

What Would You Do?

Best collector is feeling burned out and doesn't know why: What do you do?

The Scenario

Credit Manager Riley Prescott watched Collection Supervisor Amy Frye hang up the phone.

She let out a long sigh.

"Amy," Riley said. "Do you have a few minutes? We need to talk."

"Sure, Riley," Amy answered. She sighed again as she stood up.

Efficiency is down

Riley followed Amy into his cramped office and closed the door.

"I'm worried about you, Amy," Riley said. "Your call volume and your collection rates are down. And I'm not the only one hearing those long sighs."

Amy was silent for a few seconds.

"Oh, Riley, I don't know. Sometimes I just feel like I've lost the fire," Amy began. "When I get some

people on the other end of the phone, I don't really care if I get a payment commitment or not."

"Is there a problem here in the office that's bothering you?" Riley asked.

"Nothing more than the usual stuff," Amy answered. "I just feel burned out doing the same thing, day after day."

"You know you're the best collector we have," Riley said. "Everybody here looks up to you, and you're the one to beat in collection efficiency. Am I asking too much of you?"

"No, Riley. It's me. I'm having a lot of trouble staying focused," Amy explained.

"It started creeping up on me last month, and now it's in full swing. I don't know what to do."

If you were Riley, what would you do to help motivate Amy?

TRY THESE WEB SITES

- www.nacm.org/resource/usefulsites.shtml – Trouble tracking down recent research or factual tidbits? Try this mother lode of financial information, with topics ranging from Accounting to U.S. Appeals Courts.
- www.irscollect.com/articles/Final%20Demand%20Letter.pdf – Looking to put a little more bite in your final demand letter? Here's a format you can follow.
- <http://tinyurl.com/ypk4z4> – If you're curious about new business process management (BPM) software, *Business Finance* magazine catalogs the pluses and minuses of many different ones.
- <http://biz.yahoo.com/i/> – Any source of information on potential customers is valuable – especially if it's free. Here are profiles of more than 9,000 public companies.

Reader Responses

1 Ann Meyer, credit manager, Strauss Veal Feeds, Inc., North Manchester, IN

What Ann would do: We had a situation just like that with one of our employees. To help get her going again, I sent her to a seminar, which gave her a lot of new ideas that really helped her out.

Reason: Hearing some new ideas from a different source can rekindle the fire – especially if they prove successful.

2 Joe Cardamone, manager of credit and collections, Duane Morris, LLP., Philadelphia

What Joe would do: I'd have to have a one-on-one with her to determine if there were outside factors affecting her work.

Reason: If there's an outside pressure on her, such as something going on at home, we can take that

into consideration. By helping her deal with the outside stress, we would be able to alleviate that pressure so she could focus more on her work.

But we do hold people to a certain standard of performance, and if she can't keep up to that standard, we may have to re-evaluate her position.

3 Maureen Hayward, regional credit manager, Allied Building Products, Woodinville, WA

What Maureen would do: I would sit down with Amy and set obtainable daily goals for her.

Reason: By setting goals for every day, it will help get her refocused on performance. Every time she meets, and especially when she exceeds, those goals I would offer praise for her good work. If she was doing especially well, I would offer her little rewards like an extra half hour for lunch to get her feeling good about producing. This would get her feeling good about her job again.

FROM OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Over 90% of our readership report in our surveys that What's Working in Credit & Collection, with its quick-read format, is more valuable to them than any other publication they read.

"What's Working in Credit & Collection does a good job of covering the problems that exist in today's economic environment."

Ron Decker
Controller
Sparta Steel & Equipment

"There's always something new in WWCC."

Darlene O'Kane
Manager
Moyer & Son