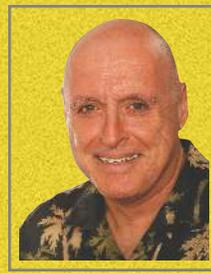


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1062 When Should A Person's Pay Begin?

Imagine you are an hourly worker and are called upon to deliver a service that is in line with your job, but occurs some 30-50 minutes before your scheduled work period begins. Further, imagine that you're not paid for giving this service. Further still, imagine that this is not a one-time or even occasional situation, but one that happens each and every day that you work. I'm Jerry Roberts and my question is, how would you feel about that? I'll tell you why I'm bringing this up, next, on The Extra Point.

So, you're not being paid for this work done during the 30-50 minutes prior to your shift, but you're expected to do the work. Did you answer the question as to how you'd feel about this?

If you haven't guessed, this is the world of airline flight attendants, unless you happen to fly for Delta. The Atlanta-based carrier, the only one where flight attendants are not unionized, recently announced they will pay attendants during boarding, starting in June.

While it's only at half the flight attendant's normal hourly rate, it's a start.

This is a slap in the face to the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), which represents 50,000 flight attendants at 20 airlines. It also should be noted that the AFA has been out to unionize Delta for some two decades, and have been voted down three times.

This move strengthens Delta's position that it doesn't need a union, that management and workers can get together and thrive without unionization.

I once knew a man named Bill Gibson who promoted such an idea. He told me that good ownership is proactive in taking care of its people, and makes sure that no union can ever drive a wedge between them and workers.

He also told me that there are companies that do little for the benefit of its workforce, and absolutely deserve a union. I think he would applaud Delta's efforts.

The AFA has been unable to get any of those 20 airlines to do what Delta just did — and a lot of those members are hopping mad that non-union employees are getting a benefit they don't get...even though they've been paying union dues since they got their wings.

I've flown a lot of miles over the years and had no idea that the attendants I've asked for help before the plane lifted off, were not getting paid. It makes me want to bypass them and ask a pilot who might be standing around.

I happen to think that when it comes to flying, flight attendants are essential personnel, and should be paid when they start working.

During the jobs in my life when I was paid by the hour, there were numerous times when my boss asked me to go off the clock because he couldn't show overtime, yet still needed help.

I pitched in and was happy to do it. That said, would I have felt differently if I was asked for an extra half-hour or hour a day, every day? Sure.

I don't know when police officers start getting paid, or nurses, and I'm sure there are a lot of other essential folks out there, and are they being called upon to start working before they officially go on the clock?

In any case, maybe Delta's action will lead the way for all flight attendants to get what their union has been unable to get for them.

(Con't.)

Union membership across all industries has dropped to about 10% in recent years. However, tougher times are upon us and the increasing inflation won't help. Petitions to form unions have grown by 57% in the last six months, according to the National Labor Relations Board.

A recent Gallup poll reported that two in three Americans now approve of unions. Employers have their work cut out for them if they want to keep unions out.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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