

*ROBERT L. PICCONE and LOCAL 340s*

# **SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO SURVIVAL AT UNITED PARCEL SERVICE**

**(Revised 2006)**



***ROBERT L. PICCONE and TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION #  
340's***

**SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO SURVIVAL AT  
UNITED PARCEL SERVICE**

**(Revised July 2006)**

As a UPS employee there are some things you need to know if you plan on working for UPS until you retire. You will also need the same information if you are only working there for the health insurance or if you are just there for a short ride. This Guide is just as important to those who depend on your having a healthy and satisfying career at UPS. Please ask them to read it also. Listed below are some survival points and facts and in no particular order:

- UPS is big, diversified, powerful, influential, trend setting, tough, demanding, and wealthy. They can be unforgiving, forgiving, tyrants, benevolent, ridiculous task masters and logical. The Company's lifelong antagonist is the Teamsters Union.
- The Teamsters Union is all of the same things listed above, except not wealthy.
- UPS needs the Teamsters Union to make them an exemplary and safe employer.
- The Teamsters need UPS because they provide many good jobs for many Teamsters.

Therefore, as a UPS Teamster member you need to know how to balance those two entities in your best interests as a worker, family provider and Union member. Again, in no particular order, are listed some of the things you need to know in order to be on a level playing field:

- UPS is where you have chosen or otherwise decided to report to work every day. Therefore, UPS owes you every bit as much as you owe them. You are entitled to a good day's pay with benefits. In return, they are entitled to a good day's work.
- Being entitled to a good day's pay implies not only to wages and benefits but also to conditions, respect, consideration, and a work environment that will make it possible for you to get to the end of your day and to the end of your work life safely and in good health.
- A good day's pay is not a gift to you from UPS; it is a hard-fought for, Union negotiated benefit that UPS would just as soon not have to give to you or have to live up to, and that's just good business on their part. It is so true that you don't get in life what you deserve, you get what you negotiate.

- The disputes between the New England Teamsters and UPS are settled at the New England Area Parcel Grievance Committee (NEAPGC – “the Panel”). That committee is the single most influential entity in your UPS career. That is the group that defines the make-up of your job and can hold the fate of you and your family in their hands. The Company would like to control that Panel. The Union would like to control the Panel. The members/employees should control the Panel. Listen to the business agents' reports and learn the what, why, where and when of the grievances that go to the Panel.
- The Teamsters Union is not some self-contained, remote organization that you can criticize without criticizing yourself, because, you are the Teamsters Union. Criticizing the Union and not working within to help create change makes you sound foolish.
- If the Shop Steward does not do his or her job effectively or as well as you could, you should agree to help the steward, show them what you think should be done or become a steward yourself and do something worthwhile for yourself and the Union.
- Stop working your lunch and breaks and you will have given yourself the largest raise you will ever receive.
- Do not work your lunch and break periods. UPS does not need the extra money you take from your family. In Maine alone, it amounts to tens-of-thousands of dollars per year. How much are you paying?
- Take out a calculator and see how much money you did not take home in one year by working your lunch and breaks, then, determine how much you paid in dues to the Union for that same period. If you paid the Union (who needs the money) the same amount of money you paid the Company (who does not need the money,) the Union could probably provide you with a business agent to be on-car or even in the unload and pre-load with you each day.
- Compare the amount of money you give the Company by working your breaks with every other expenditure you have in your budget; next, try justifying what you are doing to yourself and your family.
- If your workload is beyond your ability to complete without working your breaks, make a determination as to why; then tell your supervisor to correct the problem.
- If they do not correct the problem, call the Union and tell them what needs to be done. The goal here is to establish a workload that allows you to include your lunch and breaks.

- Don't work injured! Report all work related injuries; follow your doctor's advice; fight like hell against any orders or demands on you to work outside of your medical restrictions.
- Have a doctor of your own; the Company's doctor is just that, the Company's.
- Don't think that you are tough and can take it; you are no tougher than some really tough guys who have seen their lives and their families' futures destroyed by being afraid to report work related injuries.
- Don't report work-related injuries to NNEBT as non-work related. Doing so is only a temporary fix that could cause you to become out of work without benefits either now or in the future. It is also insurance fraud and NNEBT and your fellow employees should not be expected to pay UPS' medical bills.
- If you have a drug or alcohol problem, get help. UPS will support you if you go to them before you have done something that can result in discipline. Also, your health and welfare program and your Local Union will assist.
- If you know someone at work who has a drug or alcohol problem show them the paragraph above.
- Tardiness is an attendance problem just like absenteeism. This is the one problem you can't blame on the Company; only you write this record. Get two alarm clocks. Put one next to the bed and the other across the room so that you have to get out of bed to turn it off. Call in if you're going to be late.
- Do not let the Union put you off. Sometimes there is so much work *for* them the Union must prioritize its work. If you do not agree with their priority, make it known.
- Always make your differences known to the Union, not to the Company or to outsiders whose interests are not the same as yours.
- The wheel that squeaks the loudest really does get the most grease. This is true when you squeak against the Union or the Company. However, always do so with the same respect you want shown to you.
- Keep records: every member should have a notebook into which you should make an entry each day, everyday without failure. Include what happened that day and why, including what your supervisor said and what your response was. When nothing happens, say so. The hardest thing for the Union to do when defending a member against charges made against them is to defend a member who cannot explain the what, why, where and when of the day or event in question. It is almost impossible for members to recreate events from memory.

- Do not sign papers and documents if you do not agree with the contents or believe them to be false. Do not sign papers without receiving a copy. When in doubt, call the Union for advice.
- You would be surprised how many papers you have already signed, either when applying for work or at one of the many PCMs and AMs you have attended.
- Never go into a meeting with the Company without a shop steward concerning any matter of discipline or any issue that makes you uncomfortable.
- Always do what you are ordered to do as long as what you are ordered to do is not dishonest, immoral or unsafe. Never do any of the latter, even under threat of discharge. If ordered to do something you should not do, involve the Union.
- Always perform your assigned work as though someone is watching, because, someone is watching. No, you are not paranoid, someone really is watching.
- Always go to the Union's General Membership meetings. Take your fellow Teamsters. Not only does the wheel that squeaks loudest really get the most grease; there really is strength in numbers.
- If you have a question about the Union, ask the shop steward or someone at the Union hall; don't ask the Company about Union matters; you will get a biased response.
- If you have a question about the Company, ask the Company first. If you do not get an answer, ask the Union. You will probably get a biased response but we try not to do that.
- Never lie at a discipline hearing; it is very hard to defend a lie. Have a shop steward or business agent with you and don't answer questions of which your Union reps do not know what your answer is going to be. If they don't know the answer, take a break.
- Don't falsify your records for any reason. If told to do so by a supervisor, record what they told you in your notebook then tell the Center Manager and the Union. Falsification of records is difficult to defend and supervisors will never admit they told you to do so. This is particularly true of recording others' work as your own or false lunch and break times.
- Don't take what is not yours, nothing, not even a pen or piece of paper. Over-goods and damaged packages belong to receivers, shippers and UPS, most anyone but you. That also goes for damaged packages that are thrown into the dumpster.
- Never, ever, leave a COD without having received payment. Many drivers have been left holding the bag. Also, you will lose the argument and much, much more.

- Never, ever, sign a customer's name for them even if they are a friend; you could find you have no friend.
- Never ever open a package or put your hand into one unless you are a rewrap person or otherwise authorized to do so.
- Even though your supervisor may know when you really do take your breaks outside the allotted times, he or she will never formally admit that to their boss. In a pinch, you will have only the Union to defend you against charges of stealing time.
- Keep your cool; almost every serious customer complaint results from a driver being tired and angry and responding to an unreasonable shipper or receiver. Upon returning to the building, file your own "customer complaint."
- Stay out of customer's houses, even when invited in. Customers have been known to lie about what took place in their houses.
- Drivers should never flirt or make passes at customers or their employees; every sexual harassment complaint results in the driver being in shock because he was certain that the one complaining was receptive to his advances or was leading him on. Really!
- Always report accidents no matter how slight. Even if you have an accident out in the woods, never assume that no one saw it; you can bet someone did.
- Having an accident that you know occurred doesn't mean that you can be fired but not reporting it does. Accidents are defendable; not reporting them is not.
- Never listen to a supervisor who tells you that you do not need to report a specific accident. Report the accident and the supervisor.
- Do not let anyone convince you to drive a vehicle that has a safety defect. Again, make a fuss; involve the Union.
- Work to make a living not an impression! At UPS, you have off weekends, holidays and vacations; that's a good deal. The attitude should be that you are going to work for the week, looking forward to payday and the weekend.
- Make as much money as you can while you are still able to make as much as you can. You may not agree with that advice now, but you will be telling your adult children to do the same thing when they go to work.
- Stop working your lunch and breaks and give yourself the biggest raise you will ever get; invest that extra income.

- Invest the maximum in the 401 K. It will only hurt for a few months and after that you will not even notice the difference. (Thank me 20 years from now for that advice.)
- Take care of your Union; even if you think you are one who can pull yourself up by your own bootstraps; the boot straps that you pull on are those supports that have been fashioned by Union workers before you: Those old retirees!
- Take care of your health; no one else is going to do that for you and this is the one time you really can pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.
- Support fellow workers who need your help, whether you like them or not. You are not going to get out of this life alive or retire from UPS without some sort of tragedy in your life; always carry some dollar bills, one for every panhandler that asks for money. In reality, we really don't know why we are blessed and they are not.
- And last, but not least, remember that no one is as responsible for you as you are.
- Call me if you think I have left anything out that you know can be helpful to others.

Fraternally,

Robert L. Piccone

Teamsters Local #340