

# Bad employees – fix or fire them?

By Ed Koch, Las Vegas Sun

The administrative assistant spent about as much time hanging around the water cooler complaining about her job and the workplace as she did half-heartedly completing her assigned duties.

“I wish they’d fire me so I can sit home and collect unemployment,” time and again she told co-workers, many of whom were fed up with her not pulling her weight.

It took less than two weeks for the company’s new human resources director, Mary Beth Hartleb, to conclude that, as employees go, the woman was broken and could not be fixed.

“She was thrilled to get her severance package,” said Hartleb, a 30-year veteran in the field that used to be called personnel. “And, despite having to pay her more than we wanted to, the company benefited from her departure because soon after she left, office morale greatly improved, as did worker productivity.”

Perhaps most shocking about that story is that the secretary in question had lasted 10 years in that job. She survived a fistful of frustrated supervisors before anyone did anything to stem the toxicity she was spreading through her department.

“Unfortunately, many employers do not document each incident (of poor employee productivity or misconduct), as was the case here,” said Hartleb, owner of Prism Global Management Group LLC of Henderson, which runs human resources operations for about 30 companies that collectively employ more than 5,000 people.

**Read the whole story**