



# CINTAS & IMS

## READY FOR ANYTHING

Since its founding in 1929, Cincinnati-based Cintas Corporation ([www.cintas.com](http://www.cintas.com)) has helped its customers open their doors with confidence -- be "Ready for the Workday" -- by providing a wide range of products and services to keep its customers' facilities clean and employees looking their best. This Fortune 500 Company has over 40,000 employee-partners across North America. Referring to its employees as partners, Cintas emphasizes the contribution and importance of its personnel to the success of its business. As an essential business, Cintas continues to provide products and services to its customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMS has worked with Cintas for many years, playing an integral role in the development and training of up-and-coming Cintas managers. Historically, this was delivered via in-person programs at convenient locations, allowing Cintas to send approximately 50 managers per year to leadership development programs.

However, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, in-person training was paused by IMS and replaced with 3-hour virtual programs. IMS' quick and effective response provided an alternative solution and enabled Cintas to continue offering quality leadership training to its managers.

Guiding this change for Cintas partners is Becky Coates, Cintas' Organizational Development Manager. For several years, Becky has worked closely with IMS to design and deliver effective leadership education to meet the needs of Cintas managers.

Originally viewed as a challenge, the COVID-19 pandemic created new and unforeseen opportunities. With virtual delivery, more Cintas partners can participate in trainings. According to Becky Coates, "With virtual IMS offerings, we're now able to reach many more leaders in locations that previously were not able to travel to in-person sessions. In fact, in the last year, the number of partners taking IMS training at Cintas has nearly tripled. IMS was able to assess the requirements, modify its courses for virtual delivery, and we were



quickly back to offering outstanding classes from IMS to our partners.”

Virtual training has been rewarding for Cintas partners as well. In the past, an entire team could not leave their location on the same day and travel to attend a class. Now, with virtual delivery, team members can attend a class together and feel a greater sense of camaraderie. Becky noted that, “We also like the 1-hour complimentary sessions which allows even more partners to become familiar with IMS and their programs.”

Recently, Becky received a note from a Cintas manager who attended an IMS program stating, “I attended Tuesday’s IMS class, and it was AWESOME! I really love the content. I want to attend more of these. Thank you for offering IMS as part of the leadership curriculum.”

In addition to offering open enrollment, Becky has made IMS an integral part of the Cintas Executive Leadership Program. Becky explained, “We have a 10-month leadership program for 40 up-and-coming leaders each year. Part of that program includes attendance at one IMS class for each partner in this leadership program. The variety of IMS offerings is a nice addition to our program, allowing the leaders to select topics that meet their personal development needs. During the pandemic, we increased the funding to include two IMS courses per partner.”

In addition to the quality virtual offerings from IMS, Cintas also saw the overall cost of IMS training decrease. More people from more geographies can now attend classes without getting on an airplane or staying in a hotel. Cintas employee-partners from small towns and remote areas are now attending programs, whereas before it might have been too expensive or time-consuming to travel.

Partner development is a cornerstone of Cintas’ guiding principles, and the Institute for Management Studies is an integral part of that development.

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*- Cintas Manager*

