

VIEW(S) FROM THE JUMPSEAT: SIMPLY HARMONOSITY

How's it Going? Part Two

[Last week we asked a simple question](#): How is this service harmonization thing working out for you? Click [HERE](#) to tell us your thoughts. Within minutes, the truth began pouring in. One week later, it hasn't slowed down. There are several common themes to your feedback, which is being tallied and tracked for a collective report going straight to the top from your NWA-AFA MEC and ASHS Service Sub-Committee.

- 1) We are experienced safety and service professionals who take pride in our work, but we require the proper tools, support, and respect to do it.
- 2) We are not being provided the proper tools, support or respect to do our jobs, despite expectations built to the contrary in the travelling public and our own internal company press. This includes an apparent lack of foresight in the implementation of sweeping service changes that misjudged market and/or cultural needs, mistook service carts for full-size concessions stands and include countless catering errors, missing products, missing pieces, missing crewmembers, "cute" tools that don't work, and someone close to the top who can't count.
- 3) We can't continue working this way, but who is listening to us?

We are. Our contract allows us to insist our members have a safe, secure and healthy workplace, and that new equipment, processes and procedures are evaluated to comply. Moreover, service simply needs to work along with common sense.

Your feedback is organic. That's why it's so important. It's not glossed over with happy words to soften the blow, and the company must listen if they want to succeed. In addition to carrying your concerns to the top, we'll take a look at some real feedback in your own words and zoom in on the back of one particularly messy mock-up. You might even recognize it:

This week's View(s) from the Jumpseat stares directly at a stainless steel disaster: one heckuva galley hot mess. Stocked so slipshoddedly, stacked high haphazardly, this sticky situation is now playing by continuous loop on the counter of a galley near you. It's not poor 4L's fault, mind you. She's working at warp speed, whirling and twirling through the galley to—POOF!—make Winnebago service cart magic out yet another catering catastrophe. She just can't move fast enough to compensate for some painfully misguided service designs and thoughtless galley packing.

It's another round of Lermer Stacker Jenga Juggle in the Broken Brake Ballet, while she simultaneously hosts an EATS three sandwich commission lotto (Which cart sells them? Shall we bid or draw straws? Oops, fresh out of stir sticks...). There's the Backside Bottom Drawer Bend-n-Snap, the Pretzel/Cookie Crush-to-Size, the Soda Drawer Bench Press Shuffle, and, oh—Get Anything Absorbent Over Here Now!! (which is not a dance move but a cry for help). Between steps, 4L rests her Capezios and scratches out six pages of hand-written notes on the back of an FS-23 that may as well be from Mars.

Many hours and repeat performances later, she finds these and other crumpled comments, and begins transcription onto AFA's [ONBOARD SERVICE FEEDBACK FORM](#). Exhausted and emptier than a leaking KFC ice bucket, she collapses onto a flattened hotel pillow for the remainder of her minimum rest and dreams of a marvelous, magical airline world where rhyme and reason do exist, and The Little Guy gets to help paint The Big Picture, which is carefully and thoughtfully framed in reality before it reaches public view. A wonderful world where trash bags hold trash, drains drain, brakes don't break, and doors stay on hinges without duct tape. A beautiful world in which we can celebrate our successes without fabricating them, where pretzels don't have to be smashed up to fit in a drawer, a place where no one uses the word "portal."

READY!! FIRE!! AIM!!

Another common theme considered on our [FEEDBACK FORM](#), is whether thoughtless service flow and haphazard provisioning is a gauge of respect for our work group. After all, if they don't respect us enough to provide more than a handful of Kleenex to wipe up spilled coffee, how might we expect that respect be reflected in our paycheck, absent a contract?

One frustrated member suggests:

"Our supervisors know everything that is going on, but NOBODY at the top appears to be listening. They seem to put a higher priority on making sure that Delta stays union-free rather than focusing on our REAL priority: our customers!"

Following is a small, random sampling of the input you've sent our way this week:

"Contractually required food service gloves were not available on any of my flights."

"Among the items which are useless are the 'galley/lav wipes', the 'take-out chicken ice bucket,' and the 'Macy's Trash Bag.' All of these are cute (well, not the galley wipes) but not at all effective tools."

"The coach new service was hectic. First service has 3 different entrees and 2 different set up trays. Second service has 2 entree choices and 2 different set up trays. This service is so not possible with the staffing. How can they save money by doing this kind of service? This kind of service takes more work digging for the trays and a lot longer to finish."

"We work for concessionary wages from bankruptcy with less staff and more than ever to do. Now I'm a caterer? The movie snack wasn't even put together. Everything is catered in bulk and was put in the toppers. I'm not lazy, but at this point enough is enough!"

"A 747-400 with five flight attendants in the back? Is this some kind of joke? We do our best but I feel insulted . . ."

"I don't mind hand running things, but we need our gray buckets back! These new ice buckets they want to place on top of the counter takes up a large portion of our work/

counter space...and when you have to hand run things now we desperately need that counter space!"

"Having to dig into the buckets of ice as opposed to having them at a reachable level is tough on the shoulder. We already have to maneuver into the carts to pull out set ups and other items. Repetitive motion injury is painful and should be considered."

"We had to get used to saying 'I'm sorry' multiple times during this flight. Some of what was missing:

- Meals*
- headsets*
- coat hangers*
- customs forms*
- flight attendants (minimum crew on a 767)*

On top of that, the video didn't work for ten hours. Is anyone listening to our feedback? It feels like all the memos just announce MORE to do and how we can do it with LESS!"

"I'd like to know who is in charge of counting? We left with only one bucket of ice for FC – no back up at all. I had only one tray of 8 cocktail glasses and no basket for my peanuts and pretzels. I also had only 11 trays for a service for 24 people."

"The A320/319 is probably the easiest plane to do work, but our passengers waited a long time for drinks, food and then especially for pick up. In MC, the carts are still too heavy for one person. Nothing is thought out in regard to ergonomics and safety of the f/a's nor the long term effects of making our job more physically demanding than it already is. This is putting a round peg in a square hole."

*". . .plastic bags with handles that hold two cups – forget about going green! No plastic gloves and if I don't bring my own 'caddy clips' there won't be any to use. Why should I supply service items? **I thought I worked for the company, not owned it.** Where are the appropriate tools for our jobs? Galley wipes are gone with paper towels that fall apart on the first wipe. I feel like I went back in time at least 20 years."*

The preceding is just a fraction of your feedback, as we continue to document, sort, and professionally advance your concerns. We all have a vested interest in working for a successful employer, and a successful employer recognizes its vested interest in listening. We will not collect J. D. Powers top honors—or any other—until Delta executives stop believing their own press and do more than pay lip service to our collective voice. With your help, we expect to see reasonable and appreciable change, as together, we offer solutions to win.