

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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Issue 642

To our clients and friends

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Stopping the Leaks

Earn Employee Commitment

On a Tuesday morning not long ago, I stopped by unannounced to see the president of the largest, most successful general contractor in Salem, Oregon. He has been a client and friend since 1989. I told him I was stopping by because I had just made a call on the owner of a nearby plumbing contractor. He had referred me to that contractor because he often uses them as a subcontractor. He said, "Oh yeah, they're great guys, let me tell you a story." He began to tell me a story which I found most revealing.

"As you may know, union plumbing contractors often use journeymen and apprentices from the union hall, which is basically 'a call for' a plumber. The way it works in theory is the contractor calls each day for the number of plumbers they need and the union hall dispatches them, assigning the craftsmen to the first contractor who calls. The way it works in practice is the craftsmen work the same job for the contractor so they have the same plumbers come to their business every day. If the contractor doesn't have work for them, they tell them 'we don't need you for the next couple of months,' and they go back to the hall. Then their plumbers go to work for the next contractor who's short on craftsmen and calls for an apprentice or journeyman."



"This particular contractor was experiencing a temporary lull, a few days between jobs. He knew he had jobs coming up to put his journeymen on, but he didn't have any work for them for that week. So, what did he do? He didn't send them back to the hall and run the risk of some other contractor picking them up, he didn't send them home just to twiddle their thumbs while he was paying them \$30 or \$40 per hour. He called my friend, Kurt, the general contractor, and said, 'Do you have any plumbing you need done around your home or office? Do any of your employees have plumbing they need done around their homes? If so, let me know, I'm going to send over some of my guys to do the work for you free.'"

This commitment goes well beyond what is thought of as a typical commitment of an employer to an employee in construction or most any other business. Does it payoff, is it paying off, could it payoff? The answer is an emphatic yes! This plumbing contractor keeps the craftsman he wants to keep and he certainly earns a favored status and the right to bid on all the jobs my general contractor friend needs a plumber for.

So my question for you is "What is your commitment to your team?" Many managers spend countless hours trying to figure out how they can get their employees to be more committed to them. Maybe the first step is to show you're committed to your employees.



Larry W. Dennis
President
Turbo Leadership Systems

**"What is your
commitment to
your team?"**



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