

# Dumb Policies that Cause Obstacles and Ones that Protect Us

By Jen Boss

As surveillance watched the dealer, they noted he was incredibly sloppy. He didn't spread the cards properly making them unreadable, his payouts were unclear, and their view of the chips was blocked by his hands, and he knocked the player's chips over frequently and had to restack them repeatedly. All in all, he looked like he was a break-in dealer.

Unfortunately, he wasn't a break-in dealer. He was a long-time employee, and the surveillance department was very familiar with how he dealt, and it wasn't what they were seeing now. He was either extremely ill and had lost control of his faculties, or he was dumping the game.

In this case, the dealer was dumping the game to a friend of his. Although he had never been in trouble before, he'd developed a gambling habit and was on a long losing streak. He was way behind in his bills and was about to be evicted from his apartment. Hence the need for making some easy money by dumping the game to his friend. His friend had about \$800 in chips on him when they were both taken off the game. They admitted to security they had been working the scam for three weeks and probably took about \$10,000.

## ***Where Policies Come in to Play***

It's important to note that the reason this typical type of theft was caught is the violation of established and even traditional policy and procedures:

- We require dealers to spread the cards so we can determine the hands total to ensure the wagers are paid correctly.
- We require dealers to cut into a wager so that we can clearly see that the wager is paid properly and accurately. This is near impossible to do after a dealer knocks over the chips and makes a payout without floor approval.

## ***Policy Violations***

By violating standard policies and procedures the dealer exposed himself to detection. In almost all cases of employee theft or fraud, a policy or procedure must be violated or bypassed to allow the theft or fraud to occur. This is true in all areas of a gaming resort.

A lot of our newer supervisors, managers, and even directors have no idea that our policies and procedures, especially in gaming and points of sale, were developed to prevent theft or fraud from being attempted. And if it were attempted, to allow for an alert supervisor or surveillance agent to spot the incongruity and investigate. Of course, most of these controls, policies and procedures were put in place after a theft or fraud had

already occurred. After we determined how it was perpetrated, we developed countermeasures to prevent it from ever happening again.

As an example, the “clearing of hands” by a dealer or other money handler was put in place to prevent employees from handling chips or cash and then hiding chips or cash on their person. This is a solid and effective countermeasure to this type of theft. The clearing of hands has been required in our industry for many, many years and you would think that it would be in place and sacred everywhere. Unfortunately, this policy is not consistently enforced at most properties and in fact, discontinued at others. I can tell you that employees handling chips or cash and then taking it for themselves has not disappeared.

Sadly, most front-line supervisors and managers think of controls, policies and procedures as only obstacles put in their way to slow their operations down and to work inefficiently. Rather than using them to protect their department and the property.

## ***Embrace Your Controls***

To those leaders charged with the responsibility of a shift or a department, I say embrace your controls. Enforce your policies and procedures! They are your best weapon for protecting your business from the theft and fraud that occurs in every industry. It has been my experience that regardless of the sophistication of a scam and despite the attempt by the perpetrator to hide or camouflage the fraud, it is the detection of the most common violations of our controls, policies and procedures that will bring light out of the darkness.

Take the time to ensure your front-line leadership is familiar with the way things are to be done, why they are done that way, and enforcing what has to be enforced. This will go a long way to reduce losses from happening and detect those in operation.