



THE SCIENCE OF
CLEANING
& **HYGIENE**

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2023
CERTIFIED EXCELLENCE IN EMPLOYEE CONDITIONS

TOP EMPLOYER 2023

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TSEBO

Being certified as a Top Employer is a testament to our dedication to build a better world of work through our human resources (HR) policies and people practices. We are humbled by this recognition and are committed to building on this acknowledgement by accelerating our people strategies with benchmarking policies with proven HR best practices around the world.

This certification also assures our clients that Tsebo is a responsible employer with ethical and sustainable business practices. Clients, employees (current and potential) and other stakeholders wish to be associated with a company that prioritises its employees' development, health, safety and wellbeing.

It's particularly important in a services-led business like ours, where our people are the true differentiators. With an overall score of over 82 per cent, benchmarked against a globally certified group of more than 2 050 Top Employers, this accolade provides us with a competitive advantage in our industry. It validates our collective efforts to continually raise the bar by providing our clients with the best people, service and innovative solutions.

On 19 January 2023, representatives from Tsebo attended an award ceremony at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg (South Africa), to receive the award. The event was attended by a large audience of South African and Africa's leading brands, businesses, and HR executives.

We are exceptionally proud of our South African HR community, who have worked hard to enable us to achieve the certification – congratulations to all those involved! We trust we shall in the future expand this certification process to other countries within our African portfolio.





Why did Tsebo achieve the Top Employer certification?

It is important to know why our organisation has achieved this coveted certification and what the benefits are:

The Top Employers Institute is a global authority on recognising excellence in people practices. The institute certifies organisations based on the participation and results of their HR Best Practices Survey. This survey covers 600 practices in six HR domains across 20 topics, including People Strategy, Work Environment, Talent Acquisition, Learning, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Wellbeing, and more. Participants then submit evidence and are independently audited over several days in which their practices are thoroughly interrogated.

The adjudicators were impressed by Tsebo's use of innovation and technology, which played a large part in driving Tsebo's positive results. Watch the 2023 Top Employer Employee Video to learn more about the process and the benefits.

Top Employer celebrations highlights and testimonial video

We've kicked off the year on a high note by achieving 2023 Top Employer Certification in South Africa. In the following video, you will see highlights of our official CEO announcement, celebrations, and the formal award ceremony.





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Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO) South Africa recently had an exclusive interview with Elanie Kruger, Group CHRO of Tsebo Solutions Group, to find out more about dealing with a geographically dispersed workforce and keeping deskless employees engaged through innovation and technology.

ELANIE KRUGER

Group CHRO of Tsebo Solutions Group

Q: Tsebo's workforce is geographically widely distributed with the majority being deskless employees. How, within this context have you harnessed innovation and technology from an HR perspective?

Tsebo is all about people. Our purpose statement confirms that 'we develop people, to serve people, to uplift society'. We commenced with a digitisation strategy a few years back and identified the needs of our employees, clients and the business.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the need to prioritise our digitisation journey. It was clear that we needed to change the way we do things and challenge ourselves to work more innovatively and efficiently. We knew we could not make these changes overnight and steadily progressed on our journey. We mapped the end-to-end employee life cycle and identified where the use of technology would enhance the employee and client experience across the Group.

Q: What are some of the challenges you faced during this process?

People in general, embrace new ideas but are not that open to change itself. Change management is very important and it takes time to convince people of the benefits of doing things differently and adopting the discipline that comes with making the changes successful.

I also realised that too many changes at once can be overwhelming for the business. As such, timing and user adoption are very important. But there is always that one manager or team that embraces change and is willing to pilot a new system, and that energy and enthusiasm have a way of propelling change where more people want to be part of the journey.

Q: What are some of the benefits of which you are most proud?

Tsebo was certified as a Top Employer for 2023 and digitisation and the use of technology are key criteria for certification.

This accolade is directly related to the benefits that were identified as the following:

- Our careers platform has grown substantially to over 500,000 candidates in less than five years.
- Our human resources information system (HRIS) has been rolled out to all employees who can access leave, personal details and payslips via Employee Self Service. Employee time and attendance are fully integrated with our HRIS.
- We have achieved a 98 per cent payroll accuracy with an additional payroll query functionality on the ESS Mobi-platform.
- We have a knowledge portal TseboNet.
- Our Learner Management System (LMS) is accessible to all employees with more than 50 per cent utilisation and helps us bridge the digital divide by making training modules accessible offline.
- We had a 50 per cent participation in our Bi-annual Employee Experience Survey, which has been digitised, and we use technology to conduct culture checks.
- We have created several dashboards assisting us to monitor trends and empowers us to make more informed business decisions.

Q: What were some of the lessons learnt?

There were a few, including:

- Do not try to make too many changes all at once, rather, make incremental changes.
- Focus on the projects that will give you the biggest return. You need a success story and build from there.
- Success lies in proper planning prior to any execution.
- Get your change ambassadors to lead and pilot changes. Very soon, everyone wants to share in the success and adopt it.
- Position the changes as business enhancement tools, not HR tools.
- Be mindful of the technological literacy of employees, as it would be different across generations and levels.

FRESH AIR, WHAT EXACTLY IS IT?

By Johan le Roux, Divisional Manager Tsebo Cleaning Solutions



Source: European Cleaning Journal, January 2023 issue.

A recent survey conducted by an influential European cleaning magazine asked a few companies what ‘fresh air’ meant to them and their customers, as well as how the services they offer freshen the air of publicly-used facilities.

Air freshening systems are fast becoming a common feature of public buildings worldwide, particularly in luxury hotels and upmarket spas. Let us unpack the term ‘fresh air’. Plainly put, a good air freshening system should be able to replicate the scents and quality levels one would experience outdoors.

Exactly how fresh is the air outside, you may be wondering? Air quality is now a global concern with an estimated seven million people dying each year from indoor and outdoor air pollution. The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes this phenomenon as the biggest environmental threat to human health, further estimating that 99 per cent of the world’s population lives in locations that fail to meet WHO clean air standards.

This situation can be attributed to a number of factors such as the burning of fossil fuels, forest fires, waste incineration and other industrial practices – meaning we steadily managed to ruin the quality of our air over the years.

The history of fresh air

The picture was less gloomy in the mid-1850s when the therapeutic effects of fresh air first began to be utilised. Nineteenth century hospitals and convalescent homes would encourage patients to spend more time outdoors to help them recuperate from infectious diseases and pulmonary conditions.

Today’s air freshening companies have tougher responsibilities at hand. Their role is to replace bad smells in the air with new aromas – preferably those that people associate with cleanliness and freshness. For this reason, outdoor scents such as pine, citrus, floral options, baby and clean linen aromas are popular.

Varying meanings

The term ‘fresh air’ can have different definitions depending on the environment in question, according to Vectair Marketing Vice-President Chelsey Schwartz. “Fresh air can mean anything from air that has been cleansed or filtered, to an atmosphere where all malodours have been neutralised and where a pleasant fragrance is offered in their place,” explains Schwartz. “For example, a hospital will have different requirements of fresh air to those of a hotel because each facility will have a unique set of visitors with different expectations.”

The use of a fragrance is a critical element in communicating to visitors that a building is clean, says Schwartz. “In today’s world, it is important to reinforce cleanliness in your facility via all the senses. One of the most effective ways of doing this is by leveraging fragrance to advertise your cleaning practices.”

Neutralise odours

A good air freshener should eliminate malodours while also leaving a fresh scent behind. “It is important that such products are not designed to mask odours alone, but to neutralise them and use the created fragrance to communicate the cleanliness of the facility,” explains Schwartz.

“We associate fresh air with a seaside stroll or with a walk in the forest,” says Prodifa Commercial Export Manager, Séverine Bossaert. “However, it is important to note that forests contain a high concentration of volatile organic compounds, or particles suspended in the air. But this does not mean the particles in question are necessarily harmful to the body.”

According to Bossaert, the term ‘fresh air’ can also be synonymous with an absence of bad smells. “A room that smells bad is often the result of an accumulation of bacteria linked to a lack of hygiene,” she says. “Products such as odour destroyers and perfume diffusers will mask this issue, but the source of the bad smell also needs to be addressed.”

The presence of an olfactory signature is essential, notes Bossaert. “It speaks to the user’s subconscious and tells them that cleaning has been carried out and that the facility smells fresh as a result.” A scented atmosphere often makes the environment seem more pleasant and welcoming. But whatever people’s perceptions, the air cannot be qualified as fresh simply because a pleasant perfume has been used.

According to Bossaert, air fresheners are not intended to be used to neutralise allergens or bacteria. “Only the cleaning or filtration of the ambient air will meet this need,” she shares. “On the other hand, an air freshener can instantly stop an odour problem while the source of the smell is being addressed, and this is particularly useful in a professional environment.” She believes it is essential for a deodorising product to also offer a fragrant action. “Depending on the need to be addressed and the premises concerned, this perfume could be fresh, discreet, powerful, fruity, sweet – or even close to the body’s own perfume,” she says.

Bossaert believes it is impossible to produce a product that is capable of eliminating malodours and creating a fresh scent while also removing allergens. “The only way to completely remove allergens is by continuously ventilating or filtering the air in the room,” she says.





Advocating for healthier workspaces

Andreas Wissmeier, Asset Management Managing Director at Rock Capital, believes there is a growing demand for healthier office environments as a result of the global pandemic. “Even before the advent of COVID-19 it was clear that absenteeism tended to increase during periods of colds and flu, and that productivity decreased as a result,” he says.

“But throughout the pandemic, it was noticed that relatively few employees were absent during the 2020/2021 flu season – either because people were working from home or because they were wearing masks when they came into the office. Multiple heat exchangers are installed in the ventilation systems of immune offices to heat and cool the air as required. And dehumidifiers are employed to reduce the germ load and increase the comfort of office workers.

Rock Capital plans to open its first IMMUNE Building Standard™ office in Aschheim, Germany, in 2023 and among its first tenants will be global hygiene company Essity. The office building will be equipped with high-tech ventilation and hygiene concepts, UV-C air sterilisation units, self-opening doors and contamination-free heat recovery. There will also be green atriums, roof terraces, yoga areas, a concierge service and onsite sports facilities to further improve the healthy culture.

Wissmeier believes that healthy office spaces with clean air will be the next big trend. According to a survey in which Rock Capital polled 80 commercial estate marketers, 74 per cent said companies would like to lease healthy office spaces for their employees in the future. About 90 per cent of respondents said they believe the needs of office seekers have changed as a result of the pandemic, showing that demand for offices that comply with standards that enhance immune health will only increase.

A LOOK AHEAD: ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING 2023

By Marietjie Swanepoel: Hygiene, Cleaning and Healthcare Specialist

Back to the office

While the need for professional frontline workers increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decline in demand for commercial cleaning. Many offices were vacated for extended periods of time, and employees mostly worked remotely. Hybrid work models quickly became the norm, leaving the cleaning industry negatively impacted by the drastic decline in demand.

More recently, severe and ongoing power failures in South Africa makes it challenging for employees to be productive while working from home. Backup power solutions, available in most offices, are pulling employees back to the office environment in droves. In fact, 2023 is billed as the year where most people will return to the office on a permanent basis. With the lights out at home, the full time return of cleaners to commercial buildings in 2023 can be expected.

Healthier indoor environments

Historically, cleaning was carried out mainly for appearance purposes. However, during the pandemic, health and hygiene awareness became the focal points – resulting in a stronger focus on cleaning and hygiene. One of the biggest changes the pandemic introduced to the market was the need for cleaning companies to create healthier indoor environments.

Focusing on touch points while cleaning, is another healthy COVID-19 pandemic inspired habit that will remain with us. The frequency of bathroom cleaning has also increased. The demand for deep cleaning operations has increased over the last two years, with most companies including this cost in their annual budgets for 2023. Indoor air quality also took centre stage during the pandemic, and building occupants are now very aware of Sick Building Syndrome (SBS).

The aim of hygienic cleaning methodologies is to improve the respiratory health of buildings with occupants by reducing air pollutants and asthma triggers (such as viruses, allergens, mould, dust, etc.). Hepa filters on vacuum cleaners are presently the norm, and no longer a luxury. Although hand sanitiser stations are now treated as remnants of the pandemic, one habit we learnt during that challenging period was how to wash our hands thoroughly. Therefore, hand hygiene programmes are still an important focus for 2023.

Upskilling and staff retention

The contract cleaning industry plays an important role in job creation in South Africa. According to the Stats SA Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), the unemployment rate sat at 63,9 per cent for those aged 15 to 24 years of age, and 42,1 per cent for those aged 25 to 34 years in the first quarter of 2022. The official national unemployment rate currently stands at 34,5 per cent.

The focus of cleaning companies in 2023 and beyond is to employ and upskill the youth, offering them career opportunities in the cleaning industry. There are many skills programmes and qualifications available for cleaning professionals, with leading companies in the industry providing a variety of courses that include soft and hard skills.

Research has shown that the youngest generations (the Millennials and Generation Z) seek employment with a company that cares about both, the wellbeing of its employees and the environment. Employee-centred companies' retention of staff is higher, compared to companies that are only profit-driven. The ergonomic design of cleaning tools is an investment in the health of employees. Thus, ergonomic equipment is imperative in proving how necessary cleaning companies are for employees.



Advanced cleaning technology

Cleaning industry trends are constantly evolving. The main focus is to work smarter, not harder. Smart cleaning presents a variety of ways in which businesses can be more efficient and cost effective. Cleaning companies are reaping multiple benefits from integrating new technology and digital processes into their solutions. Sophisticated technologies enhance existing cleaning processes and improve efficiency.

When we think of advanced cleaning technology, we often only think of cleaning robots. However, there are a variety of devices that can be utilised when connected via Internet of Things (IOT). IOT powers some of the latest cleaning technologies in 'smart' cleaning. IOT technology is prevalent in a variety of devices and machines used in daily operations, including bathroom soap and paper towel dispensers, robotic floor scrubbers and vacuum sweepers. IOT devices can gather, share and analyse information and create actions accordingly. Data-driven cleaning empowers cleaning staff to deliver higher quality results by working smarter.

Robotic equipment includes self-driven, programmable vacuum cleaners and auto scrubbers with route recognition. These robotic cleaning machines can recognise obstacles in their cleaning path in real time, and automatically reroute themselves around the distractions. Sensors collect real time data that can alert managers when cleaning tasks are complete, when tanks need refilling, or when maintenance is required. Robots are not a replacement for humans, but they are a tool that can operate without constant supervision and work very well for cleaning premises after hours. Let us think of it this way: technology allows its human partner to do more through less.

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Environmental consciousness

With environmental consciousness growing, cleaning companies are increasingly moving towards sustainability to reduce their carbon footprint. Sustainability in the cleaning industry intersects with many different aspects of the business and is not one dimensional.

The focus is not only to use a 'green' product, but to look at the entire chain of producing these green products. The approach is no longer a 'cradle to the grave' but a 'cradle-to-cradle' philosophy, where the focus is to have zero impact on the environment. This philosophy is accompanied by a sustainability label that can be awarded to products that are produced, used and reused according to the 'cradle-to-grave' principle.

Environmental management policies and practices at every level, and in every department of the company, are imperative. Cleaning companies' focus for 2023 must be to encourage the use of new working systems, methodologies and equipment to continually improve their carbon footprint. Sustainability is shifting from a 'nice-to-have' to a 'must-have', with the aim of reducing carbon emissions to meet global 'Net Zero 2050' targets.

Last word

A quick scan of the 2023 trends confirms that they are all integrated and that none of them operate in silos. Customers are focusing on social responsibility standards, and thus look to collaborate with service providers who follow in the same path.

Customers now have higher hygiene expectations than previously and are becoming more eco-conscious. Cleaning efficiencies should be achieved by integrating advanced technology and best practices.

The retention of talent is key and, equally so, cleaning companies must invest in the health and wellbeing of their employees. But most of all, all the above-mentioned recommendations must be achieved in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

BRINGING THE OUTSIDE INSIDE

Rochelle Gouws: National Sales Manager

It goes without much saying that plants create an aesthetically pleasing work environment – making it green, clean and bringing life to the workspace. Potted plants reduce CO², CO and volatile organic compounds (VOC) levels. Better quality air means better quality employee performance.

Various research findings have shown that introducing indoor plants to your office can bring impactful benefits such as:

- Reducing stress levels
- Increased focus amongst workers
- Decrease absenteeism rates among employees
- Improve employee wellbeing
- Improve air quality within the office



ROCHELLE GOUWS

National Sales Manager,
Hygiene & Pest Control, Tsebo Solutions Group



Plants and stress alleviation

Research conducted by Kaitlyn Gillis and Birgitta Gatersleben at the University of Sussex establishes evidence linking indoor plants to improved pain tolerance and stress relief. The research report states that introducing plants indoors can in fact bring a multitude of benefits.

In addition, the research also reflected on various psychological studies that have previously charted the health and wellbeing benefits of indoor plants. For example, the ground-breaking research findings by Roger Ulrich in 1991 revealed that hospital patients with a view of the outdoors required limited pain medication.

A 2010 study by the New University of Technology, Sydney, established that the introduction of plants in the workspace brought on an encouraging reduction in stress among workers. The above study found the following among employees:

- Thirty-eight per cent workers reported a reduction in fatigue.
- Thirty-seven per cent reported a fall in anxiety and tension.
- Forty-four per cent reported a reduction in hostility and anger.
- Fifty-eight per cent workers reported a drop in dejection or depression.

Next time you consider new ways to spruce up your workspace, remember that plants literally breathe life into the work environment.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

APPRECIATION FROM A PATIENT

Inland: Mediclinic Welkom

Anna Zwane of Mediclinic Welkom in the Free State received the most heart-warming portrait of herself, drawn by a surgical ward patient, as a token of appreciation for Anna's small gestures and smiles that made her hospital stay extra comfortable.



Anna Zwane and the portrait of her

L'ORÉAL MANUFACTURING PLANT STAFF RECOGNITION

Inland: L'Oréal South Africa

During our monthly client service meeting, we were informed that the Tsebo Cleaning team was awarded a certificate from L'Oréal for their outstanding service and friendly attitude. Nominations for this award came from L'Oréal employees. What a great achievement and recognition for the team.



Quad Camera
my Galaxy A13

Front left to right: Simphiwe Deba, Thabang Nkuna, Bhekisisa Dladla

Back from left to right: Alice Khorommbi, Mavis Hlatshwayo, Thembeke Mkhize, Thabelo Mothawana, Matshidiso Tlou, Vuledzani Seko

NETCARE PARKLANDS LANDSCAPING AND GARDENS

KwaZulu-Natal: Netcare Parklands

The Gardens division of Tsebo Landscaping Solutions has had its hands full at Netcare Parklands, ensuring the garden looks as pristine as the new building, following the completion of renovations. The division worked closely with our client and the pictures below display a hospital premises to really be proud of.



NETCARE PARKLANDS SHOWS APPRECIATION

KwaZulu-Natal: Netcare Parklands

Tsebo staff member Makhehleni Mosi received an award for going the extra mile. Hospital Manager, Thea Janse van Rensburg, said Makhehleni is always willing to assist where needed, and often does so with a smile. Well done on embodying everything that Tsebo stands for Makhehleni!



Makhahleni Mosi and Thea van Rensburg

NEW CONTRACT OPENING

Western Cape: Highlands House Old Age Home

Last Christmas, when the rest of us were in the company of loved ones and friends, Linda le Gransie started a new contract at Highlands House.



Front: Linda le Gransie, **Second row left to right:** Shelin Williams, Nikita Horne, Jaydene Cyster, Miche Lucas, Aphiwe Stokwe and Nosipho Fitoyi, **Back left to right:** Pumza Singqi, Audrey Fisher, Lelethu Dyalaza, Sizeka Thwazi, Siphosandile Nqavela, Melvin De Villiers and John Oliphant

HEALTH AND SAFETY RECOGNITION

Western Cape: Old Mutual Western Cape

The Tsebo management team was recently recognised at the Old Mutual Health and Safety Awards for the company's dedication, professionalism, commitment and confident approach during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the assurance we gave Old Mutual clients to return to a safe work environment. All this, while we ourselves had to face the pandemic on a personal level.



From left to right: Graham Leffule, Nomzamo Thole, Shireen Wehr, Ayanda Kula, Thobeka Gwentshe, Quanita Williams and Mu'izz Venter

