



LOCAL 2107 NEWS

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Cingular Expectations

by Ray Pomeroy

Every large company has a policy of some sort that covers how they expect their employees to deal with customer contacts. At Cingular it is, aptly enough, the "Expectations" program.

According to Mannie Pallia, Senior Manager, HR, everyone should have recently been re-exposed to the program. It is also on page 5 of the 10 page Quick Reference that all retail consultants are supposed to receive when they start. If you don't have one request a copy from your supervisor.

The program covers greeting the customer, approach and introduction, the "build", closing, thanks and building a rapport. Basically how you are to treat the customer from door to door.

Cingular uses a 4 page checklist, used by secret shoppers and management, to rate the store employees on every point of the expectations program.

The program is not a guideline it is a policy and as such if you are not following it you risk discipline. There are a couple of points of the program such as greeting a customer in the store when you are on the phone with another customer (not a personal call) or answering the phone quick enough without being rude to a customer in the store, that are being looked at for improvement.

Page 2 of the Quick Reference covers appearance standards and appropriate attire, including wearing your name tag and "team colors". Cingular management and secret shoppers will also be rating you on adherence to this policy.

The Quick Reference is a handy tool covering many of the companies policies and procedures including safety and store operations as well as information on CTIA, reference websites, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and compensation information.

Some members may have different ideas about how some things could be done better and that's ok, if you do bring them to managements attention as well as to the Union. Just don't take it upon yourself to do things your way. Doing so on your own could get you disciplined and possibly even fired.

RAMP PROCESS

by Denise Burns

We have not had complete information about RAMP. Due to a grievance, Barbara Allen, 1st level Annapolis, scheduled HR to come down and do training for some stewards, officers and management back in the summer of 2003.

Management knew as little about the processes and details as the rest of us. I encourage you to ask your supervisor to get the training for your location.

Some details that you should know:

- Updates for the RAMP binders are sent out electronically (not all locations print the updates because they were not aware they had to).
- There is one clerk in Silver Spring that scans all of the forms (she does not have time to check them over for accuracy so they come back to you if there are errors).
- Your PED form needs to be updated every 15 months.
- Each time you receive and evaluation you should have your supervisor enter the change (this will keep your PED on file).
- The best of the test scores stay on file unless the test score requirement is changed.
- Your Verizon experience only goes back 5 years.
- Even if you do not have time in title you should still apply (you could be the only

candidate).

- Higher education (degrees & courses) gives you a higher rating for RAMP.
- Courses must be related to the job you are applying for.
- Some degrees may not be related to a job but some of the courses you took to get the degree may. You should list the courses along with the degree.
- If everything else is equal seniority will be the deciding factor.
- If you state you have a degree you must produce the transcript for your supervisor so they can sign off on it.
- If you are up for the job and they question the education and you have not submitted proof you will only have 24 hours to do so.
- You must read the job briefs to determine what the extra qualifiers are.
- Your courses will stay on your record indefinitely.

These are just some of the things that came out of the training. You need to check in your work location to see if your RAMP binder is current. If it is not, request that the updates be added. In some cases they may need to replace the whole binder.

Make sure that you complete your PED form per the instructions and that your information is accurate. There is a 67% return rate on the PED forms.

It's The Law

by Ray Pomeroy

Some of our members are still not getting the message. You are hurting yourself if you go into a meeting with management, including security, without union representation.

It's not that you shouldn't be honest in these meetings you should, and your union representative can't advise you not to be. What they can do is give you assistance and counsel as well as act as a witness to the proceedings.

The following is from from the Center for Labor Education And Research:

The right of employees to have union representation at investigatory interviews was an-

nounced by the U.S. Supreme Court in a 1975 case (NLRB vs. Weingarten, Inc. 420 U.S. 251, 88 LRRM 2689). These rights have become known as the Weingarten rights.

Employees have Weingarten rights only during investigatory interviews. An investigatory interview occurs when a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend his or her conduct.

If an employee has a reasonable belief that

(see Weingarten on page 3)

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

(Denise is unable to write her article this month due to a death in the family so we are reprinting her article from February which is still pertinent. Ed.)

All of our members, Cingular and Verizon alike, are feeling the crunch of downsizing. Work harder, do more and more with less and less.

Although there are not enough workers in the workplace that does not mean that management, someone in another job title, or a contractor should be doing your work. If management is doing your work you should ask them to stop. If they don't, refer it to a steward. If someone from another job title is doing your work find out why and who asked them to. If there is a contractor brought into your location ask who they work for and how long they are going to be there. Then refer these things to your steward. If it's happening the company needs to hire some people.

Don't believe the myth that you can do any job that pays less than yours either, we do not and will not agree on that. The Union's position is that you can work down in your job family (COT doing frame work etc).

Most of us are conscientious workers and take pride in our work. But, if your crew or location is short handed you shouldn't be giving up your rights "because the work has to be done" either. First of all, management should be aware of the problem, if they aren't, make them aware. Don't wait, speak up as soon as you realize there is a problem. Regardless of the size of the workforce, you are still entitled to breaks and lunches. If you work overtime you should be paid overtime, i.e. working through lunch but not put-

ting it on your time sheet. Not only would you be forfeiting your compensation but you would be falsifying records and could be terminated. Being short handed doesn't mean we should take short cuts from safety, work without being paid, or do something else that will cause us grief later either. The business is still the same, the laws are the same and our protections are the same. The only difference now is the workforce is smaller.

In an effort to "improve productivity" Management may also start cracking down on issues that were ignored before. If you know that you are in the wrong stop what you are doing. Be where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there. You should say and do what you are supposed to if you work on the phone too, many of you are, or can be, monitored.

You need to become familiar with your contracts. This will help you understand what can and can't be done. It will also help you distinguish between a complaint and a real problem. If you have trouble understanding something in the contract get a steward or an officer to get you an explanation. Sometimes we even have to go back to our bargaining committee to get the intent of the language.

"The next time you wonder what the union does for you, take a look at the car you drive, the house you own, the standard of living you have, and realize that the union got these for you and that management is hell bent on driving your standard of living into the ground."

Tom Kelly President APWU local

September 6-11, 2004: Union Label Week

Support Good Jobs-Buy Union

During Union Label Week we make a special effort to create a better understanding of how unions and union members contribute to America's prosperity and security:

- Building roads, offices, homes and schools and the things that go into them
- Administering and operating transportation systems
- Delivering vital services - from education to communications, from public safety to health services, from entertainment to public administration

Unions jobs add value to America's communities.



Kerry vs. Bush: Job Creation

from the National

Since President Bush took office, America has lost nearly 3 million private-sector jobs. Manufacturing has been especially hard hit, with 2.7 million jobs lost. Most jobs filled recently are low-paying, service-sector positions, and the number of new jobs doesn't come close to the 346,000 that a federal reserve report says are needed every month between now and January 2006 to close the job gap. John Kerry has called for an agenda focused on high-tech, high-wage growth, pledging to add 10 million new jobs in his first term as president.

Kerry:

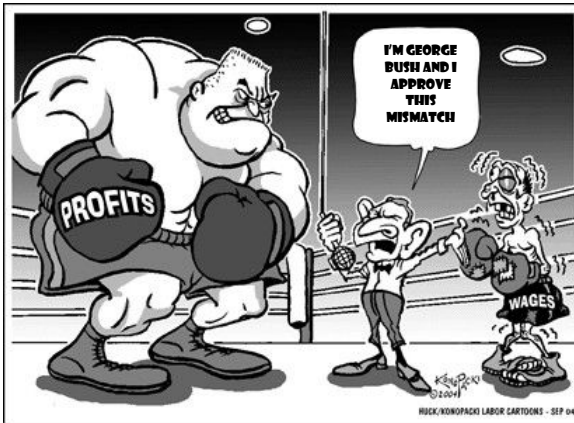
- Has pledged to cut the federal deficit in half in four years through sweeping tax reforms giving corporations incentives to invest at home. Proposes a one-time low tax rate of 10 percent on profits held abroad, now \$639 billion, if they are reinvested in America.
- Will jumpstart job growth with a new tax credit to encourage hiring by manufacturers and other businesses. It will pay the employer's share of payroll taxes for any net new jobs created in 2005 and 2006.
- Universal broadband access throughout the country at speeds 10 times faster than today is a cornerstone of his agenda. As president he will offer tax incentives to extend high-speed Internet to rural areas and inner cities, and expand available spectrum.
- Will create Manufacturing Business Investment Corporations to provide venture capital for development and will double the funding of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership to speed adoption of new technologies.
- Supports a \$4,000 tax credit on tuition to make college universally accessible for all Americans. He will fight to expand training and lifelong learning through Trade Adjustment Assistance, regional skills alliances and community colleges.

Bush:

- Despite the jobs crisis, has pursued a single-minded strategy of tax cuts for the well-off. Independent analyses confirm that his tax

policies failed to stimulate job growth or the economy. Meanwhile the deficit and national debt have skyrocketed on his watch.

- Has focused on corporate tax cuts that failed to stimulate the economy, such as the alternative minimum tax that offers little incentive for businesses to invest because it cuts taxes on capital already in place.
- Would ban taxation of all broadband development without regard to providing universal service, giving an unfair competitive advantage to non-union cable companies. Unlike phone companies, they are not required to provide service to rural areas and inner cities.
- Proposed slashing the Manufacturing Extension Partnership budget by 90 percent and would eliminate the Advanced Technology Program, the only federal program designed to promote civilian technological innovation.
- Proposed more than \$1 billion in cuts to worker training and kept the federal Pell Grant scholarship for college students frozen at \$4,050 the last three years. Meanwhile college tuition rates rose several thousand dollars — an average of 9.8 percent in the last year alone.



Do You Have Problems You Can't Handle On Your Own?

At work, at home, money, kids, health? LifeBalance is now VZLIFE. The number is 800 845-0632. The web site is www.verizon.com/life (available on the web, not the eweb). At VZLIFE they can help you with numerous issues. Drugs and Alcohol, Elder Care and Aging, Events and Transitions, Health and Wellness, Legal and Financial and Work and Personal Growth to name just a few. They also handle the EAP line.

Today's work environment can put us all on edge. If you need assistance with something call and get help.

For **Cingular** EAP the number is: 800-287-9009.

(Weingarten from page 1)

discipline or other adverse consequences may result from what he or she says, the employee has the right to request union representation. Management is not required to inform the employee of his/her Weingarten rights; it is the employees responsibility to know and request.

When the employee makes the request for a union representative to be present management has three options:

- (1) it can stop questioning until the representative arrives.
- (2) it can call off the interview or,
- (3) it can tell the employee that it will call off the interview unless the employee voluntarily gives up his/her rights to a union representative (an option the employee should always refuse.)

Employers will often assert that the only role of a union representative in an investigatory interview is to observe the discussion. The Supreme Court, however, clearly acknowledges a representative's right to assist and counsel workers during the interview.

The Supreme Court has also ruled that during an investigatory interview management must inform the union representative of the subject of the interrogation. The representative must also be allowed to speak privately with the employee before the interview. During the questioning, the representative can interrupt to clarify a question or to object to confusing or intimidating tactics.

While the interview is in progress the representative can not tell the employee what to say but he may advise them on how to answer a question. At the end of the interview the union representative can add information to support the employee's case.

Absence Reporting Center

There are options to handling problems with the Absence Reporting Center. Bill Sonnik is our bargained for Benefits Coordinator. Any problem with ARC should be referred to him.

His number is 888 571-7218.

We can use the grievance procedure but most problems should be handled up front. Bill needs to document problems with ARC. If you are not getting your papers in a timely fashion, if your supervisor reports absence incorrectly, etc. You must keep records of all correspondence with ARC. Note when you talk with someone and who they are. If you fax a document, get a fax receipt. Protect yourself.

Scholarships

The Scholarship Fund will be holding a yard sale in the fall. Please donate your unwanted items. (If clothing, infant only please) If you have a donation please get it to a steward, officer or Ann Crawford at Riva Rd.

Sympathies to:

Denise Burns on the death of her father
Ed McInturff on the death of his father

Get Well to:

Steve Clark who is still recovering from surgery
Damon Gaither, recovering from surgery

Community Services

The blood drive was held on Aug 11 and I would like to thank everyone that helped make it a great success. We had 30 pints that the American Red Cross was able to use.

Verizon

Medical, Prescriptions, Dental & Vision issues relating to payment of bills, providers, directories, medical necessity of services, forms, plan questions, retirees:

John Petrini 800 627-0200 Fax: 610 566-3123

FMLA, SADP, CORE issues:

Bill Sonnik 888 571-7218 Fax: 304 264-4189

Retirees Over 65 Years old:

Sue Anderson 888 324-4969 Fax: 973 691-0865

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

09-14 Combined meeting in Bowie

Other Meetings

09-13 Retiree Meeting

09-17 Presidents Meeting

Other

08-25—08-27 Local Stewards Training

08-29—08-31 CWA National Convention

Retirees Corner

RMC meetings will be held on the second Monday in January, February, March, April, May, September, October, November

Discounts

We have discount tickets for Six Flags and Hershey Park Our Local has signed up for Shamu Club and Club Busch Gardens. They are the complimentary corporate membership programs of Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks, offering special savings and vacation deals to Sea World San Diego, Sea World Orlando, Sea World San Antonio, Busch gardens Williamsburg, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Adventure Island, Waster Country USA and Sesame Place. Admission discounts, exclusive offers and special events for Club members are all available online. The Club gives you up-to-the-minute park news and the most current offers quickly and efficiently. To take advantage of these special offers go to http://www.adventureclubonline.com/_login/member_sign_up.aspx. You will be asked to provide your Company Code during the sign up process. Call the Local for the Company Code.

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