

Chief executive takes aisle duty on Southwest flight

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Dhaka: Images circulating online show a man walking down the aisle of a Southwest Airlines flight collecting trash from passengers, drawing widespread attention on social media.

There was nothing unusual about the act itself. What stood out was that the man holding the trash bag was not a flight attendant but the airline's chief executive officer, Bob Jordan.

Jordan, who has been with Southwest since 1988, became the carrier's sixth CEO in February 2022. He previously held 15 different roles within the company before assuming the top post.

In an interview with The New York Times, Jordan said assisting onboard is routine when he travels. He prefers an aisle seat so he can move around the cabin, serve snacks, collect trash, and speak with pilots in the cockpit.

He also avoids wearing suits while flying, opting instead for a vest or polo shirt to work more comfortably alongside crew members. Jordan added that he would help unload baggage if possible, though formal attire makes it difficult.

The practice reflects a long-standing company culture shaped by cofounder Herb Kelleher, who died in 2019. Kelleher was known for working alongside employees, including loading bags and serving on flights.

Jordan is currently leading major changes at Southwest, including assigned seating and revisions to its long-standing free baggage policy, while maintaining the airline's hands-on leadership tradition.

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