equipment: Keep It Simple...and Straightforward.

KISS...in Practice

As it relates to automatic scrubbers and other types of floor-care equipment, the KISS formula involves the following five concepts, all of which are critical to proper, cost-efficient, and environmentally responsible floor care:

1. **Performance:** At the top of the list is proper machine performance. Floors should be done right the first time. Usually this entails selecting a “world-class” machine. This means the machine is designed to work on a wide variety of floors and meets specific standards as to craftsmanship, durability, versatility, and comfort for a broad diversity of users.
2. **Productivity and ease of operation:** The cost of floor care is typically 80 percent to 90 percent labor.

Worker productivity can be enhanced by selecting equipment with an appropriately wide cleaning path; large solution and recovery tanks so that the machine performs longer with less downtime; a simple operator interface; ergonomic handles; and an easy-to-read control panel. For a correctional facility, a machine with a 26-inch cleaning path and solution/recovery tanks of 26 to 28 inches should be suitable.

3. **Serviceability:** Although most automatic scrubbers have become considerably more durable and reliable in recent years, batteries, vacuum hoses, and some other components may still need changes or adjustments. (See sidebar for more on battery care.) A “clam shell” design with a wide-opening hood makes equipment maintenance safe and straightforward and makes it easier to diagnose problems. Also, some machines now have “peel-back” shrouds covering the pads. This means pads are easier to access, and with some machines, they can be changed without tools.
4. **Safety:** A few automatic scrubbers now come with built-in worker safeguards that help avoid accidents. These safeguards include maintenance-free, nonspill, eco-friendly batteries; a clear sight line so work views are unobstructed; and parabolic squeegees, which ensure moisture recovery, helping to prevent slips and falls.
5. **Green:** Some autoscrubbers are now powered by a new type of eco-friendly battery that is far safer to use and is essentially maintenance free. Additionally, many newer scrubbers clean effectively with less water, which typically means less chemical as well, making them more sustainable as well as Green. Finally, the quieter machines on the market help reduce worker fatigue, bolster morale, and improve productivity, all aspects of Green cleaning.

A Note about Chemicals

Unless the selected floor machine has been designed to perform without water, automatic scrubbers do require some cleaning solution, Green or conventional, to achieve the best results. By thoroughly removing soils, the look and life span of the floor are improved. Many chemical manufacturers now have cleaning agents that perform exceptionally well on floors. Although this includes environmentally preferable chemicals, most users and their distributors suggest trying brands made by different manufacturers before finalizing a selection.

As to finishes, many now have high solid content that resists wear, requires fewer coats (which helps cut costs), and leaves a tough, high-gloss shine. Additionally, many of these finishes can be high-speed burnished or spray buffed using a lower speed machine to quickly restore shine and gloss.

Correctional facility managers should also be aware of one more thing when it comes to chemicals. Many floor-care products are designed by manufacturers to work better together. For instance, a manufacturer may formulate cleaning agents and other chemicals to work well with their finishes and other floor-care products. It's often a good idea to test a manufacturer's cleaning and scrubbing chemical solutions first. If these perform satisfactorily, then try their other floor-care glosses and finishes.

Final Thoughts

No matter what type of automatic scrubber has been selected, some basic care and maintenance issues apply to all machines. First and paramount to ensuring best-practice use of equipment is training. Many distributors will take the time to teach users how to properly operate the machine. This includes not only the actual scrubbing and cleaning function but also the correct start-up and shut-down procedures for the machine as well as instruction on how to service those items that can be repaired or adjusted in-house.

Automatic scrubbers should be inspected on a set schedule. Often this is best accomplished by having a log “checkoff” system. This formalizes the process and ensures that the machine is checked frequently and as scheduled. If a problem is noted, it should be listed on the log, dated, and brought to supervisory attention.

Also, there are some safety issues in regards to storing floor-care chemicals and finishes. Cleaning chemicals can create hazardous conditions, and even storing certain types of cleaning chemicals together can increase the likelihood that a health threat may arise. This is because chemicals can release fumes that when mixed with other fumes, can cause hazardous chemical reactions. A good policy is to store large quantities of cleaning chemicals by type in a safe, secure, out of the way location. Place smaller and more limited quantities of chemicals in facility working areas and janitorial closets.

With both floor-care machines and chemicals, make sure the equipment is used and operated per the manufacturers' recommendations, mixing directions, and guidelines. Failure to do so not only can hamper performance and results but also may result in an injury, risk the safety of others in the facility, and even void the equipment's warranty.

Mike Schaffer is president of Tornado® Industries, a leading manufacturer of professional cleaning equipment.

Sidebar: Battery Maintenance

The following are some routine battery maintenance tips to keep floor machine batteries in tip-top condition:

- Check the water level regularly (if applicable).
- Check cables and connectors for cleanliness and make sure these parts are tight.
- Check the connections and cables on a regular basis, even when using sealed or maintenance-free batteries.
- Periodically charge deep-cycle batteries (a more conventional lead-acid battery) to maintain battery life, ensure the battery holds its charge, and ensure the floor machine is ready for use when needed.
- Keep all batteries and battery-operated equipment away from heat sources when stored. Heat can severely damage a battery.

Remember to always wear safety glasses when servicing batteries.

*An automatic scrubber is a floor machine designed to perform three functions, all in one pass: apply cleaning solution to the floor, scrub the floor, and then vacuum dry and squeegee the floor.

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“Pay day and quitting time will get here on time”

By *Joe Bouchard*

Published: 04/19/2010



At first glance, a colleague of mine seemed like a crusty corrections veteran with a predilection for enforcing the rules. We often joke that in his spare time he goes to a local discount store and writes misconduct reports on shoppers who are not wearing regulation shoes. We know (or suspect) that it is not really true. That is the nature of camaraderie in corrections.

But, still water runs deep. If one waits and listens patiently, nuances of others' personality slowly appear. Above all, our profession teaches us that there are more than surface impressions to consider.

Although my rule enforcing colleague used his well-cultivated work persona to maintain a balanced, formidable exterior for an often precarious vocation, he surprised me from time to time. He would let slip some corrections truisms from on occasion. One of my favorites was, “Pay day and quitting time will get here on time”. Like his work persona, on the face of it, it is what it is. However there is more, if one delves a bit deeper.

Focus on a goal – Little things are important and may be part of an interconnected network of events. To solve these, we should always have in mind the chief objective – safety. We must always have an eye on the finish line as we deal with the smaller tasks. Final goals are important, even if the route that we take is somewhat convoluted.

Safety counts – What he was trying to say is that any day that we go home safe is an excellent day. As quitting time comes as scheduled, we still have to leave the facility whole.

Cherish the time off – Quitting time is a daily goal. When we are off the clock, of course, starting time will come as scheduled. But it is the time off that we need to recharge our vocational batteries. Without down time, our time in corrections is less effective and more stressful.

Enjoy the compensation – Whatever one's view of monetary compensation, pay day is a goal to keep us motivated. It is no secret that one has to search diligently for work rewards in our vocation. Quite simply, they are fleeting. And while the services we render are valuable – indeed priceless – when all goes well, our labors are not tangible.

Gain strength from rewards during a bad day – Whenever the day was not so good and challenges accumulated, my colleague would point to pay day and quitting time. That was one of his mantras, something that brought him solace in the face of adversity.

It is interesting to me that such a short phrase from a rather quiet man could mean so many things. But, that is his nature. He was the source of other quick and punchy maxims. But that remains my favorite.

He has since retired. But his excellent work habits, common sense, and dedication to the profession have left an indelible mark on others. And when I am faced with a particularly challenging day, I just focus on these comforting words: “Pay day and quitting time will get here on time”.

[Visit the Joe Bouchard page](#)

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Five Prison Charities Helping Inmates Give Back

By Republished from TakePart

Published: 04/19/2010



Convicted of a crime and placed behind bars, inmates can find a million ways to spend their time. Read, work out, dream of better days on the outside—or they can turn doing time into doing good.

At prisons across the country, innovative programs help inmates build some karma to offset the crimes that landed them in jail.

Often small, usually working with few resources, prisoner charity groups are also highly creative, and can produce surprisingly impressive results. Check out these five examples of inmates giving back from behind bars.

Link to full article as published on [TakePart](#).

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“Net – Banging”

By Vinko Kucinic, Security Threat Group Investigation, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

Published: 04/19/2010



Using the Internet as a tool to manage Security Threat Groups

Security threat groups and gangs continue to impact communities and corrections agencies across the country. A 2009 National Gang Threat Assessment conducted by the NGIC- National Gang Intelligence Center and NDIC- National Drug Intelligence revealed that approximately 1 million gang members belonging to more than 20,000 gangs were criminally active within all 50 states. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) manages an inmate population of over 51,000 inmates with approximately 8000 identified security

threat group members.

As inmate populations, caseloads and security threat groups increase and budgets are reduced, the management of these security threat groups and their members becomes increasingly more challenging. Correctional agencies manage security threat groups and their members in many ways. Traditional methods of gaining intelligence information through informants and monitoring communication as well as many others will continue to be utilized. One method or resource that should not be overlooked is the Internet.

Ohio security threat groups and their members are becoming more sophisticated in their use of computers and the Internet. A key finding from the NGIC and NDIC 2009 National Gang Threat Assessment revealed that many gangs actively use the Internet to recruit new members and communicate with members in other areas of the United States and in foreign countries. The Internet allows security threat groups and their members to spread their message, lifestyle and help facilitate their criminal activity. We have found gang histories, graffiti, diaries, drawings, maps, videos and photos of themselves online. The posting of this information has been very useful to law enforcement and corrections agencies in Ohio and across the country when trying to identify, monitor or track criminal gang activity. Additional information has been found in online chat rooms, message boards, guest books, news groups, and social networking websites. A simple search on the Internet for a local gang or security threat group can produce valuable intelligence.

Additionally, the proliferation of cell phones, Smartphones and other devices that are smuggled into correctional facilities are making it more difficult to manage security threat groups and their members. In the ODRC, we are finding security threat group inmates with email addresses and/or websites dedicated to them or their cause. With a smuggled cellphone that has internet capabilities, a security threat group member is able to surf the net from the confines of their cell and “net bang”.

The Internet and advancements in technology will continue to significantly impact correctional agencies and greatly enhance the ability of authorities to collect and share information.

For additional information, training, or assistance in STG or criminal gang matters, please contact the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction STG Enforcement Unit at (614) 752-1711.

Corrections.com author, Vinko Kucinic is a Security Threat Group Investigation Coordinator with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction where he manages the STG Enforcement Unit. He is responsible for STG tracking, monitoring, investigating and intelligence collection efforts. He provides training on security threat groups nationally and throughout Ohio including the Ohio Corrections Training Academy and the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy.

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Having the Mr. Rogers Syndrome

By Tracy E. Barnhart

Published: 04/12/2010



Dear sir; I am almost never moved to respond to comments made about articles that I write but yours gave me that much needed movement.

“Dear Mr. Barnhart, First of all let me thank you for your service to our country and now to the public. I have read all of your posting and though I don’t disagree with most of your opinions it seems that you leaning on the side of what I like to call “The Mister Rogers Syndrome”. I have worked the streets and behind glass (because bars are inhumane)

*for over 23 years and it’s always a changing environment. I am proudly an A**Hole, my mother says I get it naturally and I use it daily, but for me it doesn’t matter if its an inmate or staff the key is being fair, firm and consistent. Just to clarify I have also never been assaulted and have the respect of over 600 inmates as a regular officer but as a tactical officer I have had to use the minimal amount of force necessary to complete the mission and still have that respect. One of the issues that I have seen over and over is “weakness” “back pedaling.” Most of the assaults I have seen are on “Mr. Rogers” types, they want to give, give and help these poor misunderstood humans until its time to kick butt and all the inmate sees is a liar and a hypocrite.”*

Now that I have returned from the restroom I will respond to your comment. On February 19th, 1968 Mr. Rogers Neighborhood made its first broadcast and since that date has become the longest running PBS program in history. I can only hope that my corrections career goes for 30 years without any discipline, criminal prosecution and ultimately termination. I say that because in the eight years that I have been a corrections officer I have seen countless officers investigated, terminated as well as prosecuted from force related issues.

My training related articles are geared toward officer survival issues and providing the knowledge that officers usually find out about only after the pre-disciplinary hearing. I in no way want you to be soft and timid on your post. I want you to be confident and knowledgeable in how, when and why you utilize force. I am a firm believer that officers are under trained in force related issues and administrations have the philosophy that, “If we don’t say the ‘FORCE’ word, they won’t use it.”

“Say it ain’t so!” You know I am right when I say that in corrections your use of force training relentlessly instructs you what you should not and will not do, but falls short in informing you when you can, and must use force to ensure order. This decisional issue is often left up to supervisors called to the incident to de-escalate and moderate problems. However, most correctional supervisors are just as in the dark as the officers they are directing as it pertains to the use of force. The correctional society is 20 years behind the law enforcement society as it pertains to the education and allowances in the use of force, and America is ten years behind Canada as it relates to law enforcement use of force knowledge and tactics.

The fact of this article that I hope to bring home is that we can’t do it like we did it ten years ago and I can only imagine how we will do it ten years from now. Our agency is currently under a use of force related lawsuit, Department of Justice investigations and my institution in particular is constantly in the news because we apparently are too quick to go hands on with the inmates. So for you to make the comment that I have a Mr. Rogers Syndrome makes me laugh and the phrase has now been coined at our institution. Do you remember your first internal investigation for a use of force? You can’t tell me that it didn’t take some of the wind out of your motivational sails. When I was a police lieutenant I gave Grand Jury testimony which resulted in the indictment of four of my police officers for a use of force related incident in which I was the shift watch commander.

There are thousands of uses of force related complaints and lawsuits lodged against law enforcement and correctional officers each year. A surprising report given by the National Center for Women and Policing was given that women currently comprise 12.7% of sworn personnel in big city police agencies, we would expect that female officers in these agencies should be involved in approximately 12.7% of the citizen complaints, sustained allegations, or payouts for excessive force. Yet the data indicate that only 5% of the citizen complaints for excessive force and 2% of the sustained allegations of excessive force in large agencies involve female officers. No, I am not saying that all correctional officers should be women but you have to stop and wonder what they are doing right.

- Civil Liability Payouts: The average male officer costs somewhere between two and a half and five and a half times more than the average female officer in excessive force liability lawsuit payouts.
- Sustained Allegations: The average male officer is over eight and a half times more likely than his female counterpart to have an allegation of excessive force sustained against him.
- Citizen Complaints: The average male officer is two to three times more likely than the average female officer to have a citizen name him in a complaint of excessive force.

With every article that I write I am attempting to educate the correctional officers across the country on the When, How and Why to use force and give you the necessary pre requisites, requirements, justifications and indicators. Your report must justify the “need” to use force to control or restrain a person who is breaking the law or resisting your lawful command. Simply, you should use progressively stronger techniques to bring about compliance and stop when you have gained and can maintain control over the person. This gives a person ample opportunity to comply before being subjected to stronger control techniques or the possibility of being injured. Can your use of force report answer these questions?

- The need for application of force: Was there sufficient reason to use force?
- The relationship between the amount of force used and what type of force was actually required.

- The extent of the injury inflicted by you, the arresting officer, on the person being arrested.
- The behavior of the person at the time of the force related incident.
- The actions of third parties present during the incident.
- The physical odds against you, the officer. This includes size differences as well as the number of individuals involved.

Physical confrontations often happen very quickly, as you know, but this does not justify using force in an excessive, unnecessary or malicious manner. Whenever harm is caused by negligence or the use of excessive force, you may be held liable or your liability may be shared by your department and other officers. Such liability has far reaching consequences that may include criminal and/or tort (civil) action against you. Therefore, you should use force only when warranted and solely as a means to control or restrain a person who is breaking the law or resisting a lawful arrest. This however, should not detract from using force when necessary.

Just the other day while I was video taping a violent incident an aggravated inmate who would not comply punched an officer who was using his verbal strategies in an attempt to de-escalate. Yet after the assault the officers continued their relentless verbalization in an attempt to de-escalate the inmate as he ranted and raved throughout the pod. The inmate was never restrained. I look back and the officers were clearly justified in restraining the inmate in order to bring about compliance after the assault but chose not too. Why? Were they fearful of being investigated? Did they not understand the use of force continuum? Or was it the political climate of the institution that prevented them from going hands on? I honestly believe it was a combination of all the factors.

In the federal civil action *Madrid v. Gomez*, which successfully challenged the use of force at Pelican Bay State Prison, on grounds of violation of the eighth amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. District Court also noted the necessity for the use of force:

Perhaps the paramount responsibility of prison administrators is to maintain the safety and security of both staff and inmates.... Prison officials have the 'unenviable task of keeping dangerous men in safe custody under humane conditions.' There is no question that this demanding and often thankless undertaking will require prison staff to use force against inmates. Indeed, responsible deployment of force is not only justifiable on many occasions, but absolutely necessary to maintain the security of the institution. As one expert at trial succinctly stated, when it comes to force it is "as dangerous to use too little as it is to use too much."

I am in agreement with you brother when it pertains to the current "Hands off policies" resulting from lawsuits and court settlements and the "Cover Their Ass Administrators" that has made our jobs harder. Correctional and law enforcement officers today are sometimes confused and apprehensive about when to initiate the use of force and often need a red light / green light indicator to start. Just realize that I am on your side and I want you to stay on the right side of the bars, that being the outside.

[Visit the Tracy Barnhart page](#)

Comments:

1. **charst46** on 05/11/2010:

Tracy, I agree with your statements. I have returned to Corrections after leaving it for a short bit. I work with new staff constantly now as I am on graves, the traditional place for new folks in our system. The use of force is almost always there, in the background usually, but still there. You can sense with staff if there is a fear of inmates or not. There are discussions regarding if we think someone will have 'your back'. These discussions are attempts by new and old staff to make sense of a new situation. The framework in which these discussions occur is created by administration and how administration approaches use of force incidents. There is and never will be justification for excessive use of force. There have been several instances where staff were justified in using force in our institution, but staff did not use it. The end result of the situations turned out appropriately for staff and offender. No violence resulted. Conversely, there have been several uses of force in other situations and it has been quite justified. 'Pulling the trigger' will always be a judgement call in the mind of the staff member. The line between appropriate use and inappropriate use can be quite gray. I think, in the end, what saves an officer is this: did the officer try to de-escalate and make sincere efforts to de-escalate a situation. It helps to build a reputation of working with to maintain standards as opposed to forcing compliance. But make no mistake, when force is necessary, it must be used. Being male and ex-military, I can feel at times that I personally am being challenged. My rep is being called into question by an inmate. But in the long run, my ability to walk away, his or her ability to walk away to scream and argue with me about a rule violation is better enhanced when I can check my ego at the door and focus on the bigger picture: having a good job and a rewarding career.

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