

# 31

## SETTING UP OF A LAUNDRY SERVICE

### 31.1 INTRODUCTION

So far you have learnt about the nature and characteristics of various fabrics available in the market. This knowledge will not only help you to take care of these fabrics, but also to earn some money. You can provide laundry service to others and for this you will have to know the rules of the business. In this lesson we want you to get familiar with all the know how required for setting up your own laundry service.

### 31.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- state the meaning and need for providing laundry service;
- list different types of laundry units and describe each;
- state the services your laundry service would provide;
- work out various laundry equipments required for achieving your goals;
- maintain the accounts of the units;
- propose strategies for achieving your goals.

### 31.3 WHY LAUNDRY SERVICE?

In the market, laundry service is already being offered by washerman (dhobi) and drycleaners. Why do you want to step in? Probably because, there are no washermen in your vicinity or because many washermen have switched over to only ironing. Now if some one wants to get his clothes laundered, what shall he do? Wash the clothes himself. Where is the time to go to the dry-cleaner. It is too expensive. In big cities where both parents are going out to work, laundering of clothes has become a problem as the maid who comes home to wash the clothes does only half the job. Someone else has to take the

responsibility of picking up these clothes and get them ironed. So this is where the Laundry service is required i.e. someone who would take the complete responsibility of maintaining clothes.

### 31.4 TYPE OF LAUNDRY UNITS

#### (A) Setting up the service

The Laundry service units can be of three types:

- small unit.
- medium unit.
- large unit.

A **small unit** of laundry service provides limited service to limited clients, where you can work single handed or along with another person without investing much in the equipment and material. You will also have to limit the types of clothes you'll take up for laundering, which could be daily wear not expensive and delicate items.

A **medium unit** will require more business, space, equipment and manpower. In this case you can cater to more clients as you can divide the business with one person taking charge of getting business, another for pricing materials and maintaining stores while others can be involved in actual laundering and finishing of goods.

Now can you say what a **large unit** be like? Yes, it would be somewhat like a dry cleaner's shop. The work place would be separate from home. it will require a large space and lot of equipment and investment.

You can fix the rates keeping them reasonable or competitive to already existing rates in the market so that people decide to use your service.

#### (B) Advertising the service

To make people aware of your service you will have to spread the news by word of mouth or by distributing pamphlets giving details, advantages and price list of your laundry service. Once the people know of your service and are satisfied with your work then you will need no advertising.

#### (C) Actual working

Once your equipment and its organization is decided your laundry service will start.

##### (i) Preparation and coding of garments

All garments coming from the same source will have to be coded in a similar way with dates. You can code them by putting a fabric tag on which you can write numbers with waterproof ink. The preparation will be done by mending, stain removal as when required.

(ii) **Sorting:** The garments can be sorted in number of groups on the basis of fiber content (cotton, wool, silk) or type of dirt (very dirty, less). All those articles which require starching could also be kept separate.

(iii) **Washing:** You can now presoak the articles and wash them with right detergent using right method of washing (you already have this information from previous lesson). Then articles can be rinsed, dried and collected for ironing when damp.

(iv) **Finishing:** Garments have to be finished by ironing or pressing. Ironing has to be done slowly to give a smooth finish to articles. Then articles should be neatly folded and put in bundles according to their codes.

- (v) **Holding and Delivery:** If clothes can not be sent back as soon as they are ready, keep them at a place where they are safe and neat.

In this way you can run a small unit but remember it is the quality and efficiency from you which will keep your clients satisfied. Follow the rules of the fabric and you'll never go wrong. Recognize the fabric and give it an appropriate treatment. Also, be systematic while working. Keep everything within your reach and buy things in bulk to save money. If these small details are remembered while working, you'll save energy, and will be able to maintain your cool while working.

You can set up a medium sized unit on the same line as a small unit, the difference would be that you'll require a separate room where a number of persons can work. You'll also need more equipment, to contact more people for business and provide more materials to carry out the work. You can start with a room of 10' x 10' with separate washing, finishing and storage area. A washing machine with a drier would also be very useful. But with more people joining in you'll have to assign separate duties to each, keep track of all material to avoid wastage.

As said earlier, in the large sized service, the work place can be anywhere but the receiving counter should be in a commercial area or in a residential colony with good clientele. Obviously, in order to deal with a bigger unit you'll need more space and people.

One thing which you'll see is that as the unit becomes bigger, money transactions also become more so you'll have to maintain accounts.

#### (D) Maintaining accounts of the unit

It is important to keep accounts of the unit to manage the resources in a systematic way. You can maintain a ledger with initial account of money on top and make columns for day to day transaction in terms of expenditure and income.

Expenditures				
Durables	Non-durable	Fuel	Transport	Salary
• Washing machine	• Washing aids	• Coal	• Collecting	• Workers
• Tubs	• Auxillaries	• Electricity	• Delivery	
• Brushes	Starchs		• Goods	
• Drying line	Blues		procurement	
• Rack	OBA's			
• Hangers	Stain removing agents			
• Irons	acidic/alkaline			
• Ironing board	oxidising/Reducing			
• Sleeve board	grease absorbent/			
• Spray bottle	solvent			
• Washing aids				

#### Income

articles — date wise

Once these accounts are maintained properly you can think of buying some new equipment if there is prprofit, according to the needs. Therefore, account keeping will help you to:

— keep track of payments and expenditures.

- maintain account of all details of expenditure/ payments.
- utilize profit to buy new equipment.
- Pay salary to personnel.

### INTEXT QUESTION 31.1

State whether the following are true or false.

- i) Mending a seam is a part of laundry service.
- ii) Fixing of loose buttons is not a part of laundry service.
- iii) Laundry service means laundering of large sized clothes only.
- iv) A small unit of laundry service can also provide service to large number of clients.

### 31.5 SETTING UP OF A SMALL UNIT

What would you do if we asked you to set up a small unit for laundry service? Yes, you'll think about the services you can offer. Consider the following:

- Laundering of daily wear and undergarments.
- Laundering of household linen.
- Repair of any broken seams, missing buttons or hooks (this might give you an advantage over the others).
- Home delivery and picking.
- Offer the service twice/thrice a week to about 4-5 clients only.
- Laundry done at your home or at the clients house.

It is good if you can offer all the above or else select some of the above. Once you have decided about the various services you would like to offer, next step is to take stock of all equipment you would need.

#### 1. LISTING OF EQUIPMENT

Can you sit back and make a list of all that you would need to set up this unit? Let's see what all you have on your list.

- (i) **Area to hold and receive dirty items:** You can have big baskets to keep dirty items.
- (ii) **Washing area:** It should be big enough, with good drainage, tiled surface and good supply of water. This will ensure efficient washing.
- (iii) **Washing equipment:** You will need:
  - buckets, basins, mugs, brushes.
  - shelf/cupboard to keep supplies.
  - washing machine, if you have money to invest, as it reduces your efforts and energy requirements.
  - washing aids like soap, detergents, bleach, starches, stain removal kit, O.B.A.'s.
- (iv) **Drying area and equipment:** You'll need a lot of open space to dry clothes on clothes line, racks, clips.

(v) **Ironing and finishing:** You will need.

- an ironing board/table with cover, sleeve board.
- an iron with thermostat or a steam iron.
- an electric point.
- some hangers, shelves, clipboards to hold laundered items.

## 2. ORGANISATION OF THE LAUNDRY SERVICE

To actually start this unit, after you have procured the equipment you'll have to prepare a rate list of various items.

You can prepare the rate list by doing a small market survey of the existing rates or talk to various dhobis dry cleaners. You could also talk to people about the kind of rate they are ready to pay. On that basis you can categorise them as:

Household textiles		Garments		
<i>Bed linen</i>	<i>Table Linen</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Ladies</i>	<i>Gents</i>
Sheets (double/single)	Table cloth	Frock	Saree (Cotton/Silk)	Trousers
Bedcover (double/single)	Table mat	Baba shirt	Saree blouse	Shirt
Pillow cover	Table napkin	Pants	Kurta (cotton)	Jeans
	Towels	Shirts	Salwaar	Pullover
			Dupatta	Kurta
			Churidaar	Pyjamas
			Skirt	
			Top	
			Pullover	

## INTEXT QUESTIONS 31.2

(A) State whether the following statements true or false.

1. Your own washing area can be used to provide large sized laundry service.
2. Separate equipment is necessary when providing large sized laundry service because quantum of work is more.
3. An iron with thermostat is necessary because you have to iron different fabrics.

(B) Tick the most appropriate answer:

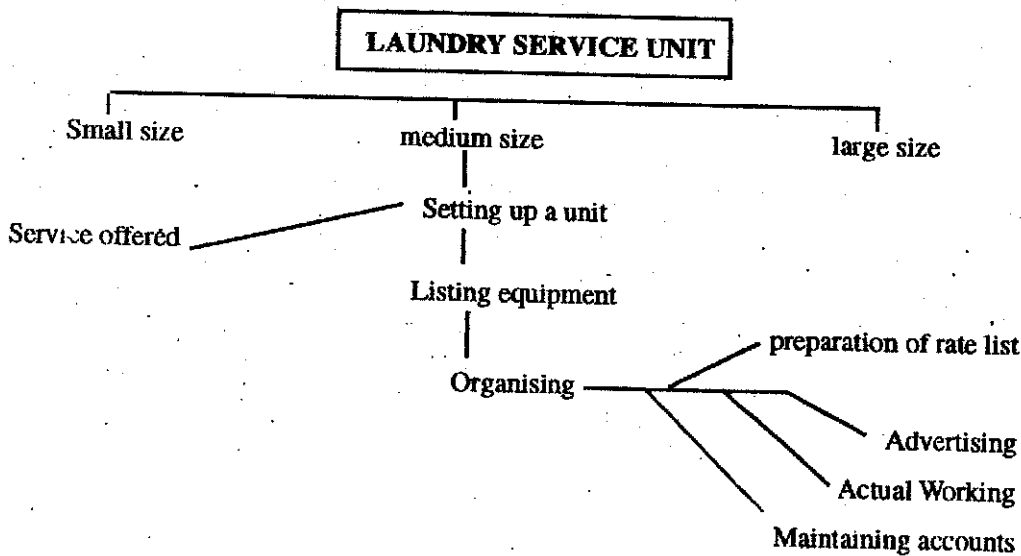
1. Laundry service means laundering of
 

a) daily wear	c) household line
b) under garments	d) all the above
2. Small scale laundry service means laundering of
 

a) daily wear	c) household line
b) under garments	d) all the above.

3. Small units of laundry service provide service to 4-5 client
    - a) once a week
    - b) 2-3 times a week
    - c) once a fortnight
    - d) whenever need be.
  4. Preparing a rate list is necessary because it will help you to
    - a) decide your expenditure
    - b) decide your profit
    - c) buy equipment
    - d) organise the scale of work.
  5. Laundry service would mean
    - (a) laundering of clothes
    - (b) picking clothes from home and laundering them
    - (c) door to door service with laundering and repair
    - (d) laundering and repair.
  6. Market survey helps in
    - (a) getting comparative rates
    - (b) selection of the market
    - (c) doing a wise purchase
    - (d) all of the above.
  7. Once the equipment and organization of laundry service is decided the next step will include
    - (a) stain removal and sorting
    - (b) mending and washing
    - (c) coding and mending
    - (d) stain removal and finishing
- (C) Put the following into suitable categories of various types of expenditure.
- i) Mugs
  - ii) Buckets
  - iii) Optical brightening agents
  - iv) Javelle water
  - v) Ironing board
  - vi) Wags
  - vii) Delivery of goods
  - xi) Rack changers
  - x) Hydrogen peroxide

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**31.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. Define laundry service?
2. Why do we need such a service?
3. Classify laundry service units.
4. Mention two characteristics of each class.
5. List the various steps involved in setting up of a medium sized unit of laundry service?
6. What are various categories of equipment needed in a unit?
7. Why is it important to maintain accounts of your unit?

**31.8 ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS 31.1**

**31.1 (A)** (i) T (ii) F (iii) F (iv) F

**31.2 (A)** (1) F (2) T (3) T

**(B)** (1) d (2) d (3) b (4) a (5) c (6) d (7) c

**(C)** i) Durable expenditure

ii) Durable expenditure

iii) Non-durable expenditure

iv) Non-durable expenditure

v) Durable expenditure

vi) Salary

vii) Transport

viii) Fuel

xi) Durable expenditure

x) Non-durable expenditure