

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



260 A Great Hiring Question and How to Answer it

The former director of human resources at Netflix reveals a question he likes to use on job applicants. It's one that immediately identifies those candidates you can't wait to hire, and others you'll likely pass on. I'm JR and today I'll not only give you the question, but I'll tell you how to answer it. That's coming next, on The Extra Point.

When it comes to job interviews and possible questions a candidate might be asked, there are countless books, videos, websites, and even online courses available to prepare people to perform well and hopefully land a position.

In an article written for Fast Company magazine, former Netflix HR executive Greg Silva recently discussed a question he likes to ask, because it forces the applicant to think beyond the normal stock answers he/she may have rehearsed, and it reveals work ethic, and curiosity, among other things. Here's the question Silva asks: "It's your first day on the job and you have a few hours to kill before your new employee orientation. What would you do with that time?"

I'm going to repeat it and I want you to think about the intent of the question. "It's your first day on the job and you have a few hours to kill before your new employee orientation. What would you do with that time?"

What is he looking for? Well, I gave a clue a few moments ago. The scenario is that you're already hired and when you arrive for work on day number one, you learn there is a mandatory orientation session at 11:00 a.m. It's now 8:00 a.m. What are you going to do until eleven?

What could happen in that time? You're shown to your desk, cubicle, or other workstation, and there are a few choices I can think of.

1. You sit there on social media or texting until someone gives you directions.
2. You walk around the department, introducing yourself to everybody.
3. You seek out your new supervisor and ask, "Hey, I've got three hours before the worker orientation, and I want to get productive. What do you have for me to do while I'm waiting for eleven o'clock to roll around?"

In a job interview the person asking questions is trying to figure out — among other things — what kind of motor you're hiding. Are you a results-driven individual who intends to make his/her mark on the company and lead by example from the get-go, or will you sit back and do the basics? Will you finish the job and sit around doing nothing, until the boss finds you and assigns you the next job?

If you hear a question like this, answer with option number three. "What I'd do is seek out my supervisor and find out how to get started. You're not hiring me to sit around. I'm sure there's something I could do in those three hours to be productive, while waiting for the orientation to start." That's the kind of answer you want to give. It demonstrates your work ethic and unique value you intend to bring to the company. Immediately, it sets you apart from others. You're putting the interests of the company before your own, and people doing the hiring will take notice.

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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