

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



430 The Four-Step Method of Changing Minds

Did you ever try to change someone's mind? It's not always an easy thing to do. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, some ideas on how to do it if you want to bring people over to your point of view. That's next on The Extra Point.

You just know that you're right, that your idea, method, decision, choice, the direction you wish to follow is not just a way to go, but it is THE way to go — but you can't find the words to persuade someone else to follow. Friend, I feel your pain.

There are times in life when we just know that Heaven above has illuminated our road and made it crystal clear that we're on the path to progress and fulfillment, to clarity and purpose, to getting further and doing better. Yet, to our amazement, there are those who don't feel the glow of enlightenment and agree to come along. What do we do about them? Here we go, tips on making it happen.

1. Agree with them. First, understand that if you show them you think they're wrong or foolish not to accept your position, you're pretty much sunk from the start. People naturally resist change and pretty much hate being told they're wrong. If you're going to change their mind you have to figure how they arrived at their decision and the underlying reasons that support it.

At this point all you have to do is say, "That's an interesting choice. Can you tell me what went into your decision?"

2. Reframe the situation. People make their choices based upon some combination of logic and emotion. Some more logical, some more emotional. If you've asked the right questions and they've given you honest answers, you'll probably understand where they're coming from. Now, you redefine the situation. "Your choice of the XL-300 widget maker is bold, especially considering the

recent recalls they've had to make. How will you maintain production in the likely event the machine goes down?" Maybe they didn't know. That's not disagreeing, that's reframing and it may get them to rethink their decision.

3. Introduce a better solution. If the other person has accepted your reframing, you then voice a different way to go that will accomplish the ultimate goal and avoid the problems raised in the reframing. You show clear evidence that what you are suggesting supports your claim. Again, it's not about making them wrong, it's all about solving a problem and showing that you have an alternative that can do it better.

4. Give them a graceful exit. Some people just cling to their decisions because they're afraid of how they'll look if they change direction or back down. If you offer them a way to "save face" you'll have a better chance to see them choose your way.

"George, without this new evidence that clearly shows the dangers of going with the XL-300, I'd have made the same choice you did because everything else indicates it is an incredible machine, right?"

First you agree, then reframe, then introduce your idea, and then let them save face if they change their mind. Arguing with someone is futile if their mind is made up. Using these four steps in order gives you a chance to introduce your information in such a way that most people will at least listen.

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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