

# Ask Mike: Telecom Q&A

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**Q:** *Dear Mike:* Two of my technicians consistently disagree with me. Not in a disrespectful way, but rather questioning how I do things. What can I do to stop this?

**A:** There may be a variety of reasons for disagreements between managers and staff. Sometimes managers have learned certain techniques for working through problems and employees have learned different methods. In any case, stopping respectful disagreement would be a mistake.

For example, a seasoned manager might look at a situation with experienced eyes, while a younger worker might see it in the context of technical training. An inexperienced manager could have the opposite problem working with a seasoned technician. Of course, attitude and personality also play a part in disagreements.

I recommend you do the following:

- Listen to your employee and thank him for the alternative input.
- Appreciate your employee for disagreeing with you respectfully.
- Logically discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both methods.
- Be willing to accept his method of doing things if it is within performance standards.

If you foster an environment that encourages communication and is open to employee ideas, you will create a positive and productive workplace. Most employees want to contribute ideas to improve their company. By listening to new ideas and possibilities, you may find that there is, indeed, a better way of approaching a project or task.

If you are willing to accept and act on employee suggestions, when appropriate, you will create a more cohesive team, build better relationships with your employees, and maybe discover a more effective way to do things.

-Mike