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## BLOGS

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# Twitter Gets Another Employee in Trouble

I'm not normally one to read advice columns in newspapers. However, Mondays [Ask Amy column](#) in the Star Tribune was right up my alley. The column tells the story of a customer service employee who was fired because an angry customer tweeted about her experience with the employee and got the attention of corporate headquarters.

This story comes on the heels of the news last week that a [settlement was reached](#) in the nationally publicized Facebook firing case. In that case, the NLRB filed a complaint against an ambulance service company that fired an employee for venting about her supervisor on Facebook. (We [previously wrote about the case](#) in our firms Employment Edge newsletter.)

These two examples show just how much social media has revolutionized the workplace. Sure, customer service employees were fired before the Internet for treating customers poorly. And of course employees were fired for publicly venting about their dislike of co-workers or supervisors. But a direct line to corporate headquarters for every customer? A regional office of the NLRB issuing a complaint based on an employers decision to fire an employee for participating in a public venting session about a supervisor? These events seem all but impossible in the pre-Internet world.

Social media can give employers access to seemingly unlimited information in the blink of an eye. Employers should take care to prevent the speed of electronic communications from dictating the pace or scope of the employers response. Employers should also make sure that they are not acting on unreliable information. Even if the information an employer discovers turns out to be true, employers still must stop to consider their response. Is the complaint justified? Is the proposed response proportionate? Does the situation involve protected activity, such as talking to co-workers about the terms and conditions of employment?

In the [Ask Amy column](#), the fired letter-writer asks Amy to tell her readers to count to ten before tweeting, posting or otherwise taking action. Come to think of it, employers can benefit from the same advice!