

Position Paper

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4 types of dry cleaners: which profile fits your local dry cleaner?

Dry cleaners can generally be divided into four categories:

- value cleaners (discount cleaners) – poor quality at a discount price
- ordinary cleaners (middle market cleaners) – mediocre quality at a moderate price
- wannabe cleaners (illusion cleaners) – slightly better-than-average quality at an inflated price
- extraordinary cleaners (true quality cleaners) – extraordinary quality at a high price.

At the low end of the spectrum are the **value cleaners**.

Value cleaners (or discount cleaners) know that they have to **extract every penny of cost** from their operations, primarily by minimizing their investment in skilled labor, processes and equipment. They know that saving a few nickles per garment can mean the difference between failure and survival.

At the high end of the spectrum are the **extraordinary cleaners**.

By contrast, extraordinary cleaners know that they have to **invest significant resources** in skilled labor, processes and equipment over many years in order to develop the institutional capability necessary to produce extraordinary cleaning on a consistent basis. On every garment. On every



order.

Both value cleaners and extraordinary cleaners know exactly who their clients are and focus solely on serving the needs of those very different clients.

It's really quite simple. And quite complicated. All at the same time.

That leaves the **ordinary cleaners** who are figuratively and literally "stuck in the middle" (between the value cleaners and the extraordinary cleaners).

Just like Kmart and Sears, ordinary cleaners have no idea who their customers are, what their needs are and how to serve them.

All they know is that they must somehow survive and, in order to survive, they must become "all things to all people".

They believe that they can simultaneously care for garments that you're **really fussy** about, garments that you're **less fussy** about, and garments that you're **least fussy** about. And that they can do all this using the **exact same** personnel, procedures,



processes, technologies, equipment and facilities and the **exact same** pricing structure.

In these days of limited resources, growing competition and increasing specialization, that's a rather quaint and possibly doomed notion.

Just ask Kmart and Sears how they're doing!

This brings us to our favorite category of dry cleaner – **the wannabe cleaners.**

Wannabe cleaners are ordinary cleaners **who have convinced themselves that they are extraordinary cleaners.**

They talk the talk but can't walk the walk.

Typically, wannabe cleaners deliver a quality of product that is only marginally above average **but at an inflated price.** Then use glitz and the illusion of quality to convince their clients that their above average cleaning is somehow "exceptional" or "exquisite" and, therefore, worth that inflated price.

As these wannabe cleaners work to transform themselves into extraordinary cleaners, they, nonetheless, don't want to alienate their existing clients who just want ordinary, bang and hang

cleaning. They **need** to somehow retain those clients in order to survive financially.

So they **offer three different levels of quality at three different price levels.** They'll typically refer to these three quality-price levels as their "everyday service", their "expert service" and their "couture" service. Or their diamond, platinum and gold service. Or their classic, deluxe and signature service. Or their basic, classic and artisan service.

The notion is absurd.

Their employees get confused about the quality of the product they need to deliver. The clients get confused about the quality of the product they're paying for. And the management has no idea how to allocate their limited resources to serve three very different types of clients with very different needs.

By contrast, a true quality cleaner would never offer three levels of care.

A true quality cleaner offers one level of quality... extraordinary care.

At RAVE FabriCARE, we know who our clients are and we understand their needs. There's no confusion. And, as a result, there are no compromises, no short cuts, no half measures and no trade offs.

We know where we stand. Our craftspeople know where we stand. And our clients know where we stand.

We do it right or we won't do it at all.

It's a philosophy that's served us well for over 25 years. As a net result

- we're Arizona's leader in true quality cleaning
- we're used and recommended by more upscale department stores, clothing boutiques and custom clothiers than all other cleaners in Arizona combined
- we're recognized as one of the nation's premier cleaners by more non-compensated, independent, authoritative third parties than all other cleaners in Arizona combined.

Compromise elsewhere.

Stu Bloom
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