



By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak
COLUMNIST

DEAR CHIEF: I’m a retail store manager in Maine and was told by a few associates that I need to apologize to some employees for being too hard on them as we have begun preparing for the holiday season rush. I find it difficult to do this because I was actually right pertaining to the situations at hand. What happened to the good old days when people weren’t so sensitive about every little thing?

INSENSITIVE MANAGER



DEAR INSENSITIVE MANAGER: The days of the majority of employees being thick-skinned go-getters are pretty much gone. Now-a-days you need to properly gauge employees’ personality traits to get a good idea how they’ll react to certain types of reprimands. Some can handle direct and open criticism while others will cry or get emotional

Humility can go a long way

over the slightest hint of criticism. Learn how you can speak to or act toward employees to keep emotions to a minimum.

You mentioned you were “actually right pertaining to the situations at hand.” Are you one hundred percent positive about that? Being “right” can often be a matter of perspective. From your perspective, you’re right. From someone else’s perspective, they’re right. So you both can be right and/or you both can be wrong.

Your employees will make mistakes, and it’s quite possible that you will make mistakes as well. Just as you expect others to fess up, they also are waiting for you. So, if you reprimanded another too sharply, and then it turns out you were wrong, apologize. If you laid blame where it wasn’t due, apologize. And if you learn that you embarrassed an employee for whatever reason, apologize.

It’s difficult to admit error, but once

you do, you will realize that it is truly liberating. Apologizing for something goes a long way toward mending broken relationships and getting your employees back on a productive track. Making a mistake and moving on makes good sense. And during those occasions when others are expecting an apology, yet you know you were right, do it anyway. You don’t have to declare you were wrong but you can acknowledge that your attitude, behavior, or poor choice of words was a mistake in regards to a particular situation.

Humility can go a long way and can reap great dividends when given with sincerity and authenticity.



For an opportunity to have your question, issue or concern addressed in the Dear Chief column, go to www.DearChiefAdvice.com and submit your comments or email them to Jeff@DearChiefAdvice.com.