

A Driving Force

For this Boeing driver, shuttling visitors and customers is about **more than quality service.**

By Bill Seil and photo by Marian Lockhart/Boeing

When customers arrive in Seattle to visit a Boeing facility, there's a fair chance they'll be greeted at the airport by Fred Hudson. Hudson, 59, is a member of Shared Services Group's Licensed Transportation that, among other things, transports special visitors to and from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. They consider themselves Boeing ambassadors and are often the first point of contact between Boeing and visiting customer executives. In this *Frontiers* series, which profiles employees talking about their jobs and how what they do fits into Boeing's overall goals, Hudson describes what quality service means to him and the importance of providing it to each visitor.

I'm basically a people person, and this job brings me new experiences every day. It's really enjoyable to get up each morning and say, "I wonder who I'm going to meet today. I wonder what languages I'm going to hear."

In most cases, I drive a Chevrolet Suburban that will accommodate several people and their luggage. When I pick up larger groups I generally drive a van, similar in size to an airport shuttle.

All of our cars are equipped with a digital dispatch system, which is used by drivers and dispatchers to schedule and display data on individual assignments. Of course, we can also speak with our dispatcher by radio.

In most cases, I wear a red polo shirt to be easily spotted at the airport. But in special situations, I'll put on a white shirt, striped tie and blue blazer and transport my passengers in a stretch limousine or Lincoln Town Car.

My passengers have varied English language skills, but over the years I've developed some versatile communication skills. I try to build a general knowledge of international cultures to ensure that my passengers are comfortable.

We drivers know that we're doing an important job for the company. We want to be one of the reasons that customers choose Boeing.

In addition to driving customers, I'm often called on to shuttle company executives who are catching flights or on their way to local meetings. I'm also dispatched to greet private aircraft, including Boeing Business Jets at Boeing Field, and provide visitors with ground transportation.

I hired into Boeing in 1968 and joined Licensed Transportation 11 years later. In the mid-1990s, I began my current job driving passengers. Since then I've enhanced my driving skills. This has included training in handling situations where special security is needed.

Over the years, I've transported many executives and leaders, as well as some celebrities, including actor John Travolta.

It's fun meeting famous people, but to me, all of our customers are just as exciting and just as important. They all deserve a very high level of service. ■

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