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## Frank on ergonomic vacuum cleaners

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The vacuum cleaner is as vital to the cleaning professional as the hammer is to the carpenter, according to Dave Frank, president of KnowledgeWorx, industry speaker, and a cleaning expert. "Because of this," Frank said, "the easier it is to use and more ergonomically designed — the safer for the worker."

Frank said the actual grip on the vacuum cleaner should comfortably conform to the user's hand, because ergonomics is all about conforming to the worker, and not vice versa. "With a vacuum cleaner," he said, "this starts with a comfortable grip."

Frank said the handle should be lightweight to better ensure operator comfort and be height-adjustable. "An adjustable-height handle minimizes shoulder stress. It also ensures that the equipment can fit more than one worker."

Noise is an often-overlooked ergonomic problem, according to Frank, who said excessive noise causes stress.

Frank said studies have shown that persistent loud noises — such as those from a loud vacuum cleaner — raise blood pressure, cause tension, and impair productivity, and he advises cleaners to look for

vacuum cleaners that produce less than 66 decibels — not much louder than a sewing machine or normal conversation.

—R.K.

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