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# LEAN THOUGHTS

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## My Email Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, except for my mouse  
The Resident Love Goddess she awoke to ask what was the  
matter

'Twas not Santa Claus, 'twas my keyboard clatter

One would think that my friends would all be fast asleep  
But my email keeps going click-click and beep-beep  
'Cause elsewhere in the world it's tomorrow already  
And my flood of email comes strong, fast and steady

While the old fashioned types still send their regards  
By snail-mail with postage and hard-copy Christmas-cards  
My cyberspace friends simply copy and paste  
Their cute email greetings, just in time with no waste

I type "Froehliche Weihnachten" for my German friends  
My "Feliz Navidad" Spanish greetings extends  
And my English buddies get a "Chin-chin old chap!"  
"Put a shrimp on the barbie!" is my Down-under rap

While the Resident Love Goddess sends her few cards with  
stamps and lick-lick  
I send seven thousand email cards with a click  
The answers come back at almost speed of light  
That's what makes my email go beep-beep in the night

But please Lean Thoughts reader friends, don't email too much  
Don't just have a virtual Christmas - go touch!  
I wish you all a good time and good cheer  
To all a good Christmas! And a Happy New Year!

## LEAN CONSORTIUM MEMBERS:

- ACE Bakery
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- ORENDA
- NESTLE WATERS CANADA



### Where “Lean Thoughts” Become Reality



## Spread the Word not the Germs

The recent tragic events associated with the presence of the listeriosis bacterium in prepared foods should remind us once again of how fragile our health really is and how much we depend on hygiene for our very lives.

Bacteria are everywhere in the natural world: in the soil, water, the living bodies of plants and animals, and even deep within the earth's crust. In fact, our bodies carry about 10 times more bacterial cells than they have human cells. Some of these bacteria are beneficial to us because they break down food and enable us to absorb nutrients; others, however, are potentially dangerous and are only kept at bay through strict hygiene. It is little wonder then that, despite an industry's best handling procedures, monitoring practices, and rigorous employee education, there is always the possibility that bacteria can yet again assert their deadly power.

Even if you are not in the food industry, bacteria are an ever-present danger on your premises and an important factor in employee illness and absenteeism. In addition to the eternal threat from bacteria, employee health can be compromised by the presence of allergens, pollutants, industrial dusts, and noise. So, regardless of the type or size of your business it is time to make sure protocols are in place to reduce the risk of illness to owners, employees and third parties. Whether offering a service, processing or manufacturing, good hygiene is a valuable first line of defence in the battle to reduce productivity losses due to illness, absenteeism or third-party problems. And, besides, under provincial occupational health and safety acts, employers have a legal obligation to provide a safe workplace.

The areas listed below are of constant concern because they are common sources of the infections that can affect the well being of your company. You may want to call in experts to review existing internal protocols.

### General Workplace Considerations

1. Embed in the company culture a sense that each employee is responsible for the health of all. Everyone must be made to know that the well being of others starts with individual responsibility to maintain hygiene and cleanliness in common areas. Basic hygiene practices are in the best interest of all employees personally and for the effectiveness of the business.
2. Provide hand sanitizers to all employees or at strategic places around the office and in the washrooms and lunchroom.
3. Those who believe the constant use of hand sanitizers may weaken immune suppression should use soap and water. Although not as convenient, it is just as effective in promoting hygiene. Water-borne soap does not kill microorganisms; it creates a slippery surface that enables microorganisms to slide off with the water.

4. Staff should not place handbags, purses, briefcases, shoes, etc. on desk, kitchen tables or counters. Because these items might have been in contact with surfaces in a car, public transportation or a public washroom, it is almost certain they are carrying contaminants and bacteria.
5. Staff should regularly sanitize desk tops, telephones, printers, chair arms, drawer or cabinet pulls, keyboards and door handles. Provide commercial antibacterial hand wipes or sprays designed to reduce surface bacteria.
6. Colds are a common cause of employee absences and lower production. Nevertheless, a company culture that encourages sick persons to stay home is probably more effective in the long run than encouraging heroic efforts to make it to the office at all costs. The truth is that colds spread very easily and can quickly reduce the effectiveness of entire departments.
7. Employees who are ill should reduce physical contact with others through handshakes, using other employees' telephones or personal property, or sitting too close.
8. Disposable tissues should be made available. Encourage their use and proper disposal. After use, hands should be washed or hand sanitizers used.
9. Employees who eat at their workstations must remove all food daily because of the risk of attracting mice or other disease-carrying vermin.
10. CD's DVD's cheques, money, invoices and mail are just a few of the thousand of items that pass through our hands every day. Each one harbours bacteria that may make you ill. Employees handling such material should sanitize their hands regularly throughout the day and keep hands away from eyes, nose and mouth.

### Office Equipment

Most office cleaning companies do not clean equipment such as computers or keyboards because they don't want to risk causing damage. Hygiene is left to the individual employee who probably does not see a problem. Keyboards, photocopy machines, fax machines, telephones, cell phones, desktops, calculators are used by everyone in your office. Television remotes are one of the worst carriers of bacteria because of the number of individuals using them. For any surface touched by hands, consider using an alcohol based cleaner and compressed air to clean out the debris stuck in a recessed area such as a keyboard. (It may be advisable to check manufacturers' instructions regarding cleaning agents, since some surfaces may be damaged by the use of alcohol.)

### Leverage Resources !!

*We can be a cost effective extension of your CI Department without adding permanent resources.*

