

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



384 No Washing? No Driving? No Thinking? Oh My!

A little bit of a rant today as we look at what technology is bringing us. Our future may not be as bright as some would have us believe. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's coming up on The Extra Point.

Our world is becoming a DFY experience, as in *done for you*. The sellers and creators of the world have figured out that we like stuff done for us and we're willing to pay for that.

In some respects DFY has been with us for a long time. Restaurants, seamstresses, bakeries, car washes, bushcutters, and many other services do things for us when we don't have the time or desire. Want to get the good stuff out of the latest business books but don't want to read them? No problem, you can subscribe to a book summary service. As I say, these DFY options have been with us and we're used to paying for the convenience they offer.

New technologies will take DFY to places not even imagined until just a few years ago. The advent of artificial intelligence, where devices learn how you want things done and adapt, are preparing us for a world where cars will free us up from the chore of being behind the wheel and drive themselves.

The same type of technology will be in the kitchen where your refrigerator will determine when you're low on certain foods, message your favorite store, pay for the items and have them delivered. Then, your robot will pull foods from the refrigerator or your cabinets, prepare a meal from a recipe just the way you like, and even spoon it up on a plate for you. I'm not sure about sitting in the back seat while the car drives itself, but I'm all for the kitchen ordering and making the meals on its own.

I was reading a story about clothing lines that have been created, featuring materials that do not require regular washing. People have worn the same item for two weeks, that's every day

for two weeks, and it's still fresh. One woman, wearing a shirt from a company called Unbound Merino, said it still looked (and smelled) like it was just cleaned. Men can buy dress shirts that look perfect without any ironing. It's a chemical process and there are questions about the chemicals being used, but the look is sharp and professional. These products go beyond done for you to never have to be done at all.

Now, there's another one that I think is going to fail, and I hope it does. Companies in the HR field are working on artificial intelligence to replace managers. No, that's not exactly how it's being presented, but the intent is clear. It features a system that will have a knowledge base and a worker will be able to talk to it and get feedback on problems they need solved.

As the onboard intelligence is updated, the unit's decision making abilities will get better. I don't necessarily see such a system replacing a highly experienced manager who has great reasoning skills — at least not for a long time — but I think lower-level supervisory positions could be endangered in organizations where cost-cutting is the main consideration. If this does take place on a medium-to-large scale, how will new managers gain the needed experience to grow to the leaders of tomorrow.

No, it's not coming right away, but money is being invested to one day make it happen. Want to avoid that? Develop great work relationships with people and help drive performance and job satisfaction that no robot ever can.

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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