



## Dirty Journalism

November 30, 2006

Dear Editor:

As one of Forbes Magazine's perennial "*Best Managed*" companies, we were stunned and disappointed by Mark Tatge's article ("Dirty Laundry," December 11) – a completely one-sided collection of personal allegations and innuendo based simply on the claims of a few disgruntled former employees and former customers.

For years, Forbes and others consistently have recognized Cintas as among the world's "*Best Managed*," "*Most Admired*," "*Best Employer*" and "*Best Supplier*" companies, renowned for our attention to ethics, honesty and customer service. In fact, we maintain a 93.5 percent customer-satisfaction rating – our industry's highest – yet these are among the facts Mr. Tatge chose to ignore.

After Mr. Tatge completely misrepresented himself to our company officials about the true nature of his article, he has since admitted that he – in an apparent failure of all journalistic ethics in fair and balanced reporting – *had* gotten positive, supportive comments from Cintas customers, yet no such constructive attributes were included in his one-sided article. We have even less confidence in Mr. Tatge's co-writer, who has received similar criticism for her past stories, as well: "*As a professor and university president, I would give Miriam Gottfried an 'F' on her distorted article.*"

We invite Forbes to take another look at Cintas, and our commitments to honesty and ethics in all we do. We strive to do our best and, if there's a problem, we fix it. With more than 700,000 loyal customers and the highest customer-satisfaction scores in our industry, we don't dispute the fact that we have parted ways with a fraction of customers on less-than-perfect terms. And we don't dispute the fact that, out of the tens of thousands of individuals who have worked for us over the years, we have had a small number who have periodically violated our business principles – and were often terminated in the process.

To base an entire article on these small exceptions and to purposefully ignore comments to the contrary is simply dishonest journalism and a slap in the face to our 32,000 Cintas employees who are committed to honesty and integrity in everything we do. Mr. Tatge may not be ashamed, but certainly Forbes should be – and it owes an apology to our employees and customers. And to its readers.

Scott Farmer, CEO  
Cintas