

## Can cleaning companies really charge £8.00 an hour?

We're noticing that more and more of our competitors are charging ludicrously low prices to win business. They're winning the business on price but can you really deliver a commercial cleaning service for £8 per hour?

This is how we should structure the hourly rate... and from this breakdown you will clearly see why we don't believe that companies can charge such low prices...

- **UK minimum wage is on average £6.00 per hour.** *(However, I Love Cleaning pays above minimum wage to ensure our employees are keen and that the best quality service is achieved. In effect we have a good employee retention rate... Which means that you won't have a new face arriving on each clean!)*
- **As an employer we are requirement to pay our employees for holidays** – as most cleaners do not work whole days, holiday entitlement is best worked out as a percentage of the hours worked. Assuming the cleaners get 20 days plus UK bank holidays then this percentage works out at 12.08% of the average hours worked for the previous 12 weeks. This takes the (minimum wage) cost per employee up to approx. £6.70 per hour.
- **In addition we have to pay Employers National Insurance for each employee** which again is calculated as a percentage. The current rate is 12.8% of earnings so the cost per hour is now (based on minimum wage) £7.60 per employee per hour.
- **We now apply additional costs such as cleaning products** – in the cleaning industry there is a generally accepted figure of around 7-10% of the wage cost will be the cleaning products cost. Assuming the lower end, the cost per employee per hour is now £8.20
- **For fuel/logistical costs we apply an additional 35p per mile** – our domestic cleaners can travel up to 20 miles each day
- **We now factor in other costs such as capital purchases like vacuum cleaners, training, uniforms...** and the general everyday costs associated with running a business i.e. Insurance, CRB checks... and let's not forget that we are entitled to make a little profit!

So before you think about going with the '**CHEAPEST**' quote please ask yourself - '**How can anyone charge £8.00 per hour and offer a reliable and quality service**'. We believe that it's simply impossible for any professional cleaning company to offer a reliable and safe cleaning service at those sorts of prices.

Companies that do operate these tactics are using the up-front price as a 'loss-leader' – Once the company get their foot in the door they will usually try to reduce the number of hours spent in your home or business over a period of time... which means that you end up with less hours than those that you started with. Based on this ploy your price per hour over a monthly period is now looking more like £13 per hour: but the service will be deteriorating rapidly as the job really did need those original hours quoted for.

As a result we're also seeing those cleaning operators charging you extra for jobs that you originally thought were included within the original quote. One of our newest customers came to us after their previous cleaning company started using this tactic.

**By all means you should shop around for a competitive price** but that price needs to be realistic and it needs to be relative to the quality of service you want and need to receive. If one cleaning company is charging considerably less than the others, work out how much you are paying per hour and then ask yourself whether they really can afford to charge that price? Like most things in life...

**If something seems too good to be true then it probably is...**