

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



156 Signs of a Toxic Workplace

In Extra Points 89 and 118 we touched upon the fact that workplace incivility and toxic workplaces can cause health problems and have a serious financial impact on an organization. I'm Jerry Roberts and today let's identify signs of a toxic workplace, on The Extra Point.

Most of the time people look at toxic workplaces from the standpoint of how managers treat employees. We'll start with that but it's only half the story. Stay with me.

It's a sign of a toxic workplace when...

- The number one thing employees talk about apart from the work itself is how much they hate their jobs and their managers.
- You can't bring up legitimate concerns with your manager, and going to the HR director only makes things worse.
- Managers talk only about hitting targets and higher production, mistakes, verbal and written warnings, and following the chain of command. Profits and cost cutting are the sole focus of the leaders, not growing talent.
- Nobody ever asks for your input.
- Management focuses solely on what employees are doing wrong or correcting problems, and rarely give positive feedback
- Managers are forced to work longer and longer hours, so they have little concern for stress or other issues that impact workers.

There's no doubt that these factors contribute to the overall toxicity of a workplace and make going to work a negative experience. However, like I said earlier, there's more to the story.

You can't lay everything at the feet of the leaders and managers. In most organizations you also find the following...

- Workers badmouth decisions made by leaders.
- Long time employees feel they've paid their dues and don't have to contribute as much any more. This is often the case when employees tout the numbers of years of experience over skills and performance.
- You hear people say the infamous words, "That's not my job."
- Gossip rules the roost.
- Coworkers tease or criticize you for trying hard, that you're showing them up. This is peer pressure to try to control others.
- Employees are quick to grab the glory when things go well, but run and hide from their role in any failure.

There you have a half-dozen factors based on the attitudes of managers, and a half-dozen on how workers contribute to negativity. These are some examples. There certainly are more. What's the takeaway? A toxic workplace is a collaborative effort. It takes time to get there and just about everyone has a role in it. Look in the mirror, accept responsibility, and if you want change — be the change.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

###

For information on training and consulting services from Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

