June 2010, I started the journey of becoming a Supervisor for the first time. Within the first week an employee called in sick on a Saturday. Let’s call the employee Sara to make this easy. Working at a credit union we only work four hours on Saturday’s and normally with a limited staff. Instantly an employee commented, “Let me guess another migraine?” Obviously this was not the first time and from there I thought lets investigate.

Short background on Sara, she had only been with the credit union for a year and was interested in pursuing a career as a radiologist technologist. She was preparing to exit the organization Aug 2011 after completing prerequisites. Sara was also a frequent visitor to the bar that is located next door to our branch. Many employees would point out her going there nights before coming into work or even calling in sick.

Sara had been having a tough year in the terms of service being provided to your membership and also I notice a several sick days in the start of the year prior to my arrival (Jan 8th, Jane 28th, Mar 24th, April 7th). Now we are at five total for the year and only June. In terms of service being provided Sara was consistently below credit union standards based on a Secret Shopper Program. In July 2010, we decided to give a written verbal warning in the terms of service provided. Expectations state to be at 4.70 on a scale of 5.00 and Sara was at 4.03 on the year. With diligent coaching and educating Sara on how to interact we made improvements and did not need to go further with these actions on paper. Overall attitude with work was felt by employees and was still a cause for concern as how it would hinder the organization’s image. Then on June 23rd Sara called in sick again. The motion from this point was to issue a verbal warning showing the amount of sick days as well as the effects on the branch. Then on June 23rd Sara called in sick again. The motion from this point was to issue a verbal warning showing the amount of sick days as well as the effects on the branch.

August 2010, following the weekend Sara called in sick. After this we decided to gather all of our documents and move to a written warning based on the evidence. Well, during this short process she had once again called in on a Saturday. We issued the written warning in September 2010.

HR has now reached out to Sara and talked about FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) due to the abundance of leave and association with migraines. Sara went to a therapist and other doctors to be diagnosed with a minor case of bipolar disease. FMLA was submitted and approved.

Into March 2011, we had no issues of attendance. March 3rd at approximately 10:30am Sara came into the branch on her day off and told some pees she was going next door for a poker tournament. Later that same day she arrived back at the branch and observed to be intoxicated. The next day Sara was scheduled to be at work but called in stating her car battery was dead and had no way to get into work. This was a voicemail left on my work phone at 8:20 which we do not arrive at the branch until 8:45. Once I received the voicemail I attempted to call the employee back and left a voicemail stating to call me on my work phone leaving my direct line. I mentioned how I would be more than happy to come pick her up as we were short staffed. Sara called back, but it was on my cell phone which I do not use during the work day and the staff is well aware. During this phone tag it was brought to my attention that her car was in the parking lot.

What would you do next?

Recap of the importance

* Bad attitude at work
* Inconsistent level of service
* Abundant amount of sick time taken
* FMLA has been approved
* All within one year