



Chapter 19 – Active Efforts Management (AEM)

AEM is a bottom-up assessment and performance system designed to replace standard top-down investigations. AEM is useful for root-cause determinations for injuries, excessive displaced production opportunity, for practically any reason to submit an insurance claim, and even for just plain-old long-term adversarial relationships.

The idea for AEM evolves from the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which is a piece of legislation that the U.S. Congress creates in 1978. The act is created in response to a crisis that American Indian and Alaska Native families and tribes are exposed to, but regardless of ICWA's motivation, the key ICWA take-away words are *stability* and *security* (certainty).

Active Efforts are the cornerstone of ICWA, in being the difference between words and actions. Congress, the courts, and laws in-general steer away from a legal phrase called 'specific performance,' because adequate performance standards are hard to enforce, due to the nature of performance standards being even harder to (legally) define; but in ICWA's case, nothing less than the specific performance, defined in ICWA's active efforts sections, will do.

Specific performance standards are generally skill-based, and skills are somewhat courage based; it takes a certain type and amount of subject-dependent courage to learn something well, and a larger amount of that type of courage to practice and retain that skill; to complicate the landscape, no matter how-high of a skill-level a person can achieve, their having a deficit in a differently required skill-set can make a continued investment in that employee no longer worthwhile (examples include poor attitudes toward safety, housekeeping, social skills, communications skills, hygiene, and so on).

AEM is a joint active efforts approach for providing an economical solution to address short-comings in expectations. Think of AEM as providing *temporary reasonable accommodations* for these cases, and as an alternative solution to consider before cutting-bait and bringing in a different person when a position has many non-obvious training costs. Another plus about AEM is that an employee evaluated as needing the training-opportunity, stands to become able to perform and contribute at higher than previously accepted levels, or...that the same employee will be more blatantly demonstrating that the time to separate has now arrived.

The most obvious active effort I notice comes from prayer. Some people say a prayer's words and hope for the best, but I am pretty sure that the people who add an *active effort* (to their words), like hitting-their-knees, tend to find better results.

Bottom-up AEM techniques weigh about 80% of a score toward actions and the other 20% towards words. This is important because AEM tracks 'what the problem is,' which is much easier after realizing that 'who the problem is' is an answer without a solvable question; in contrast, most top-down investigations seem to be satisfied when a who-problem can be found.

Back in the day, people call words without actions lip-service; other people call this 'all hat and no cattle,' and this sailor refers to effortless-words as the *thrice-wed virgin*, and notes that the clearest example of actions needing to speak louder than words, is on a wedding night.