

## ***You Make the Call ...***

Stan has been a supervisor for the past six months and now manages employees with whom he was formerly a peer.

Ed is the former supervisor of the department and was promoted to division manager. Ed's division includes the department that he formerly supervised and that Stan is now responsible for supervising. Ed is considered a rising star within the Company.

John has worked for the Company for over five years and now reports to Stan. Before reporting to Stan, John reported to Ed and was a co-worker of Stan's. John has developed a reputation of being someone who angers quickly and lashes out at co-workers. He has strong opinions and engages in strident conversations with co-workers about anything and everything ... politics, local sports teams, movies, and other contemporary topics. He has offended co-workers on numerous occasions during these conversations. Because of John's reputation and personality, though, Ed and other former supervisors have been reluctant to address these behaviors with him. John is not one of the Company's best performers. John demonstrates frequent errors in his work and consistently low productivity. Ed has had a couple of conversations over the years with John about these errors and low productivity, but there is no corresponding documentation memorializing any conversations with John about these problems.

Mary is another of Stan's direct reports. She too used to work for Ed and has been employed by the Company longer than Stan has been alive. When Ed was elevated to division manager, Mary had expressed interest in the supervisor position to which Stan was promoted. Mary can be accurately described as a quick-tongued and strong-willed employee, but she is one of the Company's best performers.

When he was one of their co-workers, Stan was well aware of a personality conflict between John and Mary. Although Stan has not personally witnessed it since becoming supervisor, he has informally learned through another of his subordinates that John still does not get along very well with Mary.

Earlier this month, Nancy, another one of the other employees in Stan's unit, forwards to Stan some e-mails sent to Nancy by Mary in which Mary makes it clear that she is not happy with John. In these e-mails, Mary included offensive and derogatory remarks about John. Many other employees also were sent these e-mails. When forwarding Stan these e-mails, Nancy includes a comment that she has received many such e-mails over the past several months from Mary and Nancy says that she has "had enough of this and wants (Stan) to deal with it."

John has just appeared at Stan's office door at the end of the day today screaming that he can no longer work with Mary as she is incompetent and out of control. Stan simultaneously learns from Nancy that Mary is in the breakroom crying on Ed's shoulders because John is impossible to work with and she feels that John is continuing to harass her.

Stan has just called you as you are the Company's employment lawyer. What is your advice as to ...

***-how Stan should respond?***

***-what issues, if any, need investigated and why?***