

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



259 It's Time to Plant Some Seeds

A large gathering of folks came together in a tribute to the life of Jon Anderson yesterday, and hearing people tell stories about what he meant to them got me thinking about one of my favorite stories. We'll talk today about planting seeds, on The Extra Point.

As people shared stories with me yesterday, I imagined Jon scattering seeds. You've heard me talk about Big Ed, my first boss. When I looked back on the time I spent with him, he also was planting seeds.

Sometimes the seeds were knowledge, other times it was encouragement, praise, and positive feedback. In either case, it sends a message to the individual that my manager is making an investment in me.

Everybody wants this, whether they admit to or not, or if they are embarrassed by the extra attention. We're wired that way. We seek approval of people in authority. We liked it when mom and grandma told us things that boosted our ego, strengthened our self-esteem, and made us feel we could do anything.

When we get to the workplace we're still looking for affirmation that we're doing a good job. A smart boss starts planting seeds from the get-go, building people up.

It's said that the number one job of a leader is to create more leaders. This includes leaders along the front line of the organization, at every level. These are leaders without a title.

But if they do break into the supervisory ranks, who is going to be their example of how to do it right? Yeah, you. It's just like parenting. You're not just raising kids, you're teaching them how to be future parents. You're showing people you supervise how to be future managers. If you want a person to be nurturing and encouraging, and to build confidence they can compete at a high level, you have to lay that in

as a basic foundation.

Whatever Jon may have lacked in terms of conventional management skills, he made up by making people feel better about themselves, their job, and their company. What I kept hearing yesterday was "he helped me, he pushed me, he encouraged me, he showed me how to do this, he was there for me when I needed it."

Whatever your position is at your organization, I want you to scatter some seeds today. You don't need anybody's permission. If you see somebody doing a good job, tell them, "Hey, I see how hard you work. You're really a big reason we're doing so well and I'm happy to work alongside of you." If you're a manager you need to add planting seeds to your playbook, and run that play every day.

If it's a knowledge thing and you see somebody struggling with a certain job or process, stop and say, "I can see you're trying hard to get this procedure down. It had me stumped for a while and then I learned something that made a big change. Would you like to see it?"

Here's a little challenge. I want you to drop a positive seed on three people today. In fact, I want you to do it every day this week. I wasn't a math major but that comes out to 15 positive, uplifting things that will flow from your mouth to a coworker, whether they be a peer, a person you supervise — or they supervise you. Yes, you can even drop a seed on your boss. They need to hear good stuff, too.

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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