

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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Issue 166

To our clients and friends

April 1, 2008



The Acid Test of Character



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*Telling the
truth secures
our future*

Cathy, purchasing manager for a paper mill in northern Ontario, Canada, told Session 5B of the Leadership Development Lab:

“The pulp mill where I was employed was bought out by another company. This company was involved in many new ventures. One of the goals of the corporate purchasing department was to do an evaluation on what products and services were used at each site and negotiate contracts based on total volumes rather than on a mill-to-mill basis. I looked after the chemical buying at our site, so I forwarded them the required information.

Our site was using the largest volume of a particular chemical and I had the most product and supplier knowledge concerning this chemical. I knew already that the agreement I had put in place two years prior was an excellent agreement with five years of firm pricing. The suppliers were tied in to an agreement that they probably wished they could get out of as the market conditions had changed and they could have received a much higher price than we were currently paying. My suppliers were honoring their agreement and keeping their commitment.

The senior vice president of engineering and purchasing called me and asked me to get in touch with these suppliers (we had in place a 50% supply agreement for each supplier) to discuss pricing. He asked me to call one supplier and tell them that the other supplier had dropped their price and then do the same for the other supplier. I couldn't believe my ears! How dare he ask me to lie to these sales representatives who I had an excellent working relationship with for many years and who had always provided us with excellent pricing and service? I told the VP I would get back to him.

I thought about the situation for the rest of

the day and into the night. I definitely wasn't going to do what he asked. I had to figure out how I was going to present this to the VP. I was worried about my future with this company and was worried I may be on the unemployment line if this did not go well. I was very angry but knew I had to keep calm and try to reason with him.

I made the call late the next day. I explained to the vice president that this was not an ethical practice and that my integrity would be questioned in future dealings. I could not do as he asked. I said, 'If you are comfortable doing this, I will give you the sales representatives phone numbers.' To my surprise, all he did was laugh. I wasn't sure how to take that kind of reaction.

In the weeks and months that followed, this vice president called and asked my opinion on many items, some involving purchasing and some not. I believe I earned respect the day I challenged him. I continue to have a great working relationship with this individual. Whether this incident was a test of my integrity or not, I will never know, but I do know one thing; I was true to my values and stood up for what I believed in.

The lesson I learned from this experience is that I should always remain calm, no matter how angry I become. Voicing my opinion in a manner that is not confrontational always has a better outcome. I also learned that standing up for what I believe in pays off.

The action I call you to take is when someone makes you angry, remember to stop, listen and evaluate before responding. Once you have calmed down, you can usually diffuse the situation in a more effective manner. Live by and stand up for what you believe in.

The benefit you will gain is respect and trust.”

Please forward this to friends, co-workers, customers or relatives who you feel might enjoy it.

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