

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



487 Find a Job or Project to Help You Step Up – Part 2

You're trying to get ahead at work. You've been asking for a side project where you can show your stuff and now you've got one. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, some important things to consider, including perhaps the most important of all. That's next on The Extra Point.

Yesterday we talked about putting yourself on the radar screens of people who can decide to help advance your career, by picking up a side project at work. You start by asking your boss if she/he has one you can jump into. If not, ask the boss's boss, or the HR manager. You keep asking and sooner or later you'll find a vehicle to show what you can do. When you do find it, there are some issues to consider.

First, when you take on a job you want to do so with a clear understanding of what success looks like. Let's define what this job has to deliver before we start. In my terms I ask the person assigning me the job where the end zone is. I want to know when I score.

Second, let's ask some questions. What does the project mean to the organization? Let's not just understand what we're doing and where the goal line is, but why are we doing it and how does this fit into the overall scheme of things? What departments will benefit and who are the key people there who have vested interests in my success? They'll care about my efforts and I can build additional relationships.

When you take on a job you want to make the most of it. At one of our leadership events, maybe 20 years ago, an amazing speaker and thinker named Tom Peters offered an idea that was a real jaw-dropper. Peters said this: "Never accept a project or job as-is." Think about that for a moment and let it sink in.

It's an unbelievably good piece of advice. When we don't take on a job exactly as it's offered to us, it means we make changes to it. Making changes to a job or project is like stamping our

logo, our brand, on it. It becomes "us" and it sends a message that we're different. We're not the average worker. We think things through and try to reach higher and farther.

If you're thinking this has to be complex, it doesn't. Here's a really basic example. The big boss asks you to paint a bench because it's now a run down green eyesore, and they're certainly not expecting your response, "Sure boss, do you mind if I choose the color?" The average manager who is tuned in might respond, "I guess but nothing crazy, okay?" If the boss isn't some kind of serious micro-manager, you'll likely get to pick the paint. That's putting your brand on it.

It goes deeper in the psychology involved. The boss might be thinking you had the confidence to ask that question, and that's a good thing. It registers as positive on the mental scorecard they keep on you and everybody else. It's a bonus when you finish the work and present the freshly painted bench.

Whether you paint, create plans, design software, landscape, build financial models, or do just about anything else, the key factor is that you get even slightly creative and innovative, and deliver results which are, well, a bit unexpected. Make it a quality job, make it yours, make it memorable so they remember you — and make them want to do more with you.

Download transcripts # 486 and 487 at guamtraining.com for yourself or to share with others. You can do this. Get after it.

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.

###

For information on training and consulting services from Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com



Listen to The Extra Point at 7:20 a.m. on The Ray Gibson Show — 93.3 fm ThePoint.gu