

WHAT'S WORKING in Human Resources™

Inside information to improve the performance of your human resources, in a fast-read format, twice a month.

FEBRUARY 7, 2012

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The Purpose of *What's Working in Human Resources*

WWHR is a fast-read source of ideas to help companies better manage their human assets and increase profitability.

Twice a month it offers real-world examples of how other companies cope with the bottom-line pressures in the new American workplace while still doing what's best for their people.

WWHR reports on the latest trends in training, development and employee communication. Plus it gives insight into what the most recent employment law decisions mean to your business, and keeps you up to date with the latest cost-saving strategies in benefits and compensation.

5 wins, 1 loss: Why firms triumphed in Facebook firings

■ NLRB (finally) brings clarity to social media policies

Is the NLRB finally hammering out a sensible approach to social media?

Since the National Labor Relations Board got involved in a Facebook firing case in 2010, firms have been questioning just when and how it's OK to discipline and fire staff for comments made on social media.

Now, the agency's released six new advice memoranda on cases involving staffers who were fired for social media postings.

Each case involves employees who filed complaints with the agency alleging that they were illegally fired for their comments.

How the NLRB ruled in each case

stands as (mostly) good news for companies moving forward.

Policy was overbroad

Let's start with the only losing case for a company, which comes from wire service Thomson Reuters.

The firm encouraged staff to post on its Twitter feed about how Reuters could create a better workplace. An employee responded that one way would be to "to deal honestly with Guild members."

The next day the employee got a phone call from the bureau chief

(Please see Facebook ... on Page 2)

EEOC: Pepsi's background check policy fizzles

■ Records searches filtered out blacks, cost firm over \$3 million

Looks like the EEOC may have found a new poster child for its crusade against criminal background checks: Pepsi Beverages.

The soda giant has settled a race bias case after the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission claimed the firm's policy on background checks had a disparate impact on blacks.

Pepsi had a policy instructing managers not to hire applicants whose background checks revealed an arrest of any kind. Turns out most of the rejected candidates were black – 300

in all. Many of the applicants had never been convicted of any crime.

A whopping settlement

Pepsi will divide most of the \$3.13 million settlement among the black applicants who'd been turned down, and offer jobs to the candidates if they're still interested.

The firm will also adopt a new criminal-background-check policy.

Info: tinyurl.com/7odrhn5

Facebook ...

(continued from Page 1)

reminding her that the firm's social media policy prohibited posts that damaged the company's reputation.

Though the staffer wasn't formally disciplined, she refrained from Tweeting again – and then complained to the NLRB, who ruled in her favor.

The agency said the firm's policy of prohibiting employees from damaging the company's reputation online – without providing examples or limitations of what staffers could and couldn't post – could prevent staff from engaging in protected activity.

Employee discussion not protected

The next case involved a therapist who complained on her Facebook wall about staff meetings. A co-worker joined her in her complaints. When her manager

discovered the conversation, she was fired.

Yet, the NLRB ruled in favor of the company here.

Wait – isn't this a perfect example of employees using social media to discuss work conditions?

Not quite. The NLRB found that even though the therapist interacted with her co-worker online, neither person was trying to change the terms and conditions of the workplace – and that meant she wasn't protected.

The ruling suggests that just because two or more employees discuss work online doesn't guarantee the discussion's protected.

Instead, moving forward, it appears the agency will examine not just the original post made by an employee but the reactions of colleagues to that post and how they interpreted it.

4 additional cases

The NLRB also ruled on four other cases, all in favor of the companies.

Why? Each of these cases involved a simple personal gripe – and that's not protected, according to the agency:

- A respiratory therapist was fired for updating her Facebook status during an ambulance ride to complain about her co-worker making strange noises on the job.
- A bank teller was fired after she complained on Facebook that co-workers had complained about her performance to her supervisor.
- A nurse posted on a co-worker's Facebook asking if a manager was still "making life miserable." When the manager found out, he fired her.
- An accountant made a Facebook post falsely claiming that her firm engaged in fraudulent accounting practices and was fired when she refused to remove the post. The agency said that although the original post might have been seeking group activity, refusing to remove it after learning it was false meant she was no longer protected.

Info: tinyurl.com/7xkboxm and tinyurl.com/7374xbk

Sharpen your JUDGMENT

This feature provides a framework for decision making that helps keep you and your company out of trouble. It describes a recent legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.

■ Did firm's '100% healed' policy violate the ADA?

"Why is Bert Randolph claiming our policy on returning from medical leave is illegal?" asked VP Catherine Stevens.

"It's a long story," said HR manager Lynn Rondo.

"Lay it on me," said Catherine.

Couldn't do new job, but ...

Lynn sighed. "Bert hurt himself on the job a couple years ago. He took leave, then came back to work and was totally fine.

"Then, he asked to be transferred to an office closer to his home," Lynn continued. "We approved, but the work he did there was slightly different from what he'd been doing, and he hurt himself again.

"Bert couldn't do all the duties of his current job, though he could have done his old job if it was still available" Lynn said. "So he went on medical leave. Then he asked to come back with certain restrictions."

"But our policy says staff members need to submit a medical release saying they're OK to return to work 100% healed – in other words, without any restrictions," said Catherine.

"Bingo," said Lynn. "And Bert couldn't do that. So we told him he couldn't come back until he was all better."

"And now he's suing us," said Catherine.

Bert went through with his disability bias suit. Lynn's company countered that its policy was legal.

Did Lynn's company win?

■ Make your decision, then please turn to Page 6 for the court's ruling.

WHAT'S WORKING in Human Resources

EDITOR: DAN WISNIEWSKI

MANAGING EDITOR: TIM GOULD

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: PIETER VANBENNEKOM

PRODUCTION EDITOR: TAMMI COXE

What's Working in Human Resources, (ISSN 1088-3223) February 7, 2012, Vol. 16 No. 365, is published semi-monthly except once in December (23 times a year) by Progressive Business Publications, 370 Technology Drive, Malvern, PA 19355; PHONE: 800-220-5000. FAX: 610-647-8089. Subscription rate \$299 per year. Periodicals postage paid at West Chester, PA 19380. Postmaster: Send address changes to *What's Working in Human Resources*, 370 Technology Drive, Malvern, PA 19355.

Subscription: 800-220-5000

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Why did firm have to grant FMLA leave to ineligible staffer?

■ *Employee didn't meet requirements yet, but court ruled in her favor*

It doesn't matter when an ineligible employee requests leave. What matters is if they'd be eligible when the leave is supposed to start.

That's what a court ruled after a pregnant woman was fired and sued for FMLA interference – even though she wasn't eligible for leave yet.

She would have been eligible if ...

After working for a senior living facility for several months, Kathryn Pereda notified her boss that she was pregnant and would need FMLA leave following the birth of her child.

Pereda claims that up to that point, she was considered a top staffer. But afterward, she says she was harassed and criticized, put on a performance improvement plan, and then fired.

She sued, claiming the firm

interfered with her right to take FMLA leave and retaliated against her for exercising her right to take leave.

A district court dismissed Pereda's case, saying the firm couldn't have interfered with her FMLA rights because at the time she requested it, she hadn't yet been employed for 12 months and wasn't eligible for it.

On appeal, the court said that it was undisputed that Pereda would've met the FMLA's eligibility requirements by the time she gave birth and went on leave.

The takeaway: An employee who requests FMLA leave will likely be protected by the FMLA as long as he or she will be eligible by the time the leave is scheduled to begin.

Cite: *Pereda v. Brookdale Senior Living Communities, Inc., U.S. Circuit Ct. 11, No. 10-14723, 1/10/12.*

Picture-perfect interactive dialogue saves firm in ADA case

■ *AT&T did all it could to accommodate manager with MS*

Here's how you handle tough accommodation requests.

Employers can learn a lot from this case of a disabled manager who was fired after company officials determined she was no longer able to do her job.

Restriction made job impossible

Cynthia Davey was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) a year before she was promoted to manager of an AT&T store. Davey was expected to work 48 to 56 hours a week including evenings, weekends, holidays and OT.

However, a year after being promoted, Davey's MS symptoms acted up and she took medical leave. She then submitted a restriction from

her doctor saying she couldn't work more than 40 hours a week and couldn't be on her feet for more than eight hours a day.

AT&T offered to allow her to use a wheelchair at work. However, after much discussion, officials concluded that a manager simply couldn't do the job in just 40 hours.

The company gave Davey 30 days to find a new position in the firm, but fired her when she couldn't.

Davey sued, claiming the firm violated the ADA by not accommodating her, but the court said no way – it was clear that AT&T did all it could to accommodate Davey.

Cite: *EEOC v. AT&T Mobility Servs. LLC, U.S. Dist. Ct., E.D. Mich., No. 10-13889, 12/15/11.*

■ Irony alert: Chuck E. Cheese found violating child-labor laws

At Chuck E. Cheese, "a kid can be a kid" – and, until recently, he could also operate dangerous trash compactors and dough-mixing machines.

The Department of Labor (DOL) has levied \$28,000 in fines against nine California Chuck E. Cheese franchises for violating child-labor laws.

According to the DOL, the franchises allowed teenage workers to operate on-site dough-mixing machines and trash compactors.

That violated the Fair Labor Standards Act, which says youths can't work in "hazardous jobs."

In addition to the fine, the restaurants will apply warning stickers to the machines stating that minors are prohibited from using them and instruct underage staffers not to operate the machines.

Info: tinyurl.com/74qcxhz

■ Staffer wouldn't take manager home, so she wasn't reinstated

Products may only cost a dollar at Virginia's Family Dollar Store, but handling this sexual harassment case cost the firm a lot more.

The chain of discount stores has settled a harassment case for \$45,000 after a manager allegedly groped and propositioned an employee for sex.

In addition, the woman said her supervisor allegedly reduced her hours during one week and told her that in order to have them reinstated, she'd have to let him come home with her.

The employee resigned the next day and sued. The firm opted to settle. In addition to the monetary settlement, the company will provide anti-bias training to managers and employees.

Cite: *EEOC v. Family Dollar Stores of Virginia, Inc., U.S. Dist. Ct., E.D. Va., No. 3:11cv647, 1/11/12.*

Experts give their solutions to difficult workplace problems

HR professionals like you face new questions every day on how to deal with workplace conflict and employment law. In this section, our experts answer those real-life questions.

Staffer gets DUI, loses license: Accommodation or termination?

Q: One of our employees is losing his license due to a DUI. Should we fire him or accommodate?

A: The first question is, “Can the employee legally get to work?” asks Heather Bussing (heather.bussing@gmail.com) and Sharlyn Lauby (slauby@itmgroupinc.com) on HR Bartender (hrbartender.com).

While some states prohibit firms from disciplining or terminating staff for off-duty conduct, firing could be OK if the worker can’t be there to perform the job requirements.

Also, is the DUI part of a bigger problem with substance abuse? The ADA protects staffers who ask for treatment for drug or alcohol addiction.

But if the employee is not asking for accommodation for a recovery program, then in general you can legally discipline or terminate for a DUI.

Managers should hire someone who thinks differently, and who brings qualities and perspectives they lack. They won’t be best friends, but it will help supervisors get outside perspective.

What info will the DOL want?

Q: What should we expect if the Department of Labor comes to our firm for an audit?

A: The DOL may ask to review these documents, according to Daniel Schwartz (DSchwartz@pullcom.com) on the Connecticut Employment Law Blog (tinyurl.com/2cufgh6):

- payroll records – journals, time cards, and/or time sheets – for the last two years
- lists of staff considered exempt from minimum wage or OT rules (and the exemption claimed) and job descriptions for those “exempt” employees
- lists of staff who hold more than one position at your firm
- records or documents that reflect the gross revenue of your firm for the last three years
- federal tax ID number (“EIN”)
- names, addresses and phone numbers of all employees (present and former) from the last two years, and
- job titles and dates of birth and employment for staff under 18 who’ve worked for you for the last two years.

If you have an HR-related question, email it to Dan Wisniewski at: dwisniewski@pbp.com

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

■ When should HR call the police? 3 possible scenarios

You know how to handle typical policy violations in your sleep.

But what should you do if you think an employee has committed a crime?

Is it serious enough?

Here are three situations where HR may have to call the police – and how you can decide if it’s a good idea, courtesy of Rebecca Mazin on AllBusiness.com:

- **Assault.** When employees take out their disagreements with their fists, it puts HR in a tough spot. Best bet: You must involve the police if a staffer’s injured in a fight, or if an employee decides to press charges against a co-worker. Another situation where you should almost always contact the authorities: if an employee is caught with a weapon on company grounds.
- **Harassment.** Though verbal harassment is technically against the law, you know better than to call the police when an employee tells a co-worker she has a “nice tush.” However, you should be worried if an employee physically touches or assaults a colleague in a sexual way. The same goes for comments via email, letters or phone calls. In those situations, it’s almost always best to report the harassment to the authorities.
- **Theft.** Handling theft may be the most difficult decision to make because it’s purely a judgment call. Surely you won’t call the police if you suspect a staffer of stealing pens from the supply closet. But for more egregious examples of theft – patterns of embezzlement or theft of money or equipment, for example – you’ll want to inform the authorities.

Info: tinyurl.com/6ndbxal

New strategy for hiring: Tips?

Q: We’ve had the worst luck recently with new hires. Any tips?

A: Managers should hire someone they’re likely to disagree with, says Suzanne Lucas (EvilHRLady@gmail.com) on Evil HR Lady (EvilHRLady.org).

“Fit” is a major concern in hiring, but if supervisors and their team agree on everything, they’ll be looking at things from the same vantage point – and be more likely to miss something.

WHAT WORKED FOR OTHER COMPANIES

Our subscribers come from a broad range of companies, both large and small. In this regular feature, three of them share a success story illustrating ideas you can adapt to your unique situation.

1 This one move made updating handbook easy

Keeping our policies and procedures manual updated was a major hassle.

Like most firms, we give out a copy of our handbook during orientation.

But policies and laws change – and that means our handbook needs to be updated frequently.

HR pros know what a pain it is to update a paper handbook – we had to print out new pages, instruct staffers on what to put in and what to

throw away, and so on.

There had to be a better way.

Staffers always have right edition

We considered our options, and agreed it was time we moved our policies and procedures manual online.

We set aside time during a slow period of the work year and got our handbook up on our intranet.

Yes, it took time, but once we were able to get it online, it was easy to point

staffers in the right direction for policy questions. Plus, employees can still print it out if they prefer.

Now, the handbook is far easier to maintain and update, and we never have to worry that staffers have the wrong “edition” of the manual.

The project’s been so successful that now we’re planning on making other parts of the business electronic, like our benefits info.

(Jackie Gooding, HR officer, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Alexandria, VA)

REAL PROBLEMS, REAL SOLUTIONS

2 Health coach educated staff on wellness

It was clear all our talk about the benefits of preventive health care just weren’t hitting home for our staff members.

That’s when we realized that maybe we weren’t getting through to them because they weren’t aware of how important prevention is.

The whole nine yards

So we took a number of steps to boost education about preventive care

to employees.

In the end, we:

- brought in a health coach, who comes in twice a month for four hours to speak with workers about prevention and wellness.
- began offering online education programs for staffers to peruse on their own time, and
- offered health risk assessments for employees to fill out.

So far the results have been excellent.

In particular, the health coach has made a major impact on staff members.

Since we began bringing her in, we’re seeing that employees are taking a more active role in improving their lifestyles.

That’s motivated staff to make major changes – many are eating better, for example. And that can only spell great news for our healthcare costs further down the line.

(Connie Gerba, benefits department manager, Gilbert Risk Solutions, Sharon, PA)

3 We boosted healthcare participation by 15%

We felt that not enough employees were using our benefits to their full advantage.

That worried us – we know an employee’s motivation and job satisfaction depend on a lot of factors, including benefits offerings.

We also were aware that taking advantage of things like wellness programs can lower absenteeism and boost productivity.

So once the beginning of the year

rolled around, we made a point to sit down to discuss how we could increase participation.

Now employees are enthusiastic

One possibility we hadn’t considered before was increasing our contributions and decreasing costs for employees who wanted to take advantage of our healthcare plan.

Since we knew cost was a major factor preventing staffers from getting on board, we figured that’d be a major incentive – and we were right.

At a companywide meeting, we

announced our new decision.

Some employees still opted not to enroll, but most workers were enthusiastic.

Proof: Overall participation has increased by 15%.

And we know that paying more upfront to get staffers on board will help us save money on healthcare costs on the back end – and potentially boost productivity and lower absenteeism at the same time.

(Janell Gotier, administrator, NuBilt Restoration and Construction, Denver)

Staffers more willing to relocate for work

Look out – some of your employees may have an itch to travel.

Nearly 45% of staff members said they'd be willing to relocate for a career opportunity, according to a study from CareerBuilder.

Worse: Of staff members who were laid off in the last year and who found new work, 20% of them moved to a new state or city.

The results may be indicative of staffers finally getting fed up with the sub-par working conditions they've put up with since the recession hit.

Info: tinyurl.com/78dbg2r

Most firms don't measure impact or cost of absences

HR pros know absences – sick or otherwise – hurt their firms. But new research shows few know precisely how those absences affect them.

Nearly one-quarter of firms are actively trying to reduce absences via wellness or healthcare strategies, but most firms (87%) don't measure the impact or costs associated with absences. That's according to a recent Aon Hewitt study of over 1,000 firms.

Ask yourself: How can you expect to fix absentee problems if you don't

know how serious they are?

Info: tinyurl.com/3bpxfyn

What are the most common interview questions?

Curious what most of your HR peers actually ask in interviews?

Glassdoor conducted a study to determine the world's most common interview questions. The top five are:

1. What are your strengths?
2. What are your weaknesses?
3. Why are you interested in working for this company?
4. Where do you see yourself in five years? 10 years?
5. Why do you want to leave your current employer?

Info: tinyurl.com/7noyj37

Lighter side: 6 bizarre real-life appraisal quotes

Every company has workers who do everything right. Then there are those employees who "take an hour and a half to watch *60 Minutes*."

Here's a list of real-life performance review quotes that have been used as evidence in employment litigation, courtesy of Mark Toth on the Manpower blog:

- I would not allow this employee to

WHAT COMPANIES TOLD US

The aging workforce

Has your staff changed since the recession hit?

Workers ages 25 to 54 in workforce – 2007 **100 million**

Workers ages 25 to 54 in workforce – 2011 **94 million**

Workers ages 55 and older in workforce – 2007 **25 million**

Workers ages 55 and older in workforce – 2011 **29 million**

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Center Retirement Research at Boston College and The Washington Post.

HR pros have known that the face of the workforce has been shifting since the recession, and now there's proof that older staffers are holding to their jobs longer.

Each issue of WWHR contains an exclusive survey to give executives insight into what their peers nationwide are thinking and doing.

breed.

- He's so dense, light bends around him.
- He would argue with a signpost.
- If you stand close enough to him you can hear the ocean.
- Takes an hour and a half to watch *60 Minutes*.
- His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity.

Info: tinyurl.com/75fxlpb

Sharpen your judgment... THE DECISION

(See case on Page 2)

Yes, Lynn's company won.

Bert argued that his injury made him disabled and substantially limited him in a major life activity – working.

Therefore, according to Bert, Lynn's company's discriminated against him with its "100% healed" policy, and should have accommodated him.

But the court said otherwise. For staffers to prove they're substantially limited in regard to working, they have to show that they're totally unable to do any job similar to their current one. Merely being unable to work in a specific type of job or for a specific employer doesn't cut it.

The court ruled that Bert wasn't substantially limited because he could still do his type of job. It was just his specific job that he was unable to perform.

■ Analysis: Maybe '100% healed' policies aren't great

Yes, this company won, but a "100% healed" policy is still a risky policy to adopt.

As Maria Danaher writes on Employment Law Matters (tinyurl.com/7eg9jvk), firms handling return-to-work requests also have to review FMLA issues and state workers' comp laws in addition to accommodation rules.

Best bet: Cover all your bases. Don't assume that adopting a "100% healed" policy will automatically make turning down a worker's return-to-work request legal.

Cite: Powers v. USF Holland, Inc., U.S. Circuit Ct. 7, No. 10-2363, 12/15/11.

We talked to our in-house experts to solve our turnover problem

■ Identifying top staff helped us narrow our focus for new hires

We weren't happy with our level of turnover.

It was the same story every time: Managers or employees would leave. Then we'd examine what made each of these employees unsuccessful and try to remedy that with the next hire.

Both HR and our managers were confident that the people we were hiring were good fits for the firm.

But we still found that many of them quit or moved on far too soon. What about our environment wasn't working for them?

After some brainstorming, we realized that maybe the turnover problem had less to do with what was going on in the day-to-day workplace, and more to do with who we were bringing in.

Finding the best in-house

We asked ourselves: What traits and qualities make employees and managers successful at our company?

The only way to find out was to ask the people who were already here.

So we spoke with supervisors and senior management, and together we identified the best staffers in the firm.

Then we scheduled a casual sit-down talk with each of them to

employees and managers at every level of the organization.

After conducting enough interviews, we felt we had a solid idea of what qualities and traits made staffers and managers successful.

Now we just had to figure out how to use that info in the hiring process.

Do they have the same traits?

The best way: a pre-employment test.

We devised short, online tests for each level of employment at our organization.

If candidates seemed like they might be a good fit, we asked them to take the test so we could get an idea of how they'd behave if they were hired.

Would they be focused on quality? Pay attention to detail? Be empathetic?

The test results gave us a great idea about how the employee might fit the profile of a successful employee.

Narrowing it down

The pre-employment tests have helped us phase out people who wouldn't be appropriate for the job they're applying for.

Now, instead of getting 10 or 12 resumes for each open position, hiring managers get three or four truly solid candidates to pick from who we know fit the profile of a successful person at our company.

That saves them time, and it saves us money – and it's helping our turnover problems as well.

(Rhonda Larimore, VP of HR & support services, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, Pittsburgh)

Testing helped see if the applicant would be a good fit.

pick their brain about their work style, daily routine, and so on.

We made sure to speak with

■ Morbid obesity a disability? HR pros debate new ruling

HR pros had a lot to say about a new court ruling that found a morbidly obese woman to be disabled – even though she had no underlying medical problems.

The employee, who weighed 527 pounds at her heaviest, was reportedly a stellar employee.

However, she was eventually fired due to her "limited mobility" and concerns that she would be unable to perform every aspect of her job.

The EEOC sued on the woman's behalf, and the court found in her favor, saying that even though being overweight doesn't generally qualify as a disability, people with severe obesity (body weight more than 100% over the norm) can qualify as disabled.

'People will abuse this'

HR pros discussed the ruling on our affiliated site, *HRMorning.com*. Here's a sampling of the comments:

Brian: This is a tough ruling, and I think a lot of people are going to abuse this going forward.

Common Sense: Yet another perfect example of our liberal government rewarding bad behavior. Everyone eventually pays for these inane policies.

H2r: Let's see, if you drink alcohol and develop liver cancer; smoke tobacco and get lung cancer; dive off a cliff into shallow water and become paralyzed – you're disabled.

I fail to see why overeating and becoming obese would be any different.

EME: While I'm not agreeing with the ruling, there's a big difference between comparing someone with a compulsive eating disorder to someone who drinks alcohol, smokes or dives off cliffs into shallow water.

You can't avoid eating every day, but all the other activities can be avoided. You rarely see people losing jobs for being too thin.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Companies face competing agendas when dealing with their employees. They must find ways to inspire their people to excel, while controlling costs and staying within the law. Here we present a challenging scenario and ask three executives to explain how they'd handle it.

Grumpy veteran manager is unwilling to go to training: What should HR do?

The Scenario

"I think we need to send Bill Minnis to Charm School," said exec VP Bethany Ferris.

"Based on what his direct reports tell us, his interpersonal skills are worse than ever, with him shouting and yelling at staff," said HR manager Stu Capper, flipping through a stack of paperwork. "Plus, his department has more turnover than any other."

"Bill's been with us forever and he's obviously talented and very driven," said Bethany. "But he needs to adopt some new communication techniques – and fast."

'Thanks but no thanks'

Later that week, Stu called Bill into his office. "You wanted to see me?" asked Bill. "I only have a sec – can't leave those guys alone for too long."

"No problem," said Stu. "I'll cut right to the

chase – we're concerned that your communication style may be rubbing some of your staff the wrong way."

Bill sat silent for a moment. "I've got to disagree, Stu," said Bill. "I don't have a problem communicating with my staff – I tell them what to do and they do it."

"That's kind of what we're talking about," said Stu. "We'd love to send you to some interpersonal training that's coming up later this month. You'll only be away from the office for a couple days."

"A couple days?" said Bill. "Remember when I tried to take vacation last year? Things fell apart without me here, and I had a major mess to clean up when I came back."

"Look, I'm old school, and this is just how I do things," Bill added. "So, thanks but no thanks to the training opportunity."

If you were Stu, what would you say next?

Reader Responses

1 Kim Bonewitz, HR assistant, Aviation Training Consulting, Altus, OK

What Kim would do: I'd make it clear to Bill that the training isn't an option – it's a requirement.

Reason: Bill shouldn't be the one calling the shots here.

Yes, he's an experienced manager, but we need to make it clear that this is the way upper management wants to handle the situation.

Once he knows senior management is involved, I don't think he'd argue anymore.

2 Greg Caldwell, HR director, Jones Stephens Corp., Moody, AL

What Greg would do: I wouldn't initially send Bill to training. Instead, I'd set up a meeting between Bill, Bethany and myself to discuss ways Bill could change. Only if our in-house solution was unsuccessful would we send Bill to the outside training.

Reason: The goal in this situation is to help Bill understand that he could be managing his staffers more effectively.

I believe we can at least start by trying to do that in-house.

3 Charlotte Odette, director of HR, Big League Dreams USA, Chino Hills, CA

What Charlotte would do: First, I'd investigate the complaints that some of Bill's direct reports have made against him. Are they legitimate?

If so, I'd again reiterate to Bill that the company would like him to go to training.

If he refused, I'd tell him that the training is necessary for him to continue to remain employed with the firm.

Reason: Times change, and a management style that may have worked in the past might not work with a new generation of staffers.

Bill's been a loyal employee and we don't want to fire him, so we'd try all possible avenues to get him to change his ways. But if he can't or is unwilling, we'd let him go.

QUOTES

Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours.

Jerome Jerome

All money means to me is a pride in accomplishment.

Ray Kroc

The chief danger in life is that you may take too many precautions.

Alfred Alder

I think I've discovered the secret of life – you just hang around until you get used to it.

Charles Schulz

Without Valentine's Day, February would be ... well, January.

Jim Gaffigan

Computers make it easier to do a lot of things, but most of the things they make it easier to do don't need to be done.

Andy Rooney