

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



489 Stepping Out Into the Unknown for Your Career

When is the last time you went for the unknown in your career? When's the last time you stepped out and took on a challenge you weren't absolutely sure you could handle? I'm Jerry Roberts and today, let's talk about stepping outside of our comfort zone. That's next on The Extra Point.

I've got two stories today about opportunity. About either holding onto what you know or stepping away from the sure thing, the comfortable position.

When I was going to college I struck up a friendship with a guy my age named John. He worked for a company of a couple hundred employees and had shown his bosses that he was reliable, worked hard and smart, and made good decisions. They took notice and, following the resignation of John's supervisor, offered him the job. He was all of 19 and sped home to tell his parents about the new position.

Instead of being excited for him, John's father told him about the negative aspects of being a manager. He had been a blue-collar worker his whole career and had a definite mistrust of management. He felt he had been taken advantage of and had nothing good to say about his company leaders. By the end of the evening John had bought into what his dad was saying, and decided to decline the promotion.

From what I know it would be 17 years until John got another chance. He stayed with the company and when the children of the founder took over upon his retirement, they again extended an offer for a supervisor's position.

This time he didn't bother talking to his father. He simply accepted the job. Someone who knew both of us told me John always said his biggest regret was turning down the position when it was first offered, and felt his career would have gone a lot farther if he hadn't allowed himself to be influenced by his dad.

Second story. There was a man in his late 30s who had been a middle manager for several years, and served a short stint as a company vice-president. He had earned some notable achievements and felt he was ready to lead an organization, but he worked for a family company and knew his opportunities there were limited. He decided he wanted to be a CEO. He talked with senior management recruiters, answered ads in major publications, and posted on job boards. He was going to be a CEO.

His boss knew what he wanted and gave him the flexibility to travel and be interviewed. He did so more than 30 times over a three-year period, and got to the second interview 10 times. However, he got no job offers. Halfway through the fourth year he got a call from a small company whose HR manager knew the HR manager at a company that had declined him but liked him a lot. After a video conference they flew him in to meet the management team, and his dream came true when he was hired as the company's leader.

His resume didn't match up to those of most people he was competing with, yet he didn't give up. He knew there was a company somewhere that would take a chance on him if he just kept going, just kept trying.

What is it you want but haven't yet achieved? Is what you're after worth the continued pursuit? Is it so important to you that you'd give another year, two, three, four or more, and face adversity, in order to have it? Something to think about.

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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