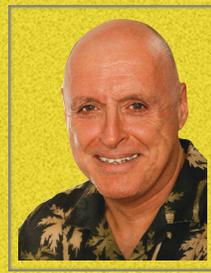


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



10 The Greatest Speech Ever Made About Work

The man championed causes for the underdog and those treated unfairly. But the most eloquent and powerful message he ever gave might have been about the world of work. I'm Jerry Roberts and I want to change the way you see your job, next, on The Extra Point.

Yesterday we talked about people who can't see value in their work, putting a "just" in front of their job title. I'm just a cashier...I'm just a reservations clerk...I just pump gas.

Today, we take the conversation in a different direction, with a 1968 speech made by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

People always talk about King's civil rights efforts, but he was a powerful force in matters of the workplace. And not just about pushing management for equality in pay, benefits, and working conditions. He also held the workers themselves accountable.

Six months before he was killed, Dr. King spoke to a group of junior high school students in Philadelphia, the title of his presentation, "What is Your Life's Blueprint?" Here's some of what he had to say in that speech:

"And when you discover what you will be in your life, set out to do it as if God Almighty called you at this particular moment in history to do it. Don't just set out to do a good job. Set out to do such a good job that the living, the dead or the unborn couldn't do it any better.

If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures, sweep streets like Beethoven composed music. Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry. Sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will

have to pause and say: Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well. Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be a sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are."

Be the best of whatever you are. You get to decide not only how well you do your job, but also how you think about it.

It's not about what your boss thinks of your work. Yes, that's important, but it doesn't define you. What defines you is how you see it, doing your work as well as you can because that's how you see yourself...who you are inside.

Who says you can't be the world's best at what you do? Maybe you're tempted to say, "I'm only making X dollars an hour. They ain't paying for the world's best."

What Martin Luther King taught us is that being the best isn't about money. The payoff is how we feel about ourselves. Make that work and eventually, the money will come.

So don't do your absolute best because of your boss. Don't do your best because of your customer. Do your best because that's who you are, and doing less would be letting yourself down.

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

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