



THE CASE OF ROGER

Roger is a new VP and supply chain manager for a mid-sized manufacturing company. He was brought in to find cost-savings opportunities, including streamlining the number of vendors the company worked with and identifying those vendors who provided the highest quality service for the most reasonable price.

Roger attacked his new role with speed and vigor. He wrote new rules, set new standards and trimmed the vendor list by 65%. He then held a series of meetings to inform and educate the various business heads regarding the new requirements. At one of the meetings, another long-service VP (and head of one of the company's flagship products) interrupted Roger in the middle of his presentation to state, flat out, that he had a long relationship with one of the vendors who was removed from the Preferred Provider list and was going to continue to work with that vendor "no matter what."

Roger was stunned at first, and then he engaged in an argument with the VP, defending his position against what he perceived to be a public challenge and loudly stating and restating the rules. Each party dug in and the argument escalated until the others felt uncomfortable and left one by one.

The next day Roger's boss called him in to discuss what happened, and once again things started to escalate. Roger's boss was unhappy and embarrassed by the quickly-spreading tales from the previous day's debacle, so his patience was a little thin. In what felt like yet another attack on his ability to do his job, Roger immediately became defensive again. "That jerk was unbelievable!" he said loudly. "I was just doing the job you asked me to do. He acts as if the rules don't apply to him! You can fire me if you want, but I know I was right!"