

## Get The Facts

“We encourage all Delta and Northwest people to have an open mind and get the facts before forming an opinion on an issue that will profoundly affect their future careers.” We read this on Deltanet in Delta’s Principles On Union Representation and thought it made sense. We assumed it meant that Delta would be open to have IAM members and union reps talk to Delta ticket agents, baggage handlers and res agents about our point of view on union representation.

We decided the best way to find out how this policy applied in real life would be to call station managers in some Delta stations and see if we could come talk to their employees about the union. The PHX station manager was asked, “Would you allow us to come on property to talk to your employees?” “No absolutely not. This is not allowed.” “Not allowed?” we asked. “It’s not that it’s not allowed. We would just never allow it” he said.

OK then. We moved onto MSY. We asked, “How can your employees make an educated decision if you don’t allow us to talk to them about the union?” The MSY manager told us, “I have an open door policy. If employees need information I can certainly provide it for them.” Finally she told us, “We simply cannot allow this type of thing.”

### Advocacy Policy

Some managers told us that having union reps talk directly to employees on Delta property would violate the airline’s Advocacy Policy. So we pulled that up on Deltanet. It says the Policy is “designed to accommodate employees’ rights to express their views, whether on union representation or other issues, while also accommodating the rights of those who

wish to be left alone...” So far, so good. We read further. Lounges and break rooms are OK. Work areas are off limits. Then we ran into a hitch. The manager in CLT said Northwest employees were not allowed to engage in advocacy with Delta employees. Hmm. That doesn’t sound right. Let’s check the policy. It says “all employees of the new Delta” can engage in advocacy activities. The manager said it appeared that Northwest employees would be included and he would get back to us.

More phone calls and, you guessed it, not one appointment. Some told us they would call back. And we are hopeful, because Richard Anderson has said in the Rules of the Road, “Truth is our currency.”

But we are also confused. According to Delta’s policies and the Railway Labor Act there is little doubt that IAM members who work for Delta or pro union Delta employees should be allowed to talk to others about the union in non work areas, such as lunch rooms and break rooms, during non work times, such as breaks lunch. Of course, this should be done respectfully and in a dignified way. Delta executives now have the opportunity to “do the right thing.”

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### Presidents’ Views On Unions

“Our labor unions are not narrow, self seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor.” President John F. Kennedy, 1962

“If I were a worker in a factory, the first thing I would do would be to join a union.”  
President Franklin D. Roosevelt