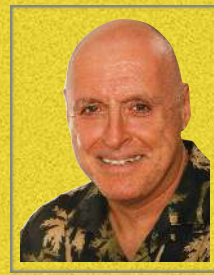


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 117 Workplace Incivility

Workplace incivility is on the rise and not everybody is playing nice with everybody else. I'm Jerry Roberts and let's talk about that, today...on The Extra Point.

Forbes magazine recently published a report that workplace incivility is pervasive and on the rise. First, let's define what we're talking about.

One description is psychological harassment and emotional aggression, that violates what most people see as mutual respect. Somebody getting on somebody's else's case. It can be rudeness, sarcasm, nasty comments, bad language, taunting, hurtful gossip, and constant bickering.

One of the lessons I remember from my mom is that it's okay to disagree, just don't be disagreeable. Two people can see things differently and argue long and loud about that, but it's not an argument if they treat each other with respect and the relationship is protected. They can work together effectively.

The disagreement is with their respective views and opinions, and smart people don't personalize those things.

However, if you look upon the person who disagrees with you as being your enemy, then it's easy to speak to them in a negative way, and to hate on them in general.

And a lot of folks are really good at pointing fingers. It's the boss who causes all this misery. He/she has zero people skills. Ask a supervisor and you might hear that most workers are just lazy. They only perk up on payday.

Workplace conflict is a huge issue, and that includes right here in our peaceful, island paradise. I get a lot of calls from managers and business owners about people not getting along.

Make no mistake about it, incivility causes a buffet of problems for any organization. You get lower employee production, higher levels of stress and absenteeism, and good workers leaving to find a better place. If you let things go long enough, you end up with a toxic culture that isn't easy to correct. Maybe it leads to costly legal problems if harassment claims are made.

They write big books on this subject and I've got two-and-a-half minutes. So what can we do?

Teach people how to resolve differences in a calm and reasonable fashion. At the risk of poking my friend Jon Fernandez, this is something we need to teach in the schools from the get-go, because fewer and fewer parents are doing that like in past generations. Ongoing conflict resolution instruction through the formative years could mean that we'll need to do less of it when they enter the workforce. If you own or manage a company, you need to do the same. And managers must be an example of the behavior they expect.

Now I realize that some people might feel that I'm not qualified to speak on a topic like this, and I don't care what they think...no good, worthless critics. I mean, I, what I mean to say is that I can see how you might feel that way and though we disagree I respect your views and would be happy to talk about it. Man, this calm stuff isn't easy, but I guess it's okay.

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.

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