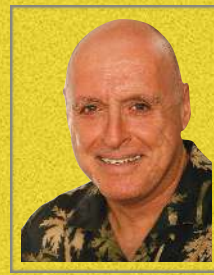


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 391 Do You Ever Say the Wrong Thing? – Part 2

Do you ever find yourself saying things you didn't really intend to say? Or maybe you did intend to say something, but it came out wrong? I'm Jerry Roberts and today we'll continue our look at the various ways we make a mess of things when we speak. That's coming next on The Extra Point.

Yesterday we began to discuss an article in Fast Company magazine, written by Judith Humphrey, entitled *The Seven Deadly Sins of Impromptu Speaking*. Today we continue with...

4. Um-ing and Ah-ing. "Um" and "ah" are in the category of what we call filler words. "Well," "like," "you know," and there are plenty more to add to the list. "Now wait a second," you might be saying, "Everybody uses these." You're right, we might have trouble finding anyone who doesn't. However, the use of fillers actually takes away from our ability to communicate well.

Once we know that we have this habit, training ourselves to use silence instead of the filler word is an effective way to deal with it. Using a pause in our conversation makes us sound more decisive and thoughtful.

5. Saying things we regret. This one is everyone. We all have said things we wished we hadn't and depending on the severity of the situation, sometimes we carry this regret for years. Maybe it hurt the person we were talking with. Maybe it ended up hurting us.

First, the bad news: it's a part of life and it's likely we'll do it again. Sorry. That said, the news gets better. There are two things that can help reduce the pain. Clearing the air with the person or people you spoke with, even apologizing if that's called for, and yes, that can be a bit humbling; and the second part of the remedy is time. Usually, the passage of time makes the situation more tolerable.

6. We didn't get our facts straight. We had the numbers wrong, didn't understand the rules, or misinterpreted something read or heard. In selling this is a fairly common occurrence. We tell the prospect something that just doesn't stand up and then we have to backtrack, often after the sale, and admit our mistake. Besides incurring the possible anger of the customer, now we've likely lost their confidence in believing what we say. The answer is to build trust with complete honesty and accepting full responsibility. After that, work hard to know our stuff. If we're unsure of something, tell the person we'll get back to them with the answer.

7. Not being in the moment. We're talking but also looking at our phone or computer, or just looking around and losing eye contact. So much of communication is non-verbal. If we look like we've lost our concentration, it's likely people we're talking with will do the same, or at least they'll be confused. Put the phone where you can't see it or turn it over, then say what you have to say. Your audience will be glad you did.

Impromptu speaking, done well, can make us look very good. It sends the message that we are in clear command of a topic, that we are sure of ourselves, and our communication skills are top notch. However, as we've seen in this commentary and the one yesterday, there are potential pitfalls that can send a different message. Grab transcripts numbers 390 and 391 at [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com).

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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