

# Myths of the United States Postal Service

*According to Edward Ringwald's experiences over the years*

## **Just a 44 cent stamp will get it there quick!**

Yes, a 44 cent stamp will get your letter there, but quick isn't always. It's true that letters get lost or damaged in handling in transit while in the Postal Service. The expression "the check is in the mail" just doesn't cut it when your recipient calls you, especially if it's a bill you got to pay.

Mailing from Point A to Point B in St. Petersburg will not be an easy route as you think. All mail will have to go through Tampa which will magnify the chance of your letter getting lost or damaged in transit.

## **I'll send it Certified Mail to prove it got there!**

Of course Certified Mail gives you a signature record of proof, but it doesn't happen about 75% of the time. Return Receipt cards don't get mailed back if at all, necessitating a trip to your Post Office so that you have to stand in a long line and speak with a belligerent Window Clerk who does not understand what you are talking about. Once the clerk understands you then a duplicate return receipt is ordered, which you must bring your original Certified Mail receipt *postmarked* or else pay \$6.60 (as of 2011).

## **I can track my Certified Mail on the U.S. Postal Service website!**

*Good luck!*

Entering your Certified Mail article number to see if it has been delivered is a challenge. Most of the time you enter your article number and you get a "no results" message, especially several days later when you think your certified letter was delivered.

If you want to really find out if your Certified Mail letter was indeed delivered, you will have to make a trip to your Post Office so that you have to stand in a long line and speak with a Window Clerk who does not understand what you are talking about. Once the clerk understands you then a duplicate return receipt is ordered, which you must bring your original Certified Mail receipt *postmarked* or else pay \$6.60.

## **I receive mail at my Post Office Box!**

Post Office Boxes are great to have for security and privacy reasons and I agree with you. However, more and more merchants ship their goods *not* through the United States Postal Service but through a private carrier such as FedEx, UPS, or DHL. The caveat here is that you have to supply a street address, which nine times out of ten has to be your work street address because no one is home throughout the day. You could have it delivered to your home street address, but you will have to take time off from work to do so.

Or, you could elect to pick up your package at the nearest FedEx, UPS or DHL office. Again, nine times out of ten you will have to take time off from work to do so, more

than likely without pay if you unfortunately work for an employer who does not pay you for time off.

**Someone tells me “you will get it in the mail”!**

*That’s a good lie!*

Someone says that he or she put it in the mail and it does not arrive, if at all. Which is why the United States Postal Service cannot be trusted for sending items of a time and/or recipient sensitive nature.

**If I package with care and insure my package it will arrive in good condition!**

*Damage in transit is more prevalent within the United States Postal Service.*

Even with regular First Class mail, mail pieces get damaged somehow during transit. According to the statement from the Postmaster when you receive a damaged item in the mail occasional mishaps do occur.

As for insurance for your package, forget about it – nine times out of ten your claim for a damaged or lost package is denied for some reason dreamed up by someone in the USPS that adjudicates the insured mail claims.

It is much better to either deliver it yourself or, if it is not practical, use FedEx and put a declared value on the package.

**If I move or change Post Office Boxes I’ll file a permanent change of address order – the U.S. Postal Service will take care of it!**

*Permanent change of address order = big privacy mistake.*

When you file a permanent change of address order, you will not escape the mail marketers who continue their junk mail assault on you. When the mail marketer uses your old address, the United States Postal Service simply supplies the mail marketer with your new address so that the mail marketer can correct its mailing lists.

If you have to file a change of address order, file it as a temporary change of address order and supply a date to stop forwarding – that way, at least you are outside the mail marketers’ radar.

**Quality Service by Quality Employees!**

Don’t expect friendly customer service when you visit your local Post Office.

The clerks that work the front counter – called the Window Unit in the language of the USPS – are instructed to treat customers mean, belligerent and rude as part of the customer service training and as part of their day-to-day interaction with the public. These postal clerks are taught to do anything to get the customer in and out, even if it means speaking to the customer in a surly, loud, or otherwise rude tone of voice.

The window clerks' customer service motto: We do not like you, please leave us alone.

Oh, and one more thing: Don't bother even trying to speak with the window clerk's immediate supervisor. If you question the window clerks' authority to be rude and mean with you, more than likely you will be escorted out of the Post Office and banned for life.

After all, the window clerks are protected by some kind of labor union that guarantees their working conditions, right down to when the clerks go to lunch. In a nutshell, USPS management is very limited when it comes to labor relations issues such as discipline and termination of employees.

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