

ALL CAPS emails lead to woman's firing

By Christopher Null: The Working Guy

Mon Aug 31, 2009 11:04PM EDT



WHAT COULD BE MORE ANNOYING THAN THIS? **MAYBE IF IT WAS BOLD? AND RED?**

OK, I can't actually make that text red due to the publishing system I'm on, but it would certainly be annoying, wouldn't it?

And if you worked for New Zealand's ProCare Health, it could even get you fired.

[That's exactly what happened to Vicki Walker](#), who was abruptly kicked out of her job for sending "confrontational emails" with text formatted in a variety of red, bold, and all caps fonts. Walker had sent the emails to fellow workers within the company, usually with stern and detailed instructions on how forms should be properly filled out.

Someone at ProCare didn't like her approach, suggesting she caused "disharmony in the workplace" and was being too confrontational via email, eventually firing her without warning.

Walker, however, got the last laugh. She sued for wrongful termination and won the case, pocketing \$17,000 in lost wages and for other unspecified harm caused due to the firing.

Quite a predicament. Is it actually possible to be confrontational in an email message? With instructions on how to fill out a form? By all accounts, Walker's emails sound rude and brusque, but did she cross a line? Just how angry would an email have to be in order to merit being fired from her job? I know I've sent a "confrontational" message or two to my co-workers in the past, and I've received more than my fair share of them, I think. I never recall anyone getting fired for it.

What do you think? Is it OK to fire someone for misuse of their caps lock button? Feel free to respond in the comments section below. First one to do so in all caps gets fired.