

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



235 To Grow Be Around People Who Will Push You

It's one of the first business strategies I ever learned, and remains a key ingredient in growing a career. I'm Jerry Roberts and it's next, on The Extra Point.

When you hear people talking about getting ahead it's usually about the need for a degree, or advanced degree, certifications, projects, etc. All this is fine, but let's examine an element of progress that almost nobody focuses on, one that will make a world of difference for us.

I'll go back to that piece of advice I got when I was getting started. I was told that if I wanted to succeed, to make sure I surrounded myself with people who would push me...push me to give my best, to take risks, to accept and plow through challenges, to get better.

Not long after I saw it in a book, that my life would be impacted by the people I spend the most time with, and how they approached life and career. That was reinforced by a coach who said, "If you hang out with losers, don't be surprised if you wake up one day and realize you've become one yourself."

Those words didn't mean then what they would come to mean a few years later, when I saw that the guys I spent time with weren't at all focused on achieving anything. They wanted to party and then party some more, come to work hung over, complain about their boss who actually expected a full day's work (imagine that), and then got off to party again.

Don't get me wrong, we were friends but it was easy to see that these guys were going nowhere, and if I stayed connected to them that's where I'd be heading, too. So I stopped hanging out with them. At first it was hard because people I liked were calling me a punk, and stuck up, that I thought I was better than them, and on it went. I just kept thinking about those words, that it was important to be around the right people.

I'm not saying to turn your back on friends, but maybe you can grow and then later help them do the same.

I always gave good effort but being around people who had made a commitment to produce results, a commitment to achieve, showed me that I needed to step up my game to keep up with them. They pushed me to get better and after a while I returned the favor. Every step of the way in my career, when I've put myself in the midst of people who had a laser focus on what they were doing, made big plans and then went after them, I was more inspired to do the same and I got better. I got more done and my work had greater impact.

So who inspires you? People in your company? Maybe some you know in other organizations. It might be business, social, government or military leaders. Maybe teachers, or retirees.

Besides surrounding yourself with can-do, high energy people at work, connect with these other folks, let them know you've recognized their achievements and ask if they'd be willing to answer some questions. I think they'll be flattered and happy to help. In return, maybe there's some way you can help them.

Being around productive people on a daily basis and then adding in the occasional time spent with other high achievers, will help keep your head screwed on straight, you'll design better goals, and then get after them.

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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