

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



166 12 Things Good Bosses Believe Pt. 1

If you're going to be a boss, what does it take to be a good one? Well, that starts with the right mindset. I'm Jerry Roberts and let's talk about 12 things that good bosses believe, next, on The Extra Point.

I came across something written almost a decade ago by Robert Sutton, a professor of management science at Stanford University, and it makes some pretty good sense. If you're now a manager or someday want to be one, this is good stuff to chew on. So, I'll take his statements and a few thoughts of mine mixed in, and see what you think.

What makes for better bosses? Sutton said this: "By adopting the habits of good bosses and shunning the sins of bad bosses, anyone can do a better job overseeing the work of others." That's a solid concept and works, but it's lacking one element — the mindset.

Sutton would agree. He concluded that all the technique and behavior coaching in the world won't make a boss great if that boss doesn't have the right mental approach to the job.

Today we cover the first six things good managers believe.

1. I have a flawed and incomplete understanding of what it feels like to work for me. This is about awareness of what is going on around us. What impact do we have on others? Have the kind of relationships with workers that they feel comfortable in telling us.

2. My success — and that of my people — depends largely on being the master of obvious and mundane things, not on magical, obscure, or breakthrough ideas or methods. Yes, mastering the fundamentals is essential in business, same as it is in sports or education. We all need to handle the foundational parts of our work at the highest level, then take on the more advanced.

3. Having ambitious and well-defined goals is important, but it is useless to think about them much. My job is to focus on the small wins that enable my people to make a little progress every day. It's a good follow to the last one. It makes me think of the tortoise and the hare. Consistent progress is the name of the game.

4. One of the most important, and most difficult, parts of my job is to strike the delicate balance between being too assertive and not assertive enough. You learn this balance by knowing each worker well, and understanding how to get the best results from each.

5. My job is to serve as a human shield, to protect my people from external intrusions, distractions, and idiocy of every stripe — and to avoid imposing my own idiocy on them as well. There's nothing to add to this. If you can be this kind of boss, your people will consider you legendary.

6. I strive to be confident enough to convince people that I am in charge, but humble enough to realize that I am often going to be wrong. This is leading by example, plus encouraging feedback from the team, including feedback on our personal performance. Then, to be open to discussing that feedback if it's not favorable. That takes courage and a thick skin.

Part two tomorrow on 12 Things Good Bosses Believe.

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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