

“Dealing With Team Member Challenges”

By Darryn White

As employers within a small business we are faced with challenges constantly. On a daily, weekly and monthly basis we are faced with employee problems, procedural issues and customer concerns. These challenges can be dealt with in so many different ways and my experience tells me that very few see the same challenge the same way.



As business owners who want to grow our business. We employ people from all walks of life with different skills and personalities to assist us in this venture, for if we didn't want to grow our business

we wouldn't employ or engage anyone. We would simply go along by ourselves doing what we do well in our own field of expertise.

Finding people to join our business, think the way we do, act the way we do and work the way we do is not realistic. Everyone is different, this is why we standardise and procedurise activities within the business, to generate some form of consistency despite who is performing the action.



Despite all the screening, checks and measures during the employment phase we don't always employ the 'perfect' people. Despite all the checks and measures everyone slips up to some degree at some time or another including us, as business

owners and employers. Call it human nature or whatever you like but as we are not computers programmed to do a set activity or act a set way. we are all susceptible to make a mistake sometimes.



When an employee acts inappropriately it is generally left to us, the boss, to sort the problem. How do we act and what do we do?



I recently had one challenge when I was confronted by two unsatisfied customers, both relating to one of my team members. I was presented with one customer ceasing to continue with us and another unsatisfied with the process to date. Well, where to from here?



A standard solution I have seen so many times would be to 'drag' the team member into my cold office and 'tear strips' off him/her for

their complacent attitude and threaten them with the sack. I have seen this action or reaction over the years and actually acted that way in the distant past myself. It does get a result, an immediate result but leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of all concerned. It allows the boss to let off some steam but generally results in the team member feeling down trodden and unappreciated.

The alternative approach I now choose to adopt is one resulting in a constructive and sharp response to the problem involving getting a full understanding of the issues from both the customer and the team member, un-



packing the shortfalls and working together with the offending team member to come up with a solution or group of solutions that will hopefully satisfy all concerned.

What I am saying is a calmer structured approach can have a better result for all concerned than that of a bull in a china shop. Not to say I didn't voice my disappointment with the said team member and outlined that they are responsible for their own actions or lack of action, which needs to be addressed. Once that was out in the open I could then help him/her work through the procedures in place to see where the system had fallen short.



provided assistance to ensure they better understand what was expected of them.

As for the customers, the one we lost entirely has postponed his project and there is an opportunity for us to complete it for him in the future. Our other customer is working well with my team member and I have chosen to assist my team member ensuring there is no chance of a repeat offence.



There are many opportunities to remind our team of what is expected within our own organisations however, unfortunately it is generally when the worst happens that we are reminded of what wasn't being done. This then is a perfect opportunity for us as employers to look at what we do or don't do to assist our team in the future.



Over the years within our business we have developed a series of check sheets and reminders to assist everyone to keep on track. It was evident that these

checks and reminders were not being used by the offending team member.



All these procedures are to assist in minimising the possibility of errors so I strongly suggested that it is mandatory within our business to use them as it is for the good of the entire process. There is no room for not filling them in and/or doing as they ask.



Once all the issues and concerns were unpacked and my offer to help was accepted I did formalise the wrong doing with an official warning. This was accepted with the true understanding that he/she didn't act appropriately and the team management



**always
make new
mistakes**

(esther dyson)