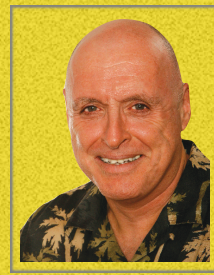


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



11 When You're the Smartest One in the Room

You're the one with the answers. People in your work team and your social crowd defer to you because they know you're smart. You're comfortable with that and so are they. So why is it time for a change?...I'm Jerry Roberts and we explore that, next, on The Extra Point.

The quote goes something like this..."If you're the smartest person in the room, you need to find another room."

Now I've only heard about this, it's never happened to me personally, and my wife and all former coworkers will attest to that, but what does this statement really mean?

If you want to learn more about a certain topic do you hang around with people who know more about it than you do, or less?

Well, that's obvious. Our knowledge grows when we spend time with those who know more.

If your goal is to be a professional golfer, you're not going to play regularly with a group of once-a-week hackers who struggle to break 100.

I've known supervisors who have said they want to be better team leaders...but they don't connect with other, more successful managers.

Business philosopher and motivational speaker Charlie Jones said: "You will be the same person you are today in five years but for two things: the people you meet and the books you read." Basically the same idea. You have to spend time with achievers, people who have specific knowledge that will help you grow, and who have walked the challenging path you want to follow.

And this is not just for managers. If you want to be a better mechanic, hang out with better mechanics. If you want to be a better cook, get in with more accomplished cooks.

Some people say that's what they want, but they don't do it. Why not?

Fear? For some of us...yes, the uncertain scares us. Success scares us, because it comes with a need for renewed commitment.

But for others it's different. They don't want to be accused of having a big head and that they're too good to hang with the old crowd any more. There's lots of peer pressure on things like that, particularly in a small community like Guam where so many friendships go back 20, 30, 40, 50 years and more.

Now look, nobody said you had to give up your old friends. However, if you want to grab the brass ring you're going to have to reach for it.

You're going to have to spend less time in that old and familiar room...and more time finding a new one where your knowledge is the least of anyone's, and where you're learning all the time. That's where the greatest growth and real change can take place.

And then you know what? it's okay to go back to the old room and share some of what you learned with the folks who know you best. Then, everybody benefits and that's a good thing.

So, every time you find yourself the smartest one in the room, find a new room and start over.

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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