**EVOLUTION OF A MANAGER: CAREER ON THE LINE**

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**Abstract**

Mike Gibson’s second chance as a team manager seemed doomed. Reassigned to lead the bottling and packaging line in a food production facility, members of his team falsified quality reports and were reprimanded. After the disciplinary incident, the team retaliated and gave Gibson an extremely low rating on an upward feedback appraisal. Although a graduate of a corporate management program and currently an MBA student, he seemed unable to apply the lessons of the classroom to his own work. The handwriting was on the wall—Gibson’s career was on the line. This is a descriptive Critical Incident.

**Learning Objectives**

The objectives of this case are:

1. Assess the implications of using metaphor in the workplace and apply the structured use of metaphor to a difficult managerial and team problem by deconstructing traditional sports analogies used in U.S. business in order to identify the existing team structure and its appropriateness to the situation.
2. Evaluate managerial dilemmas associated with doing the right thing when disciplinary action is needed.
3. Develop an action plan for improving team performance.
4. Analyze key components needed to effectively assess and mentor managerial performance when the mentee is not outgoing by nature.

**Application**

The CI could be used in upper-level undergraduate and MBA courses in Organizational Behavior, Intercultural Communication, and Human Resources Management.

**Key Words**

Teams, performance management, ethics, diversity, career management

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