

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



228 Planning for a Working Vacation

Today we talk about how to plan for a vacation when you'll have to get some work done from the road, and stay in touch with the office. I've got a few ideas that may make that process better, and still deliver a great vacation. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's next on The Extra Point.

While many people fantasize about a vacation where there's no work to be done, none at all, for many it's just not possible. The demands of their job require that they stay in touch with the home base and maybe get some things done while off-island. There's one more group...those who just can't disengage or they're afraid to, and even though they're thousands of miles away, essentially they're still at work.

For today let's assume you're in the first category. You want more rest and more fun, while working less — but that time still has to be productive.

Here's another assumption. You know months in advance when you're taking your vacation. At least a month or two, right? If so, I want you to determine if there will be any reports due while you're gone or just after you return. Are there clients to be seen? Make a list of all the things you'd be doing if you didn't leave. The goal is to make sure all bases are covered and there's nothing you're going to have to sweat over from long distance. Then take your list and divide it three ways, like this:

1. If you have a capable assistant, go down your list and delegate as much as you can.
2. If you don't have an assistant or there are jobs you don't want them to tackle, is there someone else you can make a deal with and have him/her handle things for you? In this case it's not delegation, it's a swap of services. When it's time for them to go on vacation, you'll return the favor.

3. You end up with a number of tasks you can't get rid of, or intentionally reserve for yourself. It's your choice how much of that you do before you leave, or take with you.

Choose a regular time for any work you bring along, say from 8-10am. This is particularly important if you're traveling with others. If they want to do things and never know when you're going to be working, then that's going to be an issue. They want to be on vacation with you and do vacation-type things. Schedule any work you have around the vacation, not the vacation around your work.

Other than an emergency, limit incoming contact from the office, even if you're the big boss. If you need to know what's going on or you won't be able to relax and get any fun in, have someone summarize daily activity in a few lines via email.

If you have a definite itinerary and know where you'll be staying, call or email in advance to learn the quality of the Internet connections. If Internet speed is critical for the kind of work you do, don't trust the word of the front desk person. Ask to speak to the IT specialist. If the Web connections will be slow, are there acceptable WiFi options nearby?

Treat your next vacation as a project and work out details as far ahead as possible. Then, have a great time.

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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