

A Ten Part Program for Employers of Alcoholics

by Gary N.

The Original Manuscript of the book Alcoholics Anonymous contained a number of interesting parts that were either deleted entirely or modified substantially prior to the April 1939 publication of the First Edition.

Among the more interesting deletions was in the chapter "To Employers."

It is well known that Charles Towns, founder of the Towns Hospital in which Bill W. had his white light experience, was among the first treatment professionals to voice an opinion to employers that alcoholism should not necessarily be grounds for termination. Thus, it isn't surprising that the Big Book would contain such a chapter.

However, it is in the Original Manuscript that we find a ten part program for the employer to follow in dealing with his alcoholic employee:

- One: Acquaint yourself with the nature of alcoholism.
- Two: Be prepared to discount and forget your man's past.
- Three: Confidentially offer him medical treatment and cooperation, provided you think he wants to stop.
- Four: Have the alcohol thoroughly removed from his system and give him a suitable chance to recover physically.
- Five: Have the doctor in attendance present him with this book, but don't cram it down his throat.
- Six: Have a frank talk with him when he gets back from his treatment, assuring him of your full support, encouraging him to say anything he wishes about himself, and making it clear the past will not be held against him.
- Seven: Ask him to place recovery from alcoholism ahead of all else.
- Eight: Don't let him overwork.
- Nine: Protect him, when justified, from malicious gossip.
- Ten: If, after you have shot the works, he will not stop, then let him go.

However, how would you like to receive instructions from some book that states that you, as an employer, are to allow your alcoholic employee to put his "recovery from alcoholism ahead of all else?" Pretty strong language, don't you think, for a company that needs to show a profit? You're supposed to "confidentially" finance your employee's recovery? How? What do you get out of this deal? What happens if your other employees find out? How can you explain your employee's prolonged absence while he's receiving medical treatment?

How are you to protect your employee from "malicious gossip" when the content of the "gossip" might be accurate and true? Might this ten step program, upon evaluation by an employer, lead the employer to conclude that rather to try this program, it would be better and simpler to terminate the employee right then and there?

Who can say? However, upon further thought in reading the contents of this ten part program, one may surmise that the decision to delete it was a really good idea.