

What We Deserve

by **Steven D Huff**

More than 30 years ago, Ted Williams was winding down his career with the Boston Red Sox. He was suffering from a pinched nerve in his neck that season. "The thing was so bad," he later explained, "that I could hardly turn my head to look at the pitcher." For the first time in his career he batted under .300, hitting just .254 with only 10 home runs. He was the highest-paid player in baseball, making \$125,000. The next year, the Red Sox sent him the same contract.

Williams returned the contract with a note saying he would not sign it until they cut his pay the full amount allowed. "I was always treated fairly by the Red Sox when it came to contracts," said Williams. "Now they were offering me a contract I didn't deserve. And I only wanted what I deserved."

Employers and employees alike benefit from understanding what is "deserved in the workplace." Certainly there are reasonable expectations that everyone can recognize. Yet, confusion over what is expected and deserved can be a great source of workplace resentment.

Here are a few employment considerations that workers deserve:

- **Adequate Training** - The investment of training was easily accepted in the days when workers stayed with one company for much of their career. Yet even today, with people switching jobs more frequently, training is a must. You simply cannot expect people or the company to improve if there isn't training. Former U.S. Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, makes the point, "Well-trained and dedicated employees are the only sustainable source of competitive strength."
- **Clear Communication** - Former President Harry S. Truman once joked, "If you can't convince them, confuse them." In reality, motivation and performance improve dramatically with good communication. People's commitment level soars when they're kept informed of what's happening. And certainly, they deserve to know what is expected, and how they are doing.
- **Opportunities To Innovate** - John Scully once observed, "Innovation has never come through bureaucracy and hierarchy. It has always come from individuals." Wise managers and employers realize that the need for achievement is a powerful drive in most people. We simply want to do well and make a difference. So give people the opportunity to innovate and make a meaningful contribution to the company.
- **Reasonable Rewards** - Andrew Carnegie is credited with saying, "There is no way of making a business successful that can vie with the policy of rewarding those who render exceptional service." People deserve to be compensated in proportion to their performance. Not more and not less. So provide reasonable rewards in the form of money, expressed appreciation, opportunity for greater challenges, public recognition, and even promotion. Performers deserve it.