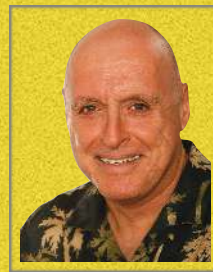


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 478 Ben Franklin's Relationship Building Strategy

Have you ever tried to turn an adversary into a friend? "Are you thinking, "Now, why would I want to do that?" I'm Jerry Roberts and today, Benjamin Franklin is our teacher, giving us a valuable start to 2020. That's next on The Extra Point.

When Ben Franklin, one of America's Founding Fathers, sought to transform an opponent into a supporter, he used a specific method that was highly successful. Is there anyone in your life you'd like to improve the relationship with, to change it from adversarial to friendship?

I'll tell you up front, *The Ben Franklin Effect*, as it's called, is counter-intuitive. On the surface you just don't see it working as it goes against conventional wisdom. Let's break it down.

To change someone's opinion of us we would normally think first of doing something nice for them. Give them a gift or perhaps offer some unexpected praise. We would take the first step in an effort to do something for them, hoping they would then reciprocate, and soon a friendship would evolve. I'm not saying this doesn't happen. It does, but Franklin came up with a different idea.

He had a particular adversary and knew the advantages of befriending the man, or at least creating a neutral relationship where there was no animosity. Instead of doing the man a good turn or providing a gift, Franklin asked him for a favor — to borrow a rare book. The man sent it to him.

A week later, Franklin returned the book with a note expressing his gratitude. When they next met, the tone of their conversation was different than usual, much more positive and uplifting. The two men eventually became lifelong friends.

So, if you want to be friends with someone it's better to request a favor of them, rather than

grant one? Here's what Franklin also discovered: you are more likely to receive a favor from someone if they have already done one for you. Like I said, it's counter-intuitive. Confused yet?

You agree to perform a favor for someone you're not particularly friendly with. Our mind is saying, "Uhh, Jerr, what's up with this? You don't really like this guy." The brain needs harmony to reconcile your action and convince itself that it — that is, you — aren't losing it.

Therefore, it changes your beliefs to fit the action performed. "Oh, he's not such a bad person," you tell yourself. Then, when he asks for a second favor, your mindset is different and now you're agreeable to doing something for someone you actually feel better about.

I need to add a caution. When someone grants you a favor don't tell them "Thanks, I owe you one." In an instant that turns a favor into a transaction and robs the other person of the satisfaction of doing something nice for you. Trust me, this is hard for so many people, to just let somebody do something for them without feeling obligated to them.

Let's get straight about something else, this is a strategy for improving a relationship, not for stockpiling free stuff. In example, don't try to make friends with a mechanic in order to get your car fixed for free.

Will Ben Franklin's relationship-building idea work for you? There's only one way to find out.

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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