

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



161 Every Kid Should Start a Business

What if I said, “Every kid should start a business”? I’m Jerry Roberts and today I’m going to enlist the help of an old friend named Peter Gill, to sell an idea that I feel is valuable. That’s right now, on The Extra Point.

Peter Gill owns KwikSpace, best known for creating unique working, living, and storage solutions out of old shipping containers. Peter is one of the most engaging guys you’ll ever meet and if you ever have the chance to sit and talk with him at length, I think it’ll be a memorable experience.

I’ve known him for a long time and about 15 years ago he agreed to be interviewed for the cover feature in Directions magazine. Among the topics we discussed was his getting a start in business — at the age of 10.

He was living in the Seychelles, a chain of 115 islands in the Indian Ocean off the Eastern coast of Africa. He would leave his village and travel over 20 miles to another island to buy salted fish, then come home and sell it in the local public market. The business grew until it began affecting the local retail pricing for salted fish, and he was approached by another fish seller who offered to buy all his fish as soon as he came into the village. Today, that’s called a disruptive force in the market.

Just before Typhoon Pamela hit Guam in 1975, 17 year-old Peter had a conversation with then governor Ricky Bordallo, who told him there would be money for people who would help clean up the debris left by the storm. Peter went out and bought every chainsaw he could, a total of six. He hired Vietnamese soldiers who had come to Guam as refugees, and he rented out the saw and a worker, clearing trees all over the island. He didn’t speak Vietnamese, but he and they communicated in French. He ended up making enough to pay for his first year at Marquette University.

The last story about Peter took place while he was attending Father Duenas. He’d buy an old Rambler (Google it) from a military guy leaving Guam, in the \$200-300 range, and sell it to another one who just arrived for \$100 over what he paid. He used the school parking lot as his used car lot. Up until May of 2004 when the story was published, FD administrators never knew why there were a lot of cars still in their lot — after everybody had gone home.

Maybe your kid won’t be another Peter Gill. Perhaps he/she will have a satisfying career working for others, or the government. That’s fine. Here’s the thing. Experiences like those Peter had teach you several life lessons. Among them...

1. That ingenuity and hard work can have a definite impact on your future.
2. You quickly learn to value money and time.
3. You learn about people, their differences, and how to effectively deal with them.
4. That people will pay if you can get them what they need or want, at a fair price.

I’ve said it before in this broadcast space. I think every kid should start a little business, at least once. Opportunities are out there, and you just never know what might come from it.

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

