



What's wrong with people today?

That excludes me and thee, of course. You know what I'm talking about. They don't act right. They do things you don't expect.

I don't know about you but I expect them do what I would do; or, at least what I hope I would. I mean I'm a businessman of sorts. Why don't the people in the business places I go know what they're doing or should do. Maybe they know but don't care? I wonder if they ever walk around looking and interacting with their store or business, its people, all the while seeing it in the eyes of the customer. I don't think so... at least it is not apparent.

The store to be Gayfers, gone now, wonder why? The name doesn't matter anyway there's always another store with the same salespeople and similar procedures to take its place.

Well anyway, we bought one of those stupid bookcases you hate, they sag when you overload them with anything with built in gravity.

They were on sale, too cheap to pass up. I mean they're ready-made, right? The clerk said we'd have to pick it up at the (your guess is as good as mine) 30-minute window. Meaning it'll be there in 30 minutes, right. After considerable wait, I asked what was the hold up? Little Miss Smiley-face said, "We don't have them in the store, they are at the warehouse. It's their lunch time. You'll have to come back in about an hour."

They advertised quick service, yet in reality... I said, "So it's not a 30-minute window, it's an hour and a half window."

"That only counts when they're there," she quickly replied, as if she came up with the cutesy window name herself. Why couldn't they see they created more ill feelings with unworkable ideas than admitting the truth, "It ain't here yet."

Anyway I informed her I had already wasted too much time on such a paltry matter and would get a refund; as if she cared. On the way to the refund window, I realized I would waste more time by not buying them. Sure I could build them, but materials alone would cost more.

Later I called to tell them I would pickup my package another day. Just to prove my grasp of worldwide prices, I ordered two more;

may as well fill up the whole wall with sagging shelves full of books I ought to get rid of.

Well I went to the appointed place "the 30-minute window" on the appointed hour on the appointed day and you guessed it. They were not there, and nobody knew what I was talking about. You know how it feels, like stepping into a Stephen King novel only YOU can understand what you're talking about.

Finally after three hours, four heated conversations with the store manager, and some words I regret, a white van careened around the corner to where I stood in the parking lot, beside my truck. The guy backed up, opened the door, and cheerfully said, "What can I do for you?"

"What?" I said, voice about two octaves above a deaf dog's hearing. "Don't you have three books cases?" Later after searching his bounty, he emerged with one, asking if this was what it was I was looking for.

Ha, only in America, I thought. Yet I finally drove away, secure in the knowledge I had partly beaten the system. I had half of my stuff, "Too hell with `em all."

As I drove off I noticed a bewildered couple in a nearby car, writing down my license tag number, just in case they needed to testify about the

strange goings on.

Anyways, back to the real problem. Everybody knows you don't go to the hardware store on Saturday morning. Only part-time workers are there, and they don't know anything, including what's in the store, or under their noses.

Unfortunately the new and larger stores think they figured out how to get around laws made to "protect workers rights," but, that's another story. Consequently no one stays employed at these places long enough to know what they are doing. So the customer has to become the expert. It's much safer to ask a customer if they know where an item is than as "Sales Associate."

You know what I mean, if you ask for help in a major store. I don't care if it's a grocery or auto-parts store, they don't know anything. Oh sure they act like they know everything saying such things like, "I'll check MY inventory."

Sometimes they even pick up the walkie-talkie, speaking to the hinterlands. Of course you have to wait `till the guy, or gal, skates to the correct bin. Ha, you've seen 'em on skates too haven't you, those robo-skaters zigzagging in and out of the customers at the warehouse stores. They can't find anything either, they're havin' too much fun.

Anyway I never got the

rest of my bookshelves. It's for the best anyway... I didn't need to keep all that stuff I was going to put in it anyway.

How about those Belkie Bucks they give you to spend next time you're in their store. You can use them if I spend \$10,000 or more toward the purchase of a single item. Hah, Belkie Buck!

So what's next?