

# Turbo Leadership Systems™

# The **TURBO** **Charger**

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Issue 115

To our clients and friends

February 20, 2007

## *Icing on the Cake with House Calls*



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*Customer complaints are a part of your business; the way you recover determines your success.*

James, project manager for a large building coproject manager for a large building company in southern Oregon, told Session 6A of the Leadership Development Lab:

“For the last four years, my wife, Pam, has ordered a birthday cake for a coworker and friend from the local Albertson’s grocery store near 58th and Main in Springfield. This year was no exception. She ordered the same cake as in previous years. When she went to pick up the cake, the bakery had produced a cake completely different from the one ordered. When Pam questioned the person in the bakery department, she was given the explanation that the cake, with the characteristics she had ordered, could not be made. My wife told the employee that she had purchased this same cake from their bakery for the last four years. Still there was no offer to inquire, make an effort, explore, or innovate for us. Pam left the bakery with an off the shelf” cake and was *not* happy.

She wrote a letter to the store manager, relating the story above, and told the store manager she was very disappointed with the response she received from the bakery department representative. Then, last Saturday, December 16th, we heard a knock at the front door. The Albertson’s store manager had driven to our house to personally apologize to my wife for the problem. He went on to explain that he had researched the problem, found and discussed the issue with the employee who refused to make the cake, and ‘corrected the problem’. Further, he gave my wife a \$20 certificate for store purchases and hoped we would still do business with Albertson’s.

My first reaction to this event was that this was a great manager. He took the following steps to correct a problem in his store:

1. Took my wife’s letter, the complaint, seriously (instead of round-filing it)

2. Investigated the problem, the complaint, to find the root cause
3. Fixed the problem so it won’t be repeated
4. Made the extra effort to retain a loyal customer

My second reaction was that this personal experience exemplifies the principles taught in Turbo’s Leadership Development Lab.

The lesson I learned from this experience is that this manager, by using good leadership principles, was effective in mitigating a potential ‘business losing’ practice in the bakery department, as well as retaining the business of an unhappy customer.

The action I encourage you to take is listen to all complaints. Never be defensive about yourself, your actions, or those of your team. Start by stating what you can do, not what you can’t do or have to do. The benefit you will gain is less stress, more confidence, and a successful business with loyal customers.”

What a great example of recovery. The Albertson’s store manager is a great example for all of us to learn from; going the extra mile to find and resolve the root cause of performance that results in unhappy customers, and then going the extra, extra mile to satisfy the customer. ###

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Coming soon . . .  
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*“15 Leadership Principles and  
Ronald Reagan - Use Them to  
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