

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Drill Down for the Real Problem



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*Building
relations is
required to
build quality*

Carla, a draftsman for a capital equipment manufacturer in Springfield, Ohio, told Session #5 of the Leadership Development Lab:

“I had just taken over the engineering responsibility for our 150D side shifter production a few months earlier when I was called out to the shop floor to look at a production problem. A 150D unit that I had engineered was at final assembly and there was a problem. The backrest couldn't be added because the holes were drilled too deeply. While I was standing there trying to figure out what I had done wrong, the machine operator who had drilled the holes came walking across the plant from the other side of the building. He looked at the unit and said, ‘You didn't adjust for the heavy duty fork bars. That hole depth is supposed to be . . .’ (and then he stated the correct dimensions, the correct depth). I was so mad because he knew all along that there was an error on the print but he didn't take the time and effort to bring it up to me and say, ‘I think we have a problem’. He just blindly followed my print even though he knew it was wrong. Did he want me to fail, did he want us to fail? Was he trying to prove something? Was he mad that a woman had come up through the ranks and became an engineer? I don't know the answer, but I know it sure made me mad!

The lesson I learned from this experience is to do the best job I can of building relationships with everyone on the

floor especially those who manufacture the products I design. We need each other. I need their help, I need their support. We can't operate as if we live in different worlds, work for different companies and be successful. I learned that I have to earn their support.

The action I call you to take is to take the initiative to build strong relationships with everyone on your team, especially those upstream who provide you with information or material, and those downstream who are your customers. Everyone who is a part of your process creates value for your external customers.

The benefit you will gain is greater ease in your daily life. You will get your job done easier and faster, and you will get it done right the first time.”

The action of this machine operator borders on sabotage and is completely inexcusable. Of course, if you over-react, you create a situation where people might potentially do what he did and won't admit they knew better. Your job as an empowering leader is to be proactive in building relationships, and creating open doors of communication and understanding. Be humble and say, “I can't succeed without you; we can't succeed without each other”, and make a hero of anyone who catches you making a mistake, finds a shortcut, or brings you ideas for improvements that make the process more productive.

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