



## The Cleaning Sector Barometer Analysis, October 2008

Office Address - Sol House, 29 St Katherine's Street, Northampton, NN1 2QZ  
Telephone number - 01604 233336  
email Address - [research@assetskills.org](mailto:research@assetskills.org)

The Barometer survey is used to gain on-going comparable data from organisations within the Asset Skills footprint every six months. The information below is from the 16 participating cleaning organisations.

### **Current challenges faced by the sector:**

1. Over half of all companies cited their first challenge as the credit crunch and the impact which this was having on their ability to provide a quality service within budget.
2. Recruitment and retention was also cited as a key challenge with comments ranging from the on-going need to attract a labour force, keep them motivated through to dealing with the administrative burden of family friendly policies.
3. Future challenges were also cited with the need to maintain marketing activities to attract new business, management of skills gaps and succession planning.

The changing economic situation is likely to impact on cleaning companies in the following ways:

- Cutting costs may be achieved by outsourcing more work
- Budgets may be reduced within the public sector
- An increase in the minimum wage would impact significantly
- Changing waste legislation

**Of the surveyed companies**, 60% are 'mature' and 40% are 'going for growth'.

### **Next 3 years growth expectations are:**

Rapid - 20% of companies  
 Moderate - 69% of companies  
 Stay the same - 6% of companies  
 Decrease - 6% of companies

### **Current business performance (mean score)**

	Optimism	Effectiveness	Profitability	Productivity	Staff morale	Running costs	Recruitment costs
Cleaning	6.2	7.9	5.2	6.4	5.0	5.3	5.5
Asset Skills	7.1	7.6	5.4	6.0	5.1	5.0	5.6

- The cleaning sector rated itself as most effective of all Asset Skills sectors
- It had the lowest perceived staff morale

A quarter of companies plan to extend into new areas of activity in the next year. Companies were positive that their staff have the skills to undertake this, only 6% stated that they did not.

### **Changing skill needs**

The new and additional skills which are needed include:

- Task specific training on specific machinery
- Health and safety
- Risk management
- Infection control

Compared to last year 44% have spent more time on training, 31% have spent more money, 38% about the same time and money. Less than 1 in 5 have spent either less time or money on training.

Nearly a third of cleaning companies state that skills levels of new recruits have decreased over the past 6 months.