

CASE 19: THE TYRANT

The Story

The Safety Division of a major manufacturing concern has a manager who displays the following behaviours:

- He loudly berates employees in front of others;
- He collects information to use against his charges while out smoking with employees from other divisions;
- He blames his charges for errors he himself has committed;
- He presents himself to more senior managers as an otherwise highly credible supervisor who has been crippled by the incompetence of his people;
- He refuses to document himself on the content of his division's work, saying: "My job is managing, not doing the work my people should be doing."

Up till recently, the tyrant manager has been able to keep the ground swell of concern about his values and style quiet. However, now one of his peers has been elevated to senior management and has decided that the situation has gone on long enough and it is time to correct the individual's behaviours or wish him good luck in another career.

The Intervention

This is a case where the senior person must model behaviour to the entire organization. She must engage the services of a neutral third party to analyze the behaviour and work in a coaching and mentoring role for the offending manager. In particular the senior person must ensure due diligence to the organization and through the agency of the mentor and coach hired on for the purpose:

- Ensure that the offending manager's behaviour has been correctly documented;
- Provide training for the manager in management values and practices;
- Define organizational and managerial expectations for the manager;
- Monitor the coaching received and monitor its effects on staff;
- Make a decision on whether the manager can be salvaged.

It should be clear that tyrant managers cannot and should not be tolerated in an organization that prides itself in the productivity of its employees.