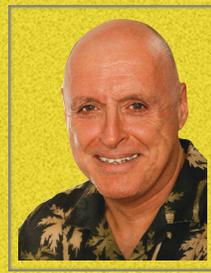


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



60 Those Freaky People in the Workplace

Is everybody in your workplace more or less normal? Or, might you have some freaky people in your midst? I'm Jerry Roberts and today we talk about freaky people and a good reason why they should be welcome where you work. That's right now on The Extra Point.

First of all, let's define what I mean by freaky people. We're not talking about the wacko fringe stuff you might pick up on social media or YouTube.

Let's just leave it as people who may not dress like most people do, or look like most folks look, or think like most people think. They're different.

Best-selling author and leadership guru Tom Peters once said he values curiosity and peculiarity and consider them important to an individual's success. He said: "I value them because these are peculiar times."

Peters believes we need new solutions to move us forward. We need different ideas that come from different people who have different viewpoints because they just see the world differently.

In the late 80s I lived in an apartment building in L.A. with a next-door neighbor who was a hip-hop dancer. She blasted her music, walked around dressed up like she was always ready to audition for a video, and sometimes even talked like a rapper.

One night there was a tenants' meeting to resolve some issues and into the room comes a woman in a beautiful business suit, a pair of conservative high heels, and impeccably groomed. "Sorry I'm late," she said. None of us knew her. Did she live here? It took a few seconds to realize it was our hip-hop princess. We'd never seen her in real clothes. It turned out she worked for a management consulting

firm and left every morning at 5:30 to commute to her job. And the dance thing? That was her dream and she was so good at analysis that her boss let her audition whenever she wanted. He didn't want to lose her.

In about five minutes she summed up the issues of the apartment complex and laid out a plan to fix them. Then she walked out and five minutes later, the music went on, and it was Hammer Time.

I've conducted brainstorming sessions for companies where the quiet one, the one who never says anything, comes up with the idea that rocks everybody back on their heels.

Peters used to say that if somebody comes to a job interview with green hair, their clothes don't make sense, and some of their answers are, well...here comes that D word again... different...if they have the qualifications to do the job you need filled — hire them.

I'm with Peters on this. I value conventional thinking but I also see the need to balance that with the unconventional, because that provides the challenge we need to grow.

Get everybody involved with generating ideas for your organization, particularly those who just don't seem normal. You might be amazed at what you get in return.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. Just leave my lunch alone. For 93.3, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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