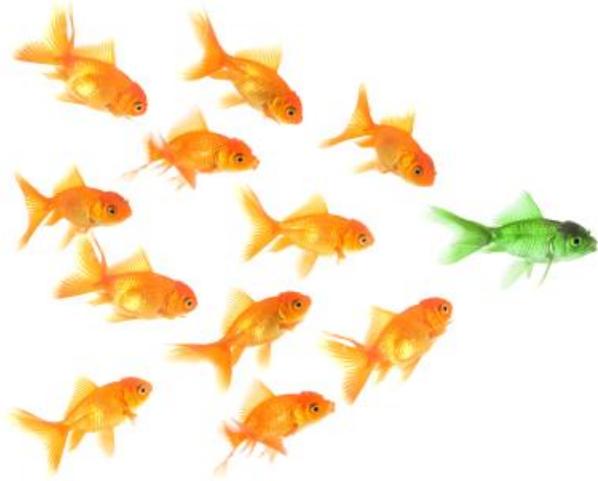


## Being a Leader Was Never Meant to Be Easy



Having a great location, compelling marketing, stellar roadside signage, a bright, comfortable, well-merchandised store laced with the newest technology, plenty of parking, and competitive pricing can all easily be wiped out by one employee's bad attitude. All it takes is one.

The toughest position I ever had was serving as a human resources manager for 150 employees. For a time, I was the type of manager who would rather squeeze out a bad employee by cutting hours or making his or her life miserable by assigning split shifts. When that didn't work, I just hoped the person would quit, retire, or...move away. *Any of this sound familiar?*

This all changed when the CEO came into my office and asked me if I would have a tough time firing an employee for stealing. "Absolutely not," I answered, "I've terminated a number of employees for theft, even had a few walked out in handcuffs!" He then asked, "*Why is it, then, you have a hard time firing employees for constantly being late, or not showing up for work, or not being productive, or for being rude to customers?*" Before I could answer, he answered for me: "*It's because **you are not aware of the price tag of clinging to an employee that doesn't match our goal.***" He continued, "*Having a great location, compelling marketing, and stellar roadside signs are easily wiped out by one employee's bad attitude. Those types of employees are stealing my future, your future, and our good employees' future.*"

Amazon is well aware of the cost of a bad attitude. Jeff Bezos' annual letter to shareholders tells how Amazon will pay warehouse workers up to \$5,000 to quit. The intent of the program, called "Pay to Quit," is to ensure that Amazon retains only people who really, really want to work at Amazon.

**How is your team?** Do you have any "bad apples"? **Training, coaching, showing leadership and knowing when to say goodbye is instrumental to your business and your future.**

-- Gabe Trahan, NCPA Senior Director of Store Operations and Marketing