A Bully Gone Wild

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Synopsis
Cheryl Vaughn was hired to manage a fabric store, which had operated without a manager for three months. A group of four assistant managers had operated the store during this period. One of them, Terri, in particular, had hoped to have been promoted to the position of manager. Cheryl was a talented seamstress and had worked in a number of fabric stores but never had served as a supervisor or manager. Terri was often rude and used her large body and snappy attitude to intimidate Cheryl. A few months into her managing the store, Cheryl learned that Terri was trying to undermine her authority. Cheryl wasted no time and fired Terri. Terri threw things at Cheryl, yelled and cursed throughout the ordeal, and tore down and tossed store displays. Cheryl, her employees, and her customers watched in disbelief as Terri continued her tirade. Cheryl wondered what she could have done differently and what would she do now to deal with the situation.

Learning Outcomes
The outcomes of this case are to:

1. Recognize and understand the importance of adequate supervisory orientation and training and to evaluate the appropriateness of a management hiring.
2. Recognize and understand the importance for managers to utilize progressive disciplinary actions in a timely manner to address disrespectful and insubordinate behaviors.
3. Evaluate a disciplinary situation and to decide what disciplinary action is appropriate.
4. Assess a situation involving a very emotional and aggressive employee and decide how to deal with the situation.
5. Assess the effectiveness of a Human Resources Department regarding how it provided advice, service, and controls to its store managers and to make some recommendations on how HR could have better supported its managers.

Application
This case is a decision case that involves a myriad of Human Resource Management concepts. It can be used in an upper-level Human Resources Management course. It should be used after coverage of employee selection, employee orientation and training, performance management, discipline/discharge and due process, and workplace violence. The case can be used after coverage of each of the topics noted above to apply each HR topic. Alternatively, the case could be used at the end of the course as a Human Resource Management capstone case.

Key Words
Human resource selection, orientation and training, performance management, employee discipline and discharge, and workplace violence.

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