

# RDA

## *Corporate Communique . . .*

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ROBERT DENNEY Associates, Inc.

*Management, Marketing, Strategic Planning*

November, 2011

### **EVEN ONE BAD APPLE CAN RUIN THE BEST COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION**

We all know that one bad apple can ruin a whole bushel basket. The same applies in a company or organization. Having even one disruptive – or dishonest or unethical – member of management can ruin the morale, culture and eventually the performance of the entire operation, no matter how stellar the rest of the team is.

Obviously you should make every effort to avoid hiring a bad apple in the first place. Always check references. Don't e mail them. Call and listen carefully to what they say and how they say it. Include other members of the management team in the interview process, even if they would report to the new person. Then individually ask for feedback from each interviewer. If there are different reactions from different people, then consider bringing the interviewers together in a meeting to discuss their reactions . When you have narrowed the field down to one or two candidates, ask them to discuss how they would address a difficult issue or situation, hypothetical or even a real one you are faced with. Listen, not only to what they say, but also how they say it. These steps won't always prevent a hiring mistake but they will certainly reduce the bad apple quotient.

If you have indication that a member of management at *any* level is dishonest or unethical, carefully and thoroughly verify the situation. If it is confirmed, discuss the matter with the HR department or legal counsel and get rid of the person as promptly as possible – no matter how important the position or how well the person *appears* to be performing.

If it is a case of a person who is openly and continuously disruptive, first discuss with the individual. There may be other factors such as health or family issues that are causing the person to act as they are. Sometimes, after a calm and open discussion, their attitude and behavior will change. However, if they indicate they won't even make an effort to change, advise them they must leave, preferably by resigning.

Remember, particularly in today's economy, there are many good apples to choose from.

*Robert Denney Associates Inc. has provided strategic management and marketing counsel to professional firms, companies and non-profit organizations throughout the United States and parts of Canada for over 30 years. Previous Communiques, as well as information about our services, are posted on our web site [www.robertdenney.com](http://www.robertdenney.com)*

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