

The AWFUL Truth

Written by

A Note to Readers: Glancing at the airline magazine on the way home from Bermuda (I know, I know), it occurred to me how interesting it would be if one of those “Letters from Our Chairman” that say things like “we know how important on-time performance is to you;” or “our people care about our customers more than they do about life itself”, actually was just straight and forthright. Might read a bit like this:



FROM THE CEO's DESK:

Here at AmeriWestFedUnityLines, we stand by our acronym. Our service is AWFUL and we mean it.

C'mon folks, it's tough being bankrupt. But hey, we're really good at it. Heck, think about it! We're about the only industry that gets to take your money as much as a year in advance and earn interest on it while you get nothing in return.

But wait, there's more! I think we need to explain our change fees once and for all:

See, every time you call us, we make you pay. It's always your fault. You should have realized, back in December, that by June you'd want to alter your trip by a day. Well, when you booked it, your ticket cost \$283. A ticket on the same flight, but a day later than your original itinerary, now costs \$1837, so, for the difference of just \$1554 plus a \$100 change fee per person, we're happy to accommodate you (deliriously so, as a matter of fact).

Why do we want the change fee, you ask? Our people! They deserve it because they have to work when you call. Ah, but you say that, more and more, we have you doing your own ticketing and changes and check-ins on the web, but we're still charging you a change fee???? Well, we're just good at AWFUL.

Your onboard experience is very important to us and that's why we have created 2.23 inches of space between your face and the seat back of the passenger in front of you. Now, admittedly, that reduces to 1.1 inches when they lean back so, our advice is that you knee them often and hard enough that they'll get the message and lean forward.

Of course, if you were one of our PlatinumPlusPluPerfectPaymorePartners you might have been upgraded and would be sitting in Primero Classo, where our flight attendants might actually get you a pillow and blanket, as opposed to shrugging and telling you that, if you're lucky, there might be one somewhere in an overhead bin.

You need to remember that our flight attendants are not waiters, waitresses and nurses; they're highly trained in safety, can yell louder than any of you and will absolutely not tolerate you suggesting that they are anything less than perfect. They can and will deplane you at will. So please, always be nice to them no matter how rude they are and when they offer to sell you our day old ounce of pressed chicken on a dried out foccacia with a packet of mayo and no napkin for only five bucks, be grateful and keep your danged knees and elbows inside the perimeter of your 16" wide seat.

Yes folks, here at AWFUL we're all owners and we take great pride in our company. Just ask our ticket agents in the concourse; if you can get them to stop pretending you're not there trying to ask them a question.

Ownership by our employees is one of the things that makes us AWFUL. We've asked them to take 14% salary cuts three times this year just so we can stay afloat... I mean aloft. Oh, folks, excuse me for a second. There's an email coming across my screen from the Board of Directors. Ah, they're offering me a “golden handshake” worth \$119 million if I clean out my

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desk and leave now.

So, I guess that's it for me. Think I'll go out on the Speakers circuit, you know, get paid \$75,000 a pop to speak to companies across America about how the airline industry overcame bankruptcy.

Yours, Awfully,
J. D. "Wings" Rich III
CEO (er, ex CEO, I guess)

PS: Please collect any trash you may have created and bring it forward as you leave the aircraft. It is not our job to clean up after you. It is our job to simply "clean up."