

Courts frown on bosses blaming subordinates for shortcomings

Here's something to consider when disciplining a supervisor or manager: She probably won't be able to get away with blaming a subordinate for her own poor performance.

Employers are entitled to expect managers to manage.

Recent case: Patricia Lolley, who has a heart condition, was fired from her management job at an energy company when forms her section was responsible for sending out were late.

Lolley sued, alleging disability discrimination. She said a subordinate was responsible for the problems that led to the late forms.

But the court tossed out her case, reasoning that Lolley was supposed to manage her subordinate. Failure to do so was a legitimate reason to fire her—not an excuse to get rid of someone who might be disabled. (*Lolley v. Carson Energy Group*, No. 09-CA-674, WD TX, 2010)