

PERSONNEL . . .

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trial and error method is over. The errors are usually too costly.

Top management must also assume its share of the responsibility for staffing the stations with qualified personnel. It must devise a better system of screening and keeping on file applicants to fill vacancies when local applicants are not available. Being unable to fill a vacancy within a reasonable time adds pressure on the manager to hire someone, regardless of his or her qualifications. He is faced with the decision of working shorthanded until a suitable applicant can be found, or taking a chance on the first person that asks for a job.

Training

Top management must also assume its share of the responsibility for training. It must realize that "X" number of personnel on the payroll does not mean that a situation has "X" number of qualified agents. Too often "X" number of people on the payroll means "X" number of bodies and "Y" number of trained agents. It takes time to train an airline agent in even the basic fundamentals. It seems, to me, to be risky business to put a new agent with a few days experience on a piece of equipment costing from \$1,000.00 to \$30,000.00 working around a plane costing \$1,000,000.00 or more. After a few weeks assigning him to fuel, work load forms, file and relay releases and flight plans without any background knowledge of what he is trying to do. From a sales standpoint it also seems risky to me to place Piedmont's reputation and image in the hands of new reservations and ticket counter personnel who have not had proper training in the basic fundamentals.

Exercise Care

I know of no better way for station managers and their supervisors to meet their responsibilities than to exercise care in screening and hiring; hiring only those applicants who have the required qualifications and who seem to have the potential to maintain high standards of work. To reevaluate their present personnel, to emphasize training of new personnel and retraining of older agents where necessary.

I realize that these comments and suggestions do not provide all the answers to all our problems, but I do sincerely feel that Piedmont has been lax in this area and that this would be a good starting point. We are living in an age of specialists and to compete and progress we must maintain highly trained personnel.

PLANES APPEARANCE . . .

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meeting. Well, the answer is relatively simple. I am concerned about the condition to which we are allowing our package to deteriorate, not mechanically, but from the standpoint of appearance. I feel any improvement in this direction will help us immeasurably, in effectively merchandising our service. By "package," I am referring to the airplane itself, both externally and internally. For, after all, this is the package in which our product (the seat) is wrapped.

We have an excellent exterior design on our aircraft, as far as I am concerned, as good as any in the industry. The interior decor of our aircraft is good, particularly the 727 and 227. But what happens to our "image" when the exterior gets dirty from engine exhaust, oil and just everyday dust and grime? I think you will agree it detracts from the original concept of having an eye-catching paint job to start with.

The interiors of our aircraft, in the main, are most attractive, but if they are not kept clean then we have defeated the purpose for which it was intended.

Recently, I had the occasion to be at the Atlanta Airport to meet some VIP's who were boarding one of our flights. After getting them checked in, we went to the restaurant for a cup of coffee. When they were seated and served I went down to the gate to block out four seats on their flight so they might sit together. I was appalled at the condition of the interior of the airplane. The center aisle had been swept, also the head rest covers and pillow slips had been changed, but the area around the seats was in deplorable condition. The ash trays had not been emptied, remains from a meal service from the previous day, this was an Atlanta overnight airplane, were still in the seats with the seat belts crossed over them, along with cigarette ashes. On the floor between the seats were chewing gum and cigarette papers. At one seat someone had been ill, and apparently missed the burp bag, hit the seat and seat belt. This had been wiped off, but the odor and stain were still there.

Appearance Make Impression

"The exception to the rule" some people might say, and I'll be the first to agree that it is highly improbable that all of these things would ever be missed on a single airplane for a long time to come.

Gentlemen, there is an old cliché, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Our customer cannot see the pains we take to maintain a safe airplane, nor can

S-R-S

Safety, Revenue and Schedule

by REGGIE POWELL

Station Manager — ATL

Now that we have 727 equipment, I recommend that another look be taken at our restrictions on freight. I think that some restrictions should be lifted for this aircraft. Examples are human remains and maximum weight per piece.

I would like to see radio equipment installed on tugs at stations having a need for it. Also, I would like to see portable radio receivers and transmitters made available for certain supervisors. Equipment such as this would provide greater utilization of agents and equipment, and would be a big help in keeping flights on schedule with a maximum amount of revenue.

Baggage Checks

As we all know baggage checks often become detached from bags, which more often than not, cause the bag to be mishandled. To help solve this problem, some carriers have gone to a strap type check and some use an elastic string on their tags. These types seem to stay with the bag better than the string type that we use. Could these type tags help solve some of our problems?

Flight information is in more demand than ever, by the public. With our present method, it is most difficult to meet this demand. I recommend that the company consider some type of TV equipment for posting flight information in some of our terminals. Atlanta for one. With such equipment, the public as well as agents, would be better informed at all times.

Everyday Challenge

For my final subject, I would like to share with you my daily challenge, which I call S-R-S. I am sure you are now wondering what is "S-R-S". Well gentlemen, S-R-S is my simple abbreviation for what I think we, as station managers, must strive to accomplish each and every day. The abbreviation is simple, S-R-S. "It's meaning, "Safety, Revenue, and Schedule". Now it does not sound so simple, for to me, these words "Safety, Revenue, and Schedule" are the most demanding and most powerful words in our business. What can be more challenging than for us to strive for the safest, most revenue producing and on schedule operating airline in the business?

Safety

Let's look at these challenges individually. Our first "S" which is for Safety, must come

he see, and if he could in all probability would not comprehend, the time and effort expended in maintaining the radio and navigation equipment on our airplanes, or for that matter many other integral parts of our operation. But he can see and comprehend cleanliness and neatness, and from this will judge the remainder by what he sees.

"Image" — product packaging, call it what you will, it boils down to one fact — making what you have to sell attractive through design, which we have, the proper presentation to the customer of the design, which I feel we need to work on. All of which "showcases" the product we have to sell which we know is the best. Through this we can better and more effectively merchandise our service.

first, we all know this is a must. The challenge of safety is a daily chore, not one that can be worked on when there is nothing else to do. To me, the practice of safety is something to be started and never ended.

The letter "R", which is for Revenue, is another challenge, for without it we cannot exist. What a challenge this is, each and every day we must strive to fill every seat and every cargo compartment on each and every flight to the maximum. To accomplish this is indeed a challenge to all, and let us not overlook the fact that revenue lost today can never be regained tomorrow.

Schedule

The next letter "S" is for Schedule, and this, too, is a must in our business if we are to survive and grow. To accomplish the challenges of safety and revenue to the best of our ability, puts strong pressure on us to meet the challenge of schedule. Yet, to allow ourselves not to meet this challenge would surely, in short order, be felt strongly in our challenge for revenue. So here, too, is a challenge that must be met daily.

Now that I have gone over what I feel is our daily challenge, I will go over some of the things that I think we can and should do to meet these challenges.

I think that we should strive to meet our daily challenges with the manpower, equipment and materials provided for this purpose. Be they adequate or inadequate.

We should all strive to work together and to promote harmony among all employees within our company, for the finest product comes from those who work together. Also, we should cooperate and strive to build a lasting friendship with other carriers and travel agencies, for they, too, can be friends indeed and can contribute greatly toward the accomplishment of our challenges. So let's be ready and willing to work hand-in-hand with them at all times.

Selling Our Product

Every effort should and must be made not only to produce and show a fine product, but also to sell this product. Therefore, let us not become producers and showmen alone, but the best salesmen in the business.

May we never allow ourselves or our fellow employees to over relax this week because last week was a good week, for surely to do this, the days to come will be poor.

Knowledge, in this day and time is needed, if we are to meet these challenges, so let's demand of ourselves and of our fellow employees that we improve our knowledge at every opportunity. However, remember that knowledge alone will not complete the job, but knowledge put into action can and will get any job completed.

Manager's Responsibility

May we remember, too, that we, as managers, are looked upon by those under our supervision as the ones to set the pace, the ones to shoulder the responsibility, to make the decision, and to have the answers. Let's never let them down, for what they see and hear from us will play a large part in forming their attitudes and opinions toward their jobs and the company. Through them our challenges of S-R-S can be eased, if we develop within them the same de-



Cutting the Cost Of Catering

by "RED" STEWART

Division Chief Flight Attendant
DCA

I have a suggestion that I think will benefit our passengers, our on-time operations, and will result in a savings to our Company of approximately \$30,000 a year. I suggest for your consideration that we assume our own catering at Washington National Airport. This program could probably be adopted at other catering locations with the same benefits; however, I have had no first-hand experience with these other locations.

Presently, we spend \$3,100 per week with Hot Shoppes in Washington. This breaks down to:

A Service Charge — which is for delivery of food — \$653 per week. If we take over this, we will save this \$653.

Cokes — We pay Hot Shoppes 20¢ each, and use 4,000 a week, for a cost of \$800 per week. We can buy them from Coca-Cola for 10¢ each, for a savings of \$400. per week.

Ice — We pay Hot Shoppes \$1.00 for 10 lbs., and we use 2,100 lbs. per week at a cost of \$210 per week. We can make 3,150 lbs. a week for 98 cents, at a savings of \$209.02 per week.

The balance of the \$3,100 is for sandwich catering, a cost which would continue.

Up to this point in my presentation, this plan could save the Company \$1,262 per week, \$5,048 per month, or \$60,576 per year. However, there would be certain expenditures necessary to inaugurate this plan. These expenditures are:

Truck — Chevrolet panel, \$2,221; **Ice Maker** — Frigidaire, \$1,350; **Two-Bay Stainless Steel Sink**, \$347. This is a one-time cost of \$3,918.

Six new employees at \$5,000 a year, each, for a total, per year, of \$30,000. The total first year's operating cost will be \$33,918, including the one-time charge of \$3,918, for a net savings to the Company for the first year of operation of \$26,658. The net savings to the Company for the second year of operation, and for successive years, would be approximately \$30,000.

sire of achievement that we ourselves have or should have.

These challenges are demanding and being humans as we are, we will make mistakes. Yet, let's be men enough to accept our errors so as to learn from them, and by so doing, prevent their recurrence in the future. To try and overlook or shun our mistakes, would be our worst mistake of all.

