



Meet our
2023 Inaugural
Technician
Award Winner
Gabriel Peterson!



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Myldred Ingram

Editorial Comment

Embracing the Green Revolution

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and concern about the impact of traditional cleaning products on the environment and human health. As a result, a noticeable shift towards using more green cleaning products has taken place. This move not only benefits the planet but also promotes a healthier and safer living environment for everyone.

In this article, we will explore the reasons behind this trend and highlight the advantages of incorporating green cleaning products into your daily cleaning routine. One of the primary reasons for the shift towards green cleaning products is the environmental impact of traditional chemical-based cleaners. Harmful ingredients, such as phosphates, ammonia, and chlorine bleach, often find their way into water systems, contributing to water pollution and damaging aquatic life. Green cleaning products, on the other hand, are formulated using biodegradable ingredients that break down naturally without causing harm to the environment. By using these products, we can reduce our ecological footprint and contribute to a healthier planet.

Traditional cleaning products often contain harmful chemicals that can pose risks to human health. When these chemicals are inhaled or come into contact with the skin, they can cause allergies, respiratory problems, and even more serious health issues. Green cleaning products, on the contrary, are made from natural ingredients, avoiding the use of toxic chemicals. This makes them safer for both the user and the people living in the same environment, especially children and pets who are more susceptible to the effects of harsh chemicals.

Indoor air quality is a crucial factor in maintaining a healthy living space. Traditional cleaning products release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that contribute to indoor air pollution. These VOCs can cause headaches, dizziness, and respiratory problems. Green cleaning products, on the other hand, are free from these harmful compounds, making your home a safer and more comfortable place to live in.

Another aspect of the move towards green cleaning products is the emphasis on sustainable packaging. Many manufacturers are now opting for eco-friendly packaging materials such as recycled plastics or biodegradable containers. By choosing products with sustainable packaging, we can reduce waste and contribute to a circular economy.

The shift towards green cleaning products also aligns with the growing consumer demand for sustainable and ethical brands. Many manufacturers of green cleaning products prioritize fair trade practices, cruelty-free testing, and sustainable sourcing of ingredients. By supporting these brands, we can have a positive impact on both the environment and the communities involved in the production process.

The move towards using more green cleaning products represents a positive shift in our approach to cleaning and maintaining our living spaces. The benefits include a reduced environmental impact, improved health and indoor air quality, sustainable packaging, and support for ethical brands. By embracing this green revolution, we can make a significant contribution to a more sustainable and healthier future for ourselves and the planet.

Myldred Ingram

Myldred Ingram
R&R Editor-in-chief



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Meet our 2023 Inaugural Technician Award Winner Gabriel Peterson!

By Myldred Ingram

Beginning this year, Restoration and Remediation has launched the Technician Award with the goal of celebrating restoration technician professionals giving them the industrywide visibility they deserve for the very noble and frontline work they do.

Technician award nominees can be in any level of their technician career and exhibit qualities such as leadership, career progress, a clear passion for the industry and making strides within their organizations and restoration overall.

This year, there were 14 finalist for the Technician award. Each nomination was carefully scored by a panel of industry judges and, of course, one finalist came out on top.



Meet 2023 Technician Award Winner Gabriel Peterson

Gabriel wasn't always a technician and like many of us, didn't initially set out to be in the restoration and remediation industry. Starting out his career in the field of HVAC, Gabriel found his way to restoration while having a break between jobs. Immediately he began working for AdvantaClean which is now called Lightspeed Restoration for now 7 years. Within that time, Gabriel has grown in skill and diversified his knowledge.

Not only is it his knowledge that Gabriel works to diversify, but he's also diversified Lightspeed Restorations service lines. With Gabriel's help, Lightspeed has added water damage, odor control, and carpet cleaning services. His leadership has been proven time and again as he's executed production work with the highest quality, and also trains junior technicians so they can take on more leadership roles themselves.

quality, and also trains junior technicians so they can take on more leadership roles themselves.

While the company was in transition from AdvantaClean to Lightspeed Restoration, Gabriel aided in the company's Violand strategic planning process for four years, both in preparation beforehand as well as accompanying execs to the retreat to put the plan together. Gabriel has helped shape the direction of the company with valuable input for many years.

Gabriel's industry certifications and awards include:

- IICRC
- WRT
- MICRO Mold Remediation Specialist
- MICRO Mold Inspection Specialist
- NADCA ASCS

This is just the beginning of our winner's certification list as he continues to grow and develop his knowledge. Gabriel is currently learning the ropes to be an estimator, inspecting and proposing jobs to help grow his business.



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Building Blocks

As we previously learned about our winner, not only did he help shape a large part of his company, but he's also into shaping and training junior technicians so they can take on more leadership roles themselves. This has given him a vested interest in being an all-star player who has put himself in anywhere that he is needed, whether that involves working extra hours, coaching budding team leads through their challenges, repairing equipment and maintaining company vehicles.

According to Lightspeed Restoration management, "Gabriel learns about his fellow technicians and helps them see their potential and place within the company, provides valuable feedback to management, and is always willing to try something new or come up with a creative solution to any problem."

Gabriel is someone who doesn't seek accolades with his work but is very deserving of them for his immense amount of dedication to his company and the industry in general.

"Gabriel is a pillar of strength and while he doesn't seek praise, I feel it is important for him to know how much we value and appreciate him. He has been so important to us for so long and we have shown that gratitude in as many ways as is possible, but this outside recognition would mean a lot to him."

- Lightspeed Restoration Management





In His Free Time

In Gabriel's free time he loves spending time with his family which includes his wife and 2 children a little boy and girl. When he's not having family time he enjoys volunteering with youth groups in his area of Northern Virginia, or volunteering to be an aide for the elderly.

Gabriel also likes to play basketball in his free time, and, although he says he should do more of it has most recently taken on working out.



Meet Our Runner-Ups



Israele (Izzy) Huerta/ Field Supervisor

Bravo Restoration

Israel, affectionately known as Izzy by many, boasts over a decade of experience in this industry! He embarked on his journey as an entry-level technician specializing in mitigating emergency situations involving water, mold, fire, and biohazard issues. In a remarkably short span, he not only gained the respect of his colleagues but also garnered admiration from numerous industry professionals.

What makes Israel's journey even more remarkable is that English is his second language. Nonetheless, he rapidly ascended the career ladder, mastering all the intricacies of mitigation along the way. As the years passed, he discovered his true passion for construction.

Today, a little over ten years since he embarked on this path, Israel has rightfully earned his position as a field supervisor overseeing both the mitigation and repairs departments. His dedication and expertise continue to shine, making him an invaluable asset to the Bravo Restoration team.



Earl Ewoldt/ Mitigation Manager

Rare Restoration

With over 12 years of experience and training, Earl is a leader that truly came up from the truck.

Earl is responsible for training next generation technicians and relaying the knowledge he has been trained with to his teams.

Earl is still in the field to explain company standards to technicians and is the best demo guy the company has. Earl leads by example in every fashion from customer service to dress code. He keeps his company up to date on new techniques and equipment that are advancing the industry.



Meet Our Judges



Eric Sprague

Owner of Super Tech University

Eric Sprague has more than 25 years of experience managing teams in the home services industry. Eric was formerly a VP of Operations at a global manufacturing company and owner of a cleaning and restoration company. Now, Eric is Owner and Director of Education at Super Tech University, a company which trains technicians and managers soft skills for all home service verticals. In his spare time, Eric is the Co-Host of the Blue Collar Nation podcast.

Sarah Largent

Co-Owner CPR Restoration

Sara Largent lives compassion. She is the co-owner of Certified Professional Restoration, a people first leader, and a proud mother to her son Reece. Throughout the years Sara has donated her time to various charitable and community building organizations. This includes Caring Makes Cents, The Total Living Center, Coats for Kids, CACPC summer food program for children, progress 4 the cure, and Echoing Connections to name a few.



When Sara is away from the office, she enjoys spending time with her family, boating, working

When Sara is away from the office, she enjoys spending time with her family, boating, working in her flower garden, feeding her koi fish, and traveling to various sandy beaches, tropical islands, and mountain ranges. Work accomplishments include the successful growth of her organization from a startup to present day operations. She has been responsible for spearheading the cultural development of the company by creating an atmosphere of growth, development, and compassion enjoyed by employees and customers alike. While Sara prefers to spend most of her time playing a support role that rarely receives the recognition it deserves, she was the proud recipient for the NSME award in 2020.

Certified Professional Restoration is a disaster cleanup company that specializes in the emergency response aspect of the restoration industry. The primary focus is water damage, fire and smoke clean up, and mold remediation. Secondary services include viral disinfecting, deodorizing services, commercial carpet cleaning, and trauma scene cleanup. While the organization does not perform construction activities, its people first approach makes it the ideal choice for customers in an emotionally compromised state. They are a calming influence for their customer base excelling in educating their clients, providing sound guidance, and clearly explaining the process throughout the experience.



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WELCOME ONBOARD

Keeping the Fire Burning in New Hires

Maintaining new employee motivation is a critical aspect of successful employee onboarding and retention. When a new employee joins an organization, they bring with them an elevated level of enthusiasm, energy, and eagerness to learn. However, this motivation can quickly fade if the organization fails to provide support and opportunities for growth.

In anticipation of their first day, a new team member is usually brimming with excitement and eagerness to impress, but it is not just the new hire who has a sparkle. On our end, we gear up to welcome them, fine-tuning training presentations and prepping some company swag. As the office artist creates a welcome note on the white board, the atmosphere hums with shared anticipation. It's fun and exciting for everyone, and it is also important work, setting the stage for a potentially transformative journey.

On their first day, an almost tangible energy radiates from a new team member. They are eager to prove their skills and show their new boss what they can do. This embodies the essence of what I call "new employee energy"—a potent force of drive and eagerness that supports solution-oriented thinking, fosters creativity, and accelerates learning. It's like a superpower.

How we wreck new employee energy

While new employee energy is powerful, it is not an eternal flame. As the novelty of first-day experiences, onboarding, and training subsides, the allure can fade, allowing the employee to slip into workplace monotony.

Employers also drop the ball when it comes to new hires. We harness just enough of their initial energy to help equip them with the fundamental skills, leaving the remaining spark to fizzle out. It's ironic that while we vigilantly conserve tangible resources like materials, labor, and cash, we often overlook the potent yet intangible resource of new employee energy.

To extend the effects of that energy, here are some things to try.

Communicate expectations and goals

Expectation gaps lead to performance gaps. Neglecting to set and communicate clear expectations is the most common reason for employee performance problems ... and it's the fault of the leader. That stings a bit, doesn't it? To get alignment and prevent confusion, the expectations must be explained up front.

In addition to job-specific skills, individuals thrive when they fully comprehend their role's purpose and success metrics. And employees should understand not just their position's goals, but also the goals of the department and company. The broader perspective of how their efforts impact the bigger goals promotes a sense of contribution, which helps to preserve their new employee energy.

Build relationships

Magical momentum can happen when a team connects with their leader on a personal level. They cannot be expected to be invested in the future of the company without a personal connection to the vision creator. They will not give their all for a distant figure who barely engages in occasional chit-chat. But for someone who takes the time to know them, share personal stories, and ensure they feel valued and supported, they will give their all.

We need to grow our people to grow our business. And to supercharge the growth of our people, we need to build relationships. Start with management by walking around coupled with one-on-one interactions like lunches or coffee chats that are more conversation than business meeting. This will foster a mentorship atmosphere, strengthening bonds and fanning the flames of excitement and engagement.

Listen and give feedback

Listen and give feedback

Within the minds of our team members are ideas that could catapult the business way beyond even leadership's vision for it. We sometimes inadvertently stifle these ideas when we fail to ask for them or fail to foster an environment conducive to sharing improvements.

An engaged, energized employee is not going to keep providing ideas if they are either not heard or always receive pushback, like being told there's nothing wrong with how things are now. An egocentric leader who insists on every idea being only theirs fosters a business that can only grow to the extent of their own imagination. This kills the energy and ambition of the team, leading them to think, "why bother trying to make anything better when the boss is just going to strike it down?"

Recognize them

Employees need to feel seen and appreciated. Every day, they contribute to the success of the company, and a simple acknowledgment can significantly boost their determination. Grand gestures like an Employee of the Year award are great, but frequent small, personal recognitions work better to keep employee energy up.

Leaders should make it a priority to set aside time for recognition, ideally daily or weekly. During this time, things can be done like writing a personal note, seeking out an employee to commend on their excellent work, and spreading the word to enable others to recognize their achievements as well. Keep in mind that some people do not enjoy fanfare, so we should consciously adapt our approach based on individual preferences. The goal is to nourish their energy, and if the recognition method makes them uncomfortable, it could backfire.

In conclusion, realize that maintaining employee energy is important. By implementing these strategies with both new and existing team members, we can ignite a spark of energy and fan it into a roaring blaze. Good employees come pre-motivated. Our task is to avoid demotivating them and, instead, periodically re-motivate them. This is the vital work of company leaders, not just to retain employees and reduce turnover rates, but to cultivate a team of individuals who feel both comfortable and empowered to strive and expand, pushing themselves, their leaders, and their company to be better.



Shauna Parsons is a business development advisor for Violand Management Associates (VMA), a highly respected consulting company in the restoration and cleaning industries. As the former owner of a concrete and foundation repair business, Parsons has a deep understanding of business operations and uses her knowledge to help businesses run more effectively and grow, while building the company's culture. To reach her, visit Violand.com or call (800) 360-3513.



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Best Practices for Asbestos Remediation in Historical Restoration Projects

By Oscar Collins

The word “asbestos” elicits a fear response in many people for a good reason. This common insulating material exists in multiple places in older homes, causing headaches for those involved in historical restoration projects. Remediation measures require a special touch to protect human health and safety.

What should people know if they own such a property or work in the trades? Here are the best practices for asbestos remediation in historical restoration projects.

The Risks of Asbestos

Many people first hear the word “asbestos” in television commercials by law firms representing plaintiffs diagnosed with mesothelioma. This aggressive and deadly cancer form first came into public awareness after H.L. Wedler discovered an association between asbestosis and cancer of the pleura among German workers who regularly handled the substance in the 1940s¹.

However, the political climate at the time prevented news of the discovery from spreading until 1960, when the British Journal of Medicine detailed 33 cases of mesothelioma among South African workers in asbestos mines and those who lived in the surrounding area.

While lung cancer and mesothelioma are the most common consequences of asbestos exposure, they aren't the only risks. Inhaling the fibers can also lead to the following²:

- **Asbestosis:** A lung condition marked by pulmonary fibrosis or scarred lung tissue. It can cause difficulties with breathing and exertion.
- **Other cancer forms:** Scientists have also found an association between asbestos exposure and testicular, laryngeal, ovarian and various abdominal cancers.

Best Practices for Asbestos Remediation

Understand that not all asbestos requires remediation. Although most products today no longer contain it, older buildings may have it in numerous places – but it may not cause issues. If the material containing it is undamaged and in good shape, there is no need to take action.

Intact asbestos doesn't cause issues. It's when the fibers become airborne that they can enter your lungs and create damage. Follow this process for assessing your property and taking the proper remediation steps.

1. Understand Where Asbestos Lurks

Asbestos may occur in the following locations³:

- Around steam pipes, boilers and furnace ducts
- In vinyl asbestos, sheet vinyl, asphalt and rubber flooring
- Millboard, paper and cement sheets
- Door gaskets in wood stoves
- In soundproofing materials
- Patching, joint compounds and textured paints
- Shingles and siding
- Artificial ashes and embers in gas fireplaces
- Fireplace gloves, stove-top pads, ironing board covers and hairdryers

- Automotive brake pads, linings, clutch facings and gaskets

2. Determine If Repair or Removal Is the Best Course of Action

In general, remediation is your best bet. Asbestos fibers become dangerous when disturbed, and most repairs create less of a risk than ripping everything apart and starting fresh.

You can't tell if something in a historical restoration project contains asbestos without a test. Doing so requires following proper procedures, including removing everyone else from the area and covering it and yourself with protective equipment to mitigate health risks. Calling a professional is usually your best bet, although you can buy DIY test kits.

3. Review Safety Procedures with All Staff before Removal

All asbestos remediation and removal procedures begin with a safety briefing for everyone involved in the process. It doesn't matter if these professionals have heard the advice a thousand times before – it's like a flight attendant reminding frequent flyers to wear their seatbelts.

Reviewing procedures and having workers sign a contract that they have received the requisite training protects individuals and firms from potential liability. If a worker takes unnecessary risks like removing PPE in the workplace, the responsible party has evidence that they informed the individual about the dangers.

4. Sequester the Work Area

Asbestos fibers can easily spread through the air. Therefore, work crews should cordon off the area with heavy plastic and duct tape. Additionally, they should shut down the HVAC system while remediation continues.

5. Prevent Spread to Other Areas

Workers should not enter other parts of the property while engaged in asbestos removal. Crew chiefs should ensure access to restroom facilities before work begins.

After the job is completed, those involved should remove all clothing and equipment and place them in sealed, leak-proof plastic bags.

6. Follow Proper Cleanup Protocols

It's not sufficient to do the work and go. Upon completion, crews should clean the area well with rags, wet sponges, wet mops and HEPA vacuums. They should not use regular vacuum cleaners but devices are dedicated to asbestos jobs.

Wetting surfaces prevents fibers from spreading during cleanup. Dusting and sweeping debris creates risk, as it releases fibers into the air.

Asbestos Remediation Best Practices

Asbestos is a word that strikes fear in many for good reasons. Loose fibers from damaged property can pose severe health risks when remediating historical restoration projects.

However, following the proper protocol keeps those involved in the remediation process safe. Review these guidelines for best practices before attempting asbestos remediation or removal when restoring your property.

Sources

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Oscar Collins is the editor-in-chief of Modded. Follow him on Twitter @TModded for frequent updates of his work.



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What to expect if Your Restoration Company is Visited or Fined by a Compliance Company

By Barry Rice

Introduction

Many Restorers think they will never be visited, let alone fined, by OSHA or the EPA. From my past conversations with them, I have found that most believe:

- They are too small to be visited
- OSHA/EPA isn't interested in their residential work
- Very few OSHA/EPA regulations apply to their work

In other words, they can “fly under the radar” for the life of their business.

For many small companies, the odds of being visited by OSHA/EPA are probably very slim, given the number of inspectors for either agency versus the number of small jobs being performed every day in the United States. Total SDS, a regulatory compliance company, ran the numbers and claims there is a 1% chance of being inspected by OSHA.



However, the chances are not zero! If you perform an Internet search for OSHA or EPA violations, you will find restoration companies who have been cited. Some of the EPA violations are much larger than the OSHA violations, but that's a story for a different day!

Point being, many restoration companies do get inspected and wind up with violations that can have big impacts on a small operation. Given that, I would like to provide you with a basic review of what I have observed and experienced. For simplicity, I'm going to break this down into two categories:

- Targeted inspection of a specific company
- Random inspection



Targeted Inspection

For this scenario, OSHA or the EPA is looking to inspect the business location or a jobsite of a specific company. I have observed a number of ways these inspections are triggered; some examples are:

- **Employee Complaint:** an existing or former employee has filed an OSHA complaint against the company. I hear about this at least a couple times a year. Typically, the complaint is filed by a disgruntled former employee. Sometimes the complaint is valid and sometimes the complaint is fabricated. Regardless, OSHA will investigate the complaint through an off-site investigation (e.g. phone call or mail) or on-site inspection. (2)
- **Customer/Neighbor/Competitor Complaint:** somebody other than an employee has called the regulator and filed a complaint. This could be a customer complaining about dust throughout a house (e.g. lead-based paint dust or asbestos). It could be a neighbor complaining about paint being dumped onto their lawn or into a storm drain. Or it could be a competitor complaining about unlicensed or unpermitted work. Again – these complaints may be valid or fabricated; however, the end result is an inspection!
- **Emergency Responders reporting to a Regulator:** the police, firefighters, or EMT's have called the regulator to report what they observed at the work location. I have experienced this in the past after a fall injury; the police called the local OSHA office to report there was a fall injury on a jobsite. These reports are due to an actual injury or incident, so an inspection is highly likely.
- **Customer calls Regulator for Information:** unlike the complaint scenario, this is based on questions the customer has for the regulator. For example, I was told about a customer calling a state environmental group with questions on asbestos testing and management. In that case, the regulator contacted the Restorer and sent a cease-and-desist letter on incorrect asbestos sampling practices.
- **Focused Inspections:** a regulator has targeted specific types of high-risk work (e.g. working from heights, high heat, or roofing) and goes into a city/county with a task force to specifically inspect jobsites with that type of work. Many times, the task force works with the local permitting group to identify jobsites to visit. Remember, you may not be doing roofing work, but a contractor beside you or across the street may be performing roofing, have a focused inspection, and the inspectors also end up visiting your jobsite (see the Random Observation Section below).
- **Your Dumpster is Flagged at the Landfill:** a dumpster has hazardous waste or materials that should be recycled and is taken to a landfill to be dumped as construction waste. During the dumping process, a person monitoring what is dumped observes that waste and stops the dumping process (e.g. asbestos materials, spray paint cans, or fluorescent bulbs). The hauler then has to bring the dumpster back to the jobsite or to a different waste site. Sometimes the local regulators are called to manage disposal of the waste and assess fines. The subsequent disposal expenses and fines get charged to the Restorer who rented the dumpster and filled it.



Random Observation

This category relates to a regulator driving by a jobsite or visiting nearby jobsites and observing a violations on your jobsite.

- **OSHA-observed violation:** This can include OSHA inspectors traveling to a planned inspection and observing your employees engaged in work that could imminently injure them (e.g. working from a balcony without fall protection or working from an aerial lift without a harness and lanyard). OSHA inspectors are required to immediately investigate situations when they observe employees in imminent danger. (3)
- **EPA/Environmental-observed violation:** just like an OSHA observation, an environmental regulator observes or is informed of a violation. This can include the random observation of loading hazardous materials into a construction waste dumpster (e.g. asbestos materials or fluorescent bulbs). I have also received calls in the past from a local fire department about liquids running out of a dumpster at our jobsite and about to enter a storm drain (requires absorptive materials to capture liquid and/or determination of what the type of liquid)



How Do I Avoid/Minimize Inspections?

Obviously, being compliant with OSHA/EPA regulations will help minimize, but never eliminate, the chance of being inspected. The articles I write in this column will help you with compliance. However, I have found that there are benefits from learning how companies end up being inspected or issued violations. First, it seems that just being aware of the scenarios I mention in this article help motivate a company to remain vigilant with their safety or environmental practices. Second, I can personally attest that every time I hear of a unique situation that lead to a regulatory inspection/violation, I think about the vulnerability our company may have and how I can train our employees on these situations. Maybe you can apply this approach to minimize inspections or pass inspections?

Summary

I have a theory that most inspections and violations are much more unexpected and random than most companies envision. Based on this theory, I believe it would be helpful if Restorers used this knowledge as a stimulus to begin basic safety and environmental compliance or enhance existing practices. Then, when a random inspection occurs, the Restorer will be less likely to face serious violations, fines, and corrective actions!

References

[TotalSDS: What Triggers an OSHA Inspection?](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration: Federal OSHA Complaint Handling Process.](#)

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From Boomers to Gen Z

By John Monroe

"Out of every one-hundred men, ten shouldn't even be there, eighty are just targets, nine are the real fighters, and we are lucky to have them, for they make the battle. Ah, but the one, one is a warrior, and he will bring the others back." | Heraclitus, Greek Philosopher

"... one is a warrior ..."—in business, that one is the owner or leader.*

For the first time in modern history, the workforce is made up of five generations of workers. For guidance about what each generation of employees wants from their work experience, it has become far too common for leaders to turn to generational stereotypes. Leaders need to let go of these stereotypes and instead, focus on the employment factors that matter to all generations.

There is extensive documentation showing that the primary reason workers from every generation quit their jobs is an unsatisfactory work environment, as defined by the company's culture. To counter this, it falls upon each company's leadership to clearly convey and explain the mission, vision, and core values that support their cultural foundation. Mere communication of these values by the leader is not enough; they must establish the standard through their own actions.

The leader's next task is to assemble a team that embraces the company culture and refuses to accept subpar performance from their colleagues. This is in line with Heraclitus and his army of a hundred, wherein "... ten of the men shouldn't even be there ..." Though this might sound severe, it underscores the frequent scenario where leaders hire hastily or retain employees due to the belief that any warm body is better than none. These employees then fail to integrate with the culture, leading to discord and draining the team's vitality. Their work ethic is lackluster, and they erode the culture for the remaining eighty-nine members.

Core values serve as the guiding principles that a business employs to govern its internal and external relationships. These values must be consciously practiced in every decision undertaken by both leadership and employees, including the critical aspect of hiring. Otherwise, leadership disappoints the rest of the team by hiring the ten who do not align with the company's core values.

In Heraclitus's army of one-hundred, he discusses the eighty who serve as mere targets. This characterization doesn't cast a favorable light on the majority of the army. In the context of business, those eighty individuals are akin to worker bees—the team members who faithfully show up every day, adhere to a set schedule, and diligently execute their assigned tasks. They don't seek recognition for their efforts and typically lack flashiness or a quest for glory. Instead, they contribute with unwavering dedication. Without their essential contributions, the company's success would falter, and those remaining would face elimination.

The final members of Heraclitus's army are the nine who are "... the real fighters, and we are lucky to have them ..." Identifying these exceptional individuals within the business will prove to be a significant accomplishment. They are the ones who can be entrusted with assignments, without hesitation, knowing they will give their all to whatever comes their way. Among these are the managers who voluntarily dedicate overtime and weekends, demonstrating a willingness to go above and beyond to accomplish the designated task. Undoubtedly, their presence is a highly valuable resource for the company. Top of Form

Being a business leader today is considerably more challenging than at any other point in history. As previously mentioned, many leaders find themselves ensnared in a pitfall of attributing the difficulty of recruiting and retaining the eighty-nine employees to the task of managing five generations, each of which has matured in vastly dissimilar eras, accompanied by distinct core values, communication styles, and technological aptitude.

But the stereotypes associated with generational differences can be disproven.

In Abraham Maslow's 1943 research paper "A Theory of Human Motivation," his hierarchy of needs outlines the fundamental aspirations of every individual within the work environment. First, employees need to fulfill their basic requirements, which include food, clothing, and shelter. Then they seek job security and well-being within both their home and work settings. As a further layer, individuals yearn for the gratification of their psychological prerequisites, including a sense of belonging, affection, and self-esteem. Finally, perched atop Maslow's pyramid are the needs for self-fulfillment, entailing the realization of one's utmost potential.

The leader aspiring to be "... *the one* ..." who unites the team across generations will need to create a work environment that fulfills the hierarchical needs of the eighty-nine. The employees' basic needs are addressed by providing competitive, top-tier pay for each position, aligning with the broader employment market. The leader then addresses the remaining needs in the hierarchy by mastering these five initiatives with their team.

- 1. Inspiring Motivation:** Understanding that employee development is a long-term initiative that also offers short-term benefits such as improved employee performance and positive employee self-esteem. Recognizing that some employees do not aspire to be managers, but they desire their manager to genuinely care about them and support their personal development.
- 2. Being Purpose Driven:** Encouraging employees to openly question other employees' actions that are contrary to the company's core values. Recognizing that using behavior-based core value questions in interviews fosters hiring the right people and building a team that shares the same beliefs.
- 3. Creating a Supportive Environment:** Recognizing that trust is ultimately about building relationships that are authentic but with vulnerability. Being purposeful in building and managing trust.
- 4. Encouraging Empowerment:** Creating an environment that celebrates failures as well as wins. Establishing a culture of transparency and placing a strong emphasis on telling the truth even when it hurts. Encouraging employees to communicate with transparency without the worry of being judged negatively. Creating trusting teams where people aren't afraid to ask for help or say they made a mistake.
- 5. Showing Recognition and Appreciation:** Acknowledging and appreciating team members' contributions and achievements, fulfilling their esteem needs and boosting morale.

The business leader embodying the essence of a warrior must harmonize Heraclitus's philosophy of adaptability and resilience with Maslow's focus on addressing the team's needs and nurturing a supportive work environment. By doing so, they can proficiently steer their diverse, multi-generational workforce through the intricacies of the business realm, empowering them to realize their shared goals.

** While work and war are similar in many aspects, we realize, of course, that the stakes and consequences of war are much higher, involving loss of human lives and the safety of nations.*

John Monroe is a senior advisor for Violand Management Associates (VMA), a highly respected consultancy in the restoration and cleaning industries. As an authority in sales, sales management, and entrepreneurship, Monroe has worked for a Fortune 500 manufacturer and owned both a franchise business and a sales management consultancy. Through Violand, Monroe works with companies to develop their people and their profits by providing leading edge coaching and training. To reach him, visit Violand.com or call (800) 360-3513.



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Buyers' Guide

The #1 directory of professional restorers and remediators, insurance claim professionals, property managers and distributors. Our resources included suppliers, associations, and products such as chemicals for disinfectants, carpet cleaning and spot removal as well as water extraction equipment and smoke damage repair products. The Restoration & Remediation directory is designed to provide you with sources for these important products & resources. Below is a sampling of some of the companies featured in this year's directory. We invite you to reference the supplier logos below and click on them to learn more about each company's offerings.

Plus, be sure to visit (and bookmark!) our easy-to-use [online directory](#) here.



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