



executive

insights



Name: Mark Malerba, HBA, CBSE

Title: Vice President

Company: Metropolitan Maintenance

Fact: Mark graduated from Ivey Business School at Western University in 2003.

Fact: Mark collects various forms of sports and entertainment memorabilia such as autographed photos, jerseys, hats and more. He says he is slowly building his collection, which includes autographed memorabilia of Michael Jordan, Wayne Gretzky, Roberto Baggio, as well as several musicians and entertainers.

Mark Malerba grew up in his family business. His parents, Mike and Joanne, started Metropolitan Maintenance, based in London, Ontario, in 1980 when he was just one year old and when he was in high school, he started working in different areas of the company so that he could learn as much as possible. After graduating from the Richard Ivey School of Business in 2003, he worked in consulting for two years before returning to the family business on a permanent basis as the manager of business development. Today, Mark is vice president at Metropolitan Maintenance. Here, he gives his perspective on future trends, discusses why he obtained his Certified Building Service Executive (CBSE) designation and shares the one piece of advice he keeps with him always.

“If you try to jump to the top, you’ll likely fall. If you take it step by step, you’ll go farther than you’ve ever imagined.”

In the next 10-15 years, where do you see the BSC industry?

Fortunately, cleaning is a service that all businesses require, and for the most part, our service is fairly recession proof. Clients understand that a clean workplace results in healthier and safer work environments by protecting against illness, increasing productivity and, ultimately, occupant satisfaction. Going forward, I see technology and care for the environment as being important factors for the BSC industry.

What is one challenge you’ve experienced in your career, and how did you handle it?

Entering a family business as the child of an owner is never an easy task. I think the most challenging obstacle for any next generation owner is earning respect, trust and carving your own footprint. My approach was to listen, ask questions, work with staff and respect what my parents had built. This demonstrated to staff that I was committed and dedicated to Metropolitan Maintenance.

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What are some tips you have for employee retention?

The average turnover rate in our industry is more than 250 percent and ours is approximately 10 percent. I am proud of the fact that we have several long-term employees who have been with us for 10, 15, 20 and even 25 years. We have several employee recognition programs, including an annual employee awards gala that honors an employee of the year, most improved employee, employees with perfect attendance and employee milestones. Every Friday throughout the year, I announce our Employee of the Month on the radio, which is a way to publicly recognize the efforts of staff who have gone above and beyond. Our Employee Referral Program has also been popular in getting staff to refer individuals who they feel would be a good fit with our team.

How do you create a great company culture for your team members?

We are a family-owned and operated business, and the culture we have created is one of family. We have an open-door policy with employees, which allows us to communicate with staff regularly to not only discuss what is going on with their work but also what is happening in their lives. We care about our staff, and if we can assist them both professionally and personally, then they are more likely to be motivated, dedicated and loyal.

What traits do you look for when hiring?

Above all else, we look for individuals who are motivated, passionate, reliable, have a desire to succeed and are self-starters. Experience is important; however, if you don't have these other traits, chances are, you will not fit with our culture. If you are willing to learn and are hardworking, we will equip you with the tools to be successful. Employees participate in and benefit from informal workshops, training videos, attending seminars and on-the-job training.

Why did you obtain your CBSE certification, and how has it helped your career?

I obtained my CBSE certification because I am a firm believer in continuing education and leading by example. Like any profession, it is vital to stay up-to-date on the latest developments and technologies. Obtaining this certification is a way to prove your skills and knowledge not only to your staff, but also to your clients and potential clients. This certification is a way of differentiating yourself from competitors, and it is an achievement to be proud of.

What is the best piece of advice you've received in your career?

Something that my father told me years ago: If you try to jump to the top, you'll likely fall. If you take it step by step, you'll go farther than you've ever imagined.