

## The Lion Roars, but he has no Teeth.

Some parents tell their children to do something over and over again and wonder why it's still not done. The reason? The kids know their parents don't really mean what they say. They know that if they ignore or argue or simply wait a little, the rules and orders will be forgotten.

It's the same with some supervisors. It's hard work managing children. It should be easier with grownups, but it's not always so. One thing is sure: with adult workers as well as children, they need to know we *mean* what we say. Not only that, they need to know that we are willing to back up what we say with consequences when our words are not followed.

With parents AND supervisors, there are usually certain behaviors that will always generate an immediate and extreme response. My Dad could not bear to have me lie to him. He only had to use that belt on me once. In the workplace, stealing (for instance) will almost always result in immediate termination.

So, if I steal from you, you're going to fire me. On the spot. No warning. No second chances. And yet—the act of stealing presents no physical danger to my person. Unless I'm trying to steal copper wire from a live power unit, stealing won't hurt me.

But wait—what about Lockout? Have you ever walked by someone who did not have a piece of equipment locked out that should have been? Did you fire the person? Did you shake your head and walk on thinking what an unintelligent person that was? Did you fail to engage this person because you didn't want to have another argument?

That argument very may save a life.

We sometimes show a double standard. We terminate someone for an offense that would not hurt him, yet we overlook an offense that could kill him. This should not be so.

When we talk about Lockout, but do not enforce its use in everyday practice, we are like the lion that roars but has no teeth. Our people know we don't really mean what we say. And, as a result, they don't DO what we say.

Too many times, this failure to enforce our own policies kills people. May it never be so in your operation.

### **Safely—or Not At All.**

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