

The Power to Hire and Fire

Stanley Greenfield, RHU

When you were a kid, did you ever go to your dad's office and see how he ran things? My dad was involved with politics in Savannah, Georgia, and when I was a kid he was the clerk of council. It was a thrill for me to go to city hall and see my dad in charge. I often wondered what it would be like to be a boss and have the power to hire and fire people. It has been many years since I ran around city hall, and I have since then experienced the power to hire and fire people. It is not a fun experience no matter how many times you tell yourself, "It's for their own good." I think no matter how many times you do it, it still isn't easy. When you have to do it, it may or may not be for "their own good," but I can sure tell you, it certainly is for "your own good."

I have written before about Harold Dillon, the gentleman that hired me when I graduated from college. When I hired my first secretary I asked Harold for some advice, and he told me that the first time I think about firing her, I should. He felt that if that thought enters your mind, it must have had justification. Many times your help will do things to aggravate you, but you don't think that you need to fire them until it becomes an ongoing thing. That's what Harold meant. When it gets to that point you should do it because you will do it ultimately, and it will cost you a lot more time and money then. He was right, and I try to follow that advice. I said, I try to follow that advice. I don't always, and when I don't it proves to me that Harold was indeed right.

How about you? Do you listen to that inner voice that many times gives you good advice and then ignore it? Well do you? Maybe it's time to follow the advice that Harold passed on to me years ago; when the thought does enter your mind, act on it. If you decide to give this a try, please drop me a line and let me know if Harold was right. I think you will find that he was then, and he still is.

Have you ever thought about using Harold's advice when it comes to dealing with your advisers? Think about that for a moment. They are employees of yours. They are on your payroll. Boy, are they ever! Why not judge them as such? You say you never have? Well, it's time you started. Get out a piece of paper and list them. That list should include your attorney, accountant, insurance agents, financial adviser, stock broker, bankers, and anyone else you are paying to help you spend your money. Did you ever think of it in those terms? That is exactly what they are doing. Do not include your spouse. Did you ever realize that you have so many people on your payroll that do nothing to increase your patient load? Some are only that -- a load -- and it may be time to reduce that load.

Now let's get started with rating these advisers. Pick anyone of them to begin with. List what they do for you, or better yet, what they are supposed to do for you. Now ask yourself a very simple question, are they doing their job? If it's hard to answer with a yes or a no, then use a rating system of one to five. Believe me, if you can't answer with a simple yes or no, you have already answered the question! Be honest with your evaluation and be honest with yourself. Remember this exercise is for your eyes only at this point. Are they doing their job?

Let's move on to the next point. What are you paying them to do their job? Are they earning it? A simple yes or no will suffice here. If they aren't, then what are they worth? Fifty percent of what you are paying them? Twenty-five percent of what you are paying them? I know it's hard to judge

the fees of someone else's profession, but you can judge if you are getting your money's worth. The next decision is do you talk to them about this problem or do you start looking for a replacement? Don't let your emotions get in the way of a business decision. Remember what Harold said, if you put it off, it will only end up costing you more in the long run. If you are pleased with their services, make note of that as well. This is not meant to be a hate list

Advisers should be rated every year just as you evaluate your "other" employees. Don't ever lose sight of the fact that they are employees. Too many reverse this and consider them the employer and themselves the employee.

You have another "employee" that we all are guilty of never evaluating and judging. It's the only employee that will always work for us if the opportunity arises. There will be no calling in sick or asking for time off. Vacations aren't even thought of. No, I'm not describing your brother-in-law, I'm talking about money. It's time to take a good long look at what that "employee" is doing for you. Are you happy with the "job" you are getting out of your money? Are you asking it to work hard enough or is it just dragging along. No, we aren't going to "fire" money, we just want it to work harder, and it will without any complaints.

You now have a job to do, and I think you can see how important it is for your well-being to really do a complete evaluation of all of your advisers. No more excuses or free rides. Everyone does the job that's expected of them. If you allow another year to slip by without doing this evaluation, you have no one to blame but yourself. That's your job. Are you up to the task? While you are at it, maybe it's time to evaluate yourself as an employer. What score will you give yourself?

Your comments and inquiries may be directed to:

*Stanley Greenfield, R.H.U.
12873 Huntley Manor Drive
Jacksonville, Florida 32216*

Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thank you.

Editor's Note:

Further advice on finances is available through Mr. Greenfield's newsletter, Greenfield Chiropractic Financial News, #J 314-C, on the Preferred Reading and Viewing List, pages xx.

JULY 1992