Case Study: With Friends Like This . . . One morning, well before the start of your department’s normal working hours, you were enjoying a cup of coffee in the cafeteria, shaping up your calendar of tasks and appointments for the day, when you were approached by one of your employees. The employee, Millie Norman, one of your two or three most senior professionals in terms of service, seated herself across from you and said, “There’s something going on in the department that you need to know about, and I’ve waited far too long to tell you.” You reacted internally with both impatience and annoyance—you were not prepared to interrupt what you were doing, and you had not even invited Millie to join you. Millie proceeded to tell you (“In strictness confidence, please, I know you’ll understand why”) that another long-term professional employee, Cathy Johnson, had been making a great many derogatory comments about you throughout the department and generally questioning your competence. For 10 minutes Millie showered you with criticism of you, your management style, and your approach to individual employees, all attributed to Cathy Johnson. On exhausting her litany, Millie proclaimed that she did not ordinarily “carry tales” but that she felt you “had a right to know, for the good of the department—but please don’t tell her I said anything.” Although Millie’s comments were filled with “she saids” and “she dids,” and generally twice-told tales without connection to specific incidents, something extremely disturbing clicked in your mind while you were listening. Recently your posted departmental schedule had been altered, without your knowledge, in a way indicating that someone had tried to copy your handwriting and forge your initials. Two separate, seemingly unconnected comments by Millie together revealed that only one of two people could have altered your schedule. Those two people were Cathy Johnson and Millie Norman herself. As Millie finally fell silent you were left with an intense feeling of disappointment. You wondered if you could ever again fully trust two of your key employees. Case Study Questions: Write at least one fully developed paragraph in response to each of the following questions: 1. What should be your immediate response to Millie Norman? Why? 2. Do you believe you have the basis on which to proceed with disciplinary action against someone? Why or why not? 3. How can the human resource department help you in your present concern?