

Supervisor's Statement Precludes Summary Judgment

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Business jargon permeates the workplace. For many of us, not a day goes by without hearing phrases such as: “hit the ground running,” “Let’s take this offline,” “paradigm shift,” “lots of moving parts,” “tenure,” etc. Some business lingo, however, may have the potential to cause trouble down the line. A recent age discrimination case out of Louisiana illustrates this point perfectly. In this case, a manager allegedly made numerous references to hiring “new blood” for the workforce. The federal court ultimately denied the employer’s Motion for Summary Judgment based, in part, on the manager’s arguably age related comments. To be sure, some might argue that this comment actually refers to hiring new employees with drive and commitment. As seen above, however, such statements can easily be taken out of context. The take away from this is simple: Employers should identify and eliminate use of any phrases that could *potentially* be construed discriminatory. The case referenced above is *Allain v. Board of Supervisors of the University of Louisiana System*.

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