

SPSC Flash

From your JetBlue Strategic Preparedness and Strike Committee



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PROGRESSIVE AIRLINE MANAGEMENT

Pilot Negotiations are not complicated, in theory. The pilots want a contract that recognizes their professional role in the landscape of our industry, and management wants to delay giving them one.

Airline Managements acknowledge the marketplace when signing contracts with airplane manufacturers, fuel vendors, airport administrations, advertising outlets and so on. They realize that paying market rate is just a cost of doing business.

When it comes to paying pilots, however, managements will often come up with schemes to pay pilots less than the going rate. They know their audience and prey upon the standard airline pilot's heightened sense of duty and responsibility.

- They may declare the company is a family instead of a large multi-billion dollar corporation whose board is responsible to the shareholders. Strangely they will then ask the "family members" to work for less than their peers.
- They may characterize the negotiations as exceedingly complex in order to draw the time frame out and save themselves money that they have no intention of repaying.
- They may try and talk the pilot group into eating their young by selling out junior pilots for lower wages in order to preserve their own pay
- A progressive management will know that the schemes above will result in bad blood amongst some—if not all—of the pilot group. The bad feelings engendered can last long past the negotiation and have lingering effects on the pilot group.

An amazing thing has happened in the world of "progressive airline managements". One airline has consistently had some of the most contentious employee relations over the last several decades. Despite being one of the world's largest airlines, American Airlines management has tried most of the schemes listed above, as well as others.

Though American signed a merger contract with their pilots that is still in effect for 2 more years, the management team recently gave their pilots an 8% raise across the board. There was nothing asked in return. The cost is about one billion dollars. Why did they do this? There is a new leader in acknowledging reality. They understand that devaluing your employees is not the way to run a first-class corporation, even if you save a few dollars along the way. We commend the American Airlines management in their latest act, and

hope the lesson is not lost on their peers.

All of our economic proposals are reasonable and have been submitted. It is up to management to show us if they plan to follow the traditional model of delays and escalation, or be progressive like American Airlines. If necessary, the MEC and SPSC are ready to employ all lawful traditional union tactics to fight a traditional airline management's delay tactics.

In Unity,

Captain Brian Dawson
Chairman
Strategic Preparedness and Strike Committee

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