
Team Huddles at University of Washington Enable Systems for Optimum Green Cleaning

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UW's Building Services teams have been recognized nationally for their standout green cleaning program by earning the *Green Cleaning Award for Schools & Universities Grand Award for Higher Education* in 2007, the *Co-Grand Award* in 2010, and the *Grand Award for Higher Education* in 2014 (American School & University, 2015).

Gene Woodard, Director of the Building Services Department at the University of Washington (UW), believes in his staff of 249 custodians, and it shows in his shared leadership style. His department has deployed 23 “Natural Work Teams” —each natural work team is supported by managers and supervisors—to provide continuously improving green cleaning to more than 11 million square feet of the main Seattle campus.

Two years ago, Building Services began launching three to four of these natural work teams each quarter. The intent was to engage the frontline workers in a systematic process that encourages them to generate ideas that make the work more efficient. The most effective solutions come from the people that are actually doing the work. The natural work teams have established goals aligned with the department's strategic objectives.



Separate project teams with representatives from across the campus tackle areas such as optimal cart design, best practices for white board cleaning, stairwell safety, and hiring. Project-based teams strive to achieve their set goals, usually within 90 days. The department's efforts to fine-tune efficiency have helped to counterbalance the 26% cumulative budget cut the department endured from 2007 through 2010.

[Read full blog.](#)

Reference

American School & University. (2015). *Green Cleaning Award for Schools & Universities*. Retrieved from American School & University: <http://asumag.com/green-cleaning-award>