



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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What Would You Do? New Case: Can You Go Back?

By John West Hadley

Here is our second entry in the "What Would You Do?" series. Write to me at SteppingStone@JHACareers.com to tell me what you would do. In the November issue, I'll compile the responses received (preserving your anonymity, of course), along with what actually happened in the real-life situation.

Also, to help me in crafting future situations, write to me about your own most challenging, surprising or nightmarish situation involving business, leadership, management, or any of the topic areas covered by *The Stepping Stone*, and what lessons you learned from them.

CAN YOU GO BACK?

Bill had been an actuarial student under Joe for a year at a small insurance company, and seemed likely to be a future superstar. He communicated well, presented himself very professionally, was a fast learner, and was well on track to receive his FSA in the next few years.

One day, Bill came to Joe requesting that he be allowed to move his workstation out of the actuarial student area, as he was finding it very difficult to work in the same area with Matthew. There were only four actuarial students, and all were in a common area. Even though Bill and Matthew had no projects in common, and even worked for

different bosses, Bill found Matthew's presence and habits annoying and distracting.

Joe discussed it with Tim, the chief actuary, but space was tight, and Tim felt it sent the wrong signals to attempt to reconfigure the operation just to accommodate one person. Joe took this back to Bill, and the next day, Bill resigned to go work for Tillinghast.

Six months later, Joe received a call from Bill. It seemed that Bill had realized that consulting wasn't really what he wanted, and he understood that Matthew had left. He asked to be considered for his old job.

The adage goes, "You can never go back."

1. If you were Joe, would you consider rehiring Bill? Why or why not?
2. If you were Bill, would you consider going back? Why or why not?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO? ●

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