

Flight Attendant Flaming Ends With Termination

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- BuzzFeed (n.d.) says that a Delta Air Lines flight attendant was fired after the airline objected to posts she'd made on her personal Facebook account.
- In one post, the flight attendant called out a man who had been trolling her.

- The troll, a man she did not know, had sent her a message that read, “You are one dumb woman.”
- The trolling escalated to sarcasm and flaming.
- The flight attendant posted a screenshot of the message captioned, “Imagine having the ego of a white man in America ?? (no idea who this guy is. just some random snowflake who messaged me and immediately blocked me so I couldn’t respond).”

- She was called in for a meeting with her superiors. They had become aware of the interaction and became concerned about Delta's reputation. She had violated their social media policy.
- The managers objected to other posts she had made, including one in which she used the word "snowflake."
- She explained that snowflake is a term the far right uses to mock liberals as sensitive, and that she was flipping the term back on her harasser. Now politics had entered the conversation.

- Regarding the comment about the “ego of a white man in America”, managers asked, “Do you think this about all white men?” They questioned whether she, a white woman, was “racist” toward white men. Now diversity had entered the conversation.
- The interrogation went on and on.
- After a nearly month-long investigation, she was suspended and ultimately fired.

- I think that this situation would not have happened if the troll and the flight attendant had been in the same room, face to face. Wood (2016) says that an obvious issue is that online communication is more restrictive than f2f interaction.
- Wood (2016) also suggested monitoring yourself and asking yourself if you are projecting the image you desire.
- People tend to feel anonymous online. Anonymity gave the troll the audacity to call the flight attendant a dumb woman. The comment might have been the beginning of a bad joke.

- The troll utilized silence as a tool by immediately blocking the flight attendant. She had no chance to ask for clarification. Wood (2016) says that silence is a type of nonverbal behavior which can communicate powerful messages. The troll went into hiding.
- She became angry and decided to defend herself with a useless insult. Paralanguage such as shouting might have been used at that point, but the troll was gone.
- The troll may not have even seen her retort, but her superiors at Delta did.

References

Buzzfeed News (n.d.). *Delta Fired A White Flight Attendant After Asking Whether She Was “Racist” Toward White Men*. Retrieved February 19, 2021, from <https://www.buzzfeednews/article/juliareinstein/delta-fires-flight-attendant-feminist-facebook-trolls>

Wood, Julia (2016). *Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters* (8th ed.). Australia: Cengage Learning.