



Avril McCarthy

Derrycourt Cleaning Specialists

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:
Avril McCarthy

BUSINESS
Derrycourt Cleaning Specialists

POSITION
General Manager

WHAT WE DO

We are a professional cleaning company providing contract cleaning and facilities management services

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Avril McCarthy had just finished her third-level studies in business when she took a summer job at the family business – Derrycourt Cleaning Specialists. The company had been established eight years previously in 1992 by her parents, Ann and Martin O’Hanlon. *“When I was in school, I was always used as the spare cleaner if someone was sick so I had no intention of joining the family business. Initially, I was just supposed to be there for a few months, but my business skills proved to be of great use, and I am still here 20 years later,”* says Avril, who is now General Manager and a shareholder in the company.

Avril – who is also chair of the Irish Contract Cleaning Association and Board Member of the EFCI (European Cleaning Services Industry)— oversees the day-to-day running of the business, which is headquartered in Dublin with a base in Cork. It employs 1,900 people across the county, including 100 support staff; the remainder are cleaning staff based across the country.

The company specialises in a range of sectors from hospital and healthcare facilities and pharma cleanrooms to crime scenes and food processing and manufacturing plants. Some of its clients include An Garda Síochána, the HSE, FBD Insurance and the country’s two children’s hospitals in Temple Street and Crumlin.

The Company is a multi-award winner, both nationally and internationally, having received recognition from the Irish Contract Cleaning Association, the Golden Service Awards (UK & Ireland) and the European Cleaning Journal Awards.

The company is all about quality, standards, and training. With a staff of 1900, there is a full-time training academy, with 4 full time staff to ensure that the teams are knowledgeable and kept fully briefed on changes in methods and routines. In addition to the training function, the company also has an Environmental, Quality, Health & Safety Department. This team undertakes unannounced audits at client sites, visits are scheduled in accordance with the risk rating of the environment.

In addition, this team are very active in promoting improved sustainable working and business practices. Derrycourt is accredited for the EU Ecolabel, which is the standard that certifies products with a guaranteed, independently verified low environmental impact. To be awarded the EU Ecolabel, goods and services should meet high environmental standards throughout their entire life cycle: from raw material extraction through production and distribution to disposal. The label also encourages companies to develop innovative products that are durable, easy to repair and recyclable.

Derrycourt continues to be in a period of growth, working within a competitive marketplace, where the competition is mostly for people. As is the case with most industries, people resources are difficult to obtain at present. *“Our people are our greatest asset, and we are very lucky to have over 1900 staff.”*

Avril was on the 12th cycle of Going for Growth and Monica Flood was her Lead Entrepreneur. *“It was a very surreal experience through Covid-19, but it was fantastic to have excellent support from such a great mentor and group. It was amazing to be able to pick up the phone to all these business women who were going through similar situations; their resilience was inspiring. We all had good and bad days and we were able to pick each other up.”*

