

# CLEAN START



REIMAGINING CAREERS  
IN THE CLEANING INDUSTRY

## PALAEOBIOLOGY & EVOLUTION TO CLEANING & HYGIENE

**"It's all about people, service and innovation," said Mike McKiernan, Senior Group Buyer at Jangro, explaining why he loves his job.**

**"I particularly enjoy the cleaning and hygiene sector. Procurement is essentially the same whatever the industry but because our sector serves so many others, I get the opportunity to immerse myself in a huge variety of industries!"**

## CASE STUDY

Jangro is a national network of independent janitorial suppliers of cleaning and hygiene products in the UK and Ireland.

Mike McKiernan is Senior Group Buyer for Jangro, and joined the organisation in 2014.

"After completing a degree in palaeobiology and evolution, a career in purchasing might seem a little unexpected" said Mike, "but they have more in common than you'd think. I loved analysing data during my degree, investigating what happened in the past, assessing what's happening now and using the knowledge to predict possible futures. When I saw a buying job advertised that required these skills it seemed like a natural fit."

Mike began his career working with the food and drink industry before moving into manufacturing and finally the cleaning and hygiene sector, with Jangro.

Explaining why he loves the role at Jangro so much, Mike spoke about the diversity of opportunity. "I might





not have set out to work in the cleaning and hygiene sector, but I've stayed because of the breadth and variety of what's on offer."

The function of procurement is fundamentally consistent across all industries, continued Mike. "Whatever the industry, we have to understand customer usage patterns, sales trends and the complexities of the supply chain. We also have to be responsive, adapting quickly to changing circumstances. The pandemic has really tested this. We've had to respond and meet demand for certain products soaring exponentially overnight. It's been challenging but I'm proud to say we've delivered. Our members have been able to keep essential cleaning products flowing through the supply chain at this critical time."

Mike continued: "Jangro has 46 members. Each member is an independent business and combined they serve a wide range of market sectors. Working with them all, I get to learn about their businesses and the industries they serve. One minute my focus is the education sector and the next it's catering. The engagement with so many different industries is one of the things that makes working in the cleaning and hygiene sector stimulating. I also interact with different departments, including sales, marketing and production. It means I get to engage with all sorts of different people, which I love."

Jangro members aim to meet their customers' future as well as present needs. Their catalogues have to include innovative products and solutions that will prove to be

exactly what their customers need next. "Tracking trends and spotting the next big thing is an important part of the role," says Mike. "There are always new solutions for cleaning tasks and product developments in areas like cleaning chemicals. I need to stay at the forefront of what's new and available to the market so Jangro members can offer their customers the very latest and best technologies."

The demands of serving a national network of independent businesses means Mike is busy. "There is always a new project and I love getting really immersed in each one. I get into the nitty gritty of cleaning chemicals, machinery or paper production and quickly get absorbed into how the industry functions. It's fascinating."

It's easy to think of the cleaning industry as just mops, buckets and microfibre cloths, but as Mike explains, that's a mistake. "Seeing the industry in that way completely misses the point. It's much more. It's about people, customer interactions, and innovation. Our goal is always to improve, to develop new services and products to help our customers."

Jangro is a member of the Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers Association (CHSA). The CHSA Code of Practice and Accreditation Schemes give buyers of cleaning and hygiene products the certainty their supplier is ethical and what's on the box is what's in the box. Our Standards. Your Guarantee.

