



THE INSIDER

By Don Allen - Publisher

Boss vs Employee

As I start my fifth year here at Concrete Today magazine I have been reflecting back on past jobs, bosses and supervisors. Some were quite funny, others unbelievable in their thinking!

I'll start my experiences from many years ago while working as an art director for a small printing company, I and my fellow employees were invited by our boss to a meeting to 'brainstorm' about possible improvements.

As the meeting began and the words, "Anybody got any ideas?" left my Boss's lips, there fell an awkward silence. I saw my opportunity to chime in with all the great ideas I had since my employment began 3 months prior, so I went for it.

My Boss and I got into a tremendous dialogue while my co-workers remained silent. I felt I was really making a difference. After the meeting was over, every one of my fellow workers commended me on my obvious passionate desire for the success of our business and the great ideas I had shared. The following morning my Boss asked me to step into her office. I felt certain I was to be praised for my sure-fire plan for success. Instead, I was reamed for suggesting that our organization was less than perfect. I was then told to apologize to everyone in the office for implying that they were less than competent professionals.

Another time (same boss), one of the employees in my department resigned. In-

stead of filling the position at \$30,000/year, I suggested an alternative incentive plan. Each month, the most productive worker in my department could earn a \$1,000 bonus, if the department's monthly goals were met or exceeded. My Boss reviewed my proposal and rejected it - including the \$18,000 annual savings. She said "What if

this worked? Everyone in the company would want to work for you."

Then there was the time... our purchasing group was negotiating with a major supplier. Because of our volume

of orders, we were in a strong position to negotiate. Finally, after two days of heated wrangling, we got the supplier to agree to a 40% discount.

As we were about to sign the contract, the President, who had not been a party to the negotiations, walked in and tore it up. He said "I'm going to teach you people how to play hardball. That's the way you make it in this world."

At that, he turned to the supplier's representatives and said "We'll give you 10% under your quoted price, take it or leave it. There are other suppliers out there."

The supplier quickly leaped at the change. Turning to us as he left, the President said "I hope you learned something from that." Yes, I learned his "micro




JUST FOR FUN!

Hidden somewhere in this issue is a small "FUEL GAUGE" that looks like this.

All readers who fax our office with the correct location will be entered into a drawing to



Win a \$25 Gift Certificate.

FAX: 352-351-4730

It could be hidden anywhere (but not on this page!) ... in a feature article, in an advertisement, upside down at the end of a sentence... **ANYWHERE!** So search every page, enjoy this issue and find the hidden item.

The winner will be announced in the January 2007 issue of Concrete Today.

WE HAVE A WINNER!!!

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Well, our winner for the September issue is **Mary Odom of Odom Septic Tank Service in Chipley, FL** The "Pain Roller" was hidden on page 18, in the shadow at the bottom of the page... **Great Work Mary!**

HONORABLE MENTION

The following sharp-eyed readers also found the hidden item, but sorry! Only one winner per issue. Better luck next time!

Mike Kuellner - L & L Ready Mix
Holyoke, CO

Peggy Caudill - Valley Concrete Operations, Inc.
Belvue, KS

Floyd & Waymon - Builders Supply
Minden, CA

Allen Rigsby - Form Tech Concrete Forms, Inc.
Columbus, OH

Al Kromas - Kay Concrete Materials Co.
Monett, MS

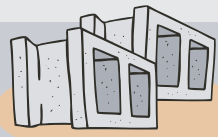
Steven Halsey - Green Ready Mix of Missouri
Carrollton, MO

Mike Cadigan - Americast Halltown Plant
Halltown, WV

Steve Sherwood, P.E. - M & W Concrete Pipe & Supply - Evansville, IN

Jane Burdick - Aggregate Industries
North Grafton, MA

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AROUND THE BLOCK

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to prove a worker is illegal – therefore, the employer cannot hire them under Colorado immigration law. However, because the employer does not know why or how the documents or name changed, it could constitute discrimination if the employer does not re-hire. Marquess said discrimination

employee file, but be prepared to separate them into different files if audited by either agency – so the federal auditors wouldn't see the state documents and vice versa. The documents must be retained for the entirety of the individual's employment.

Employers will also be required to sign



poses a greater threat of lawsuit or penalty than does violating the immigration law.

The way around the situation is to have a misrepresentation clause in a personnel policy which states that presenting false information when applying for a job or while working is grounds for termination and no rehire.

Colorado's other new immigration law, HB 1017, goes into effect Jan. 1, 2007. It also applies to verifying work eligibility of all new hires.

The law requires that employers keep a copy of the documents presented by the worker for the Federal I-9 check. Marquess and Malpert suggested that employers should keep the documents in the same

an affirmation that they inspected the documents and did not alter or falsify them. The law does not give an example of what the affirmation should say.



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managing" cost the firm an extra \$185,000 a year.

A few other no-brainers that happened around that office:

Once my boss wanted to send a fax to our head office, but she was afraid someone else would read it besides the President. So I told her to put it in an "envelope" before she faxed it. She did!

After a recent Human Resources survey, it was clear that my salary was well below the industry average for Art Directors. To correct the situation, my Boss simply changed my job title.

One day (at a different company) my Boss noticed that we used a luxury brand of toilet paper - and the supply was running low. So he took the initiative to buy (10 cases of 96 rolls each) of recycled, el cheapo, sandpaper-style paper, which he proudly boasted cost 25% less than the luxury brand. He made sure everyone knew about his cost saving exercise.

Later that day the President showed my Boss the maintenance contract. Our cleaning service buys all cleaning supplies including toilet paper.

In Closing I remember a comment from one of my past Bosses: "Don, it seems you're just an over-achiever and that's simply not good for the team here."

So, what kind of a boss are you? Will let your workers do their job to their best ability or micro-manage everything?

Don Allen
Publisher

Comments to this
months Insider can be sent to:
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