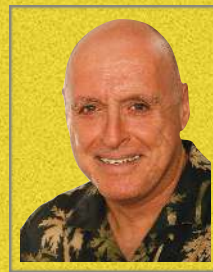


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



314 Lessons of the World's Richest Person

The richest person in the world, Amazon chief Jeff Bezos, said he learned the two most important lessons of his life, between the ages of 4 and 16, in a most unusual way. I'm Jerry Roberts and I've got the reveal, next on The Extra Point.

The name Jeff Bezos is synonymous with Amazon, the company he founded in 1993 as a relatively simple online bookstore, following a seven year run in the tech, banking, and investment fields. The legend has it that Bezos started Amazon in a garage in Seattle, but the seeds had been planted much earlier, in the dust of a little Texas town called Cotulla.

Cotulla is about 90 miles south of San Antonio and 70 miles north of Laredo and the Mexican border. It had less than 4,000 residents and nobody would have mistaken it as an up-and-coming tech hub like Austin, Seattle, or San Jose. Cotulla was where Bezos spent his summers, working on a ranch owned by his grandfather, a man Bezos and his siblings called "Pop." It was from Pop that he would learn the two lessons that would serve him well as he set off on his own to develop the company that would change how the world shopped.

In a leadership panel with his brother Mark in 2017, Bezos described the two qualities that he says made a massive difference in Amazon's success, the two qualities he saw in his grandfather that made a deep impression on him. Two qualities that each and every one of us can harness to make our lives better, and to throw off the chains that bind us to a fraction of what we're capable of.

Those two qualities Bezos saw in Pop are self-reliance and resourcefulness. Bezos says, "If you're in the middle of nowhere in a rural area, you don't pick up the phone and call somebody when something breaks. You fix it yourself."

Bezos would help Pop mend fences and pretty much anything else that needed attention. They even built an entire house from scratch. Bezos said of his grandfather, "He would take on major projects that he didn't know how to do, and then figure out how to do them."

Pop taught his grandchildren that if your plans don't come together at first, you back up and try again. Each time you retrench and get back after your goal, you're using your resourcefulness and self-reliance. This is so different from now, with so many people conditioned to give up at the first sign of difficulty.

Bezos used these lessons in establishing Amazon Marketplace, a highly successful arm of the retail juggernaut. It began as Amazon Auction and failed, but Bezos stuck with it, making changes. It took a lot more trial and error before he found a concept that worked, but his resourcefulness in trying new things finally paid off.

Our kids and grandkids think the answer to everything in life is in an app. To be truthful I don't think it's just them. It seems to me that a lot of the rest of us who don't fit into the under-40 category, sometimes think the same way. Old school doesn't mean old fool. Grandparents who came up the hard way when the hard way was the only option you had, have lessons worth learning, or re-learning. Self-reliance and resourcefulness still work, still build fortunes, and are qualities worth having.

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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