



# **Are You The Solo Professional and the Janitor?**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

## **Published**

April 7th, 2011

I really got tired of trying to find a janitor who would come into the office for a few hours a month at a reasonable cost. For the past year or so, I therefore decided to do the job myself and have figured out a way to do it without being exhausted or resentful.

Here are some tips that will save you time and money when it comes to cleaning the office:

1. Supplies and Equipment - I purchased a few items to keep in my storage room so they are handy. A feather duster, garbage bags, paper towels, and air freshener are about all you need. The only piece of equipment that I have is a new upright vacuum cleaner with attachments.
2. Regular maintenance - When each client leaves after an appointment, I quickly check the room for things that need attention. Empty bottles are put in a bag on the door handle where they can't be seen. Cushions are straightened on the love seats. Paperclips or bits of paper on the floor are picked up by hand. Books are straightened. This only takes a couple of minutes but offers good presentation for the next client.
3. Reactive tasks - I empty garbage cans when they are about half full. There are four in my suite of offices so one large black garbage bag is not only adequate for these but also allows me to empty the shredder at the same time. When I leave the office at the end of the day, I take the one bag with me for the trash bin.

If there is a need to vacuum - I vacuum. This is usually weather-related task that occurs when people bring in snow or mud on their shoes. Because I have a mat inside the front door and frequently work in sock-feet, I have noticed that clients usually take their shoes off and leave them on the mat. That helps!

4. "No show" dusting - It only takes a few minutes to dust each of my three rooms. Often I can complete this during one appointment time when the client cancels or does not show. Many times, I have found that I can actually do one room at a time in a break between my appointments.

Most of my clients are adults so there are seldom any fingerprints or sticky spots but when some do appear, a damp cloth can erase them in minutes.

If I thought that I had to spend an hour or two at the end of a long and busy week to clean the office, I likely wouldn't be happy about it. Breaking the work down into little tasks that can be spread throughout the week, however, is an easy and satisfying way of doing things when they need to be done. It also reduces expenses by converting small periods of time into productive activity.