

## PHOENIX OP-ED, Continued

# What To Do When The Buck Is Passed Over You

by Patricia Smith-Deering  
Phoenix Managing Editor

Recently, a friend of mine came to see me very distraught because a promotion that had been promised to him was given to someone else in his department. That someone was a person he had trained and who had less seniority than his seven years on the job.

What my friend experienced is not new to many blacks and women in the workforce. Countless times, we work diligently in our positions, train others - usually white - newly-arrived to the job, then when it's time for upward mobility, we are passed over in favor of someone with less service, frequently fewer

qualifying skills, and often white and/or male.

The emotions are a mixture of anger, humiliation, frustration, hostility, resentment, disillusion, and betrayal. The blow to one's self-esteem and ego is tremendous, particularly when you know that you have done a good job and you know that you were promised to be next in line.

Any subsequent actions you take will determine whether your "next in line" will be at your current place of employment or in the unemployment line. Before the shock wears off, the gut reaction is to punch out someone or something and to seek revenge. In this day and time, there have been too many

instances where a disgruntled employee has settled his dispute with a semi-automatic weapon. While I don't recommend slugging your boss, your mate, or your dog, there is a way to make your point and pursue what may go beyond being a case of a company or organization making what it will call a "decision based on the needs of the business." It's particularly important if you believe that decision to be an illegally discriminatory one.

The key is to be able to document your case. I wrote extensively on how to do this in an article, "Making The Case Against Your Employer Stick," in the October 1991 issue of the **Phoenix**. A

verbal promise for promotion at the next available opening may be as ethical as a "gentlemen's agreement" or handshake, but not easily proved. Did you get it in writing? Were there witnesses? Did the person making the promise have either the authority as representative of the company or ultimate authority to do so?

It goes beyond that. Have you documented evidence of your performance and evaluations of that performance as it relates to the position in question? Do you have a record of the skills, knowledge, and other requirements intrinsic to the position? Etc., etc., etc.

The other part of making your  
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# Let's Make Holiday Giving a Year 'Round Habit

by Ann Myles  
Phoenix Staff Writer

Christmas - a time when people give gifts as a sign of their caring or love for someone. The spirit of "peace on earth, good will toward men" (mankind) prevails. People smile and exchange "hellos" and other cheerful greetings, and the general harmony is amazing.

Christmas - a time when the hypocrites come out of the woodwork, the people that you couldn't depend on all year long, the ones you haven't seen since the last time they needed a favor, and now they love you. It can be a friend or a relative who never has the time or the wherewithal to come to your aid. Or if they do, it's with a lot of grumbling and obvious displeasure over being inconvenienced. Yet, when they're in a jam, you are the first on their list to call and respond.

Christmas is a time when you wonder why the world can't have

the glittery, gleaming, happy-go-lucky atmosphere of the child who, in his or her innocence, believes in the unbelievable and gets along with everyone - until someone older shows him or her that's a mistake.

So many things are escalating in today's environment to make life unbearable. People, young and old, are abusing children, their loved ones, strangers, and themselves in the pursuit of their own "happiness." Nations are warring within themselves and among each other. Yet, at Christmastime, if only for the day itself, there is a noticeable air of harmony and cooperation. Of course, there are those who feed off this environment and only care about Christmas because it gives them more victims. But, by and large, people unite for a momentary lull in day-to-day struggles and hostilities.

We spend so much time these days, immersed in our own concerns, expecting everyone else

to understand our inconsiderateness or self concerns. What is hard to understand is why, suddenly because it's Christmas, we can feel an ounce of humanity, extend that mythical cup of humanity kindness to folks we walk over all the rest of the year.

Christmas is a time when people put forth that extra effort to get along. But, what's wrong with doing that same thing all year 'round? Life is so much easier when people support each other's efforts and understand the impact that what they do has on others. When we aren't always the ones that have to understand why others can't do what they promised or give back what they owe until times get better, the spirit of Christmas will prevail every day.

This year, the day after Christmas will be an ideal time to make consideration of your fellow man a "one-day-at-a-time" habit. If you

expect to get, expect to give in return. From a personal viewpoint, it means being a real friend or loved one who can be counted as dependable and reliable, despite some inconveniences - not always being the receiver. In business, it means providing a product, service, or payment for that product or service without excuses for your own situation.

Everything boils down to how individuals treat each person they encounter each minute of each day. Like cleaning a room, when you take one aspect of it at a time, you can suddenly look back and see that the mission has been accomplished. But, when your own concerns get in the way, you can only see what you need and not how that may hurt someone else. What's called the "Christmas spirit" becomes hypocritical when that's the only time you can get out of yourself and show your care for others.

# America Plays Santa Claus To Everyone But It's Own

by Bunny Robinson  
Phoenix Staff Writer

Thousands standing in line to get what food there is available. Sky-high prices. An economy in the throes of recession. Enter Santa Claus to save the day with a billion-dollar package of assistance. Is there hope and cause for jubilation? Only if you live in the Soviet Union.

While I've never given politics a lot of thought, I've decided that I must be an isolationist. I have this

recurring picture in my mind: George Bush, dressed in Santa attire and riding his motorized reindeer-cade, jovially oblivious to the reality of the streets right around the White House, rushing to board Air Force One enroute to save the economy devastated by Gorbachev's failed policy of perestroika. Shielded from him outside of the smoke-colored, bullet-proof glass of his reindeer-cade are the estimated 9,000 homeless people who populate the streets and shelters of Washington, D.C.

It all sort of reminds me of Marie Antoinette's oft-quoted response when told that the people of France did not have wheat for bread. She is reported to have said, "Let them eat cake."

Federal budget cuts have closed down shelters, made affordable housing next to impossible to find, and curtailed, cut back, or eliminated the operation of dozens of other assistance programs. Yet, because the country that used to be our biggest nemesis cannot come to grips with the consequences of its

own mistakes, the United States is riding to the rescue to the tune of approximately one billion dollars.

I am an isolationist because I do not understand why this country, in the guise of President Bush, continues to step over the homeless and ignore other domestic issues like the laughable "war on drugs," the escalating crime rate, and the lack of an education system that will ensure our place in the competitive world of the 21st century. The most visible sign of the president's policy

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