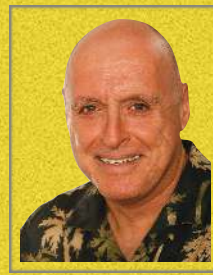


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



505 Following Einstein on Recovering from Poor Decisions

It was one of Albert Einstein's most famous quotations and it's just as relevant today as it was seven decades ago or more, when he first said it. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, how this wisdom fits our lives today. It's next on The Extra Point.

It's a quote I've heard frequently and in many variations. Albert Einstein said:

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Or,

"We can't solve problems by using the same mindset we used when we created them." Or,

"We can't solve problems by using the same minds we used when we created them."

Maybe he said all of those things over time. The key thing is that each statement is saying something a bit different. Yet, anyway you say it, it's calling for change in the process if we are to make progress. Let's unpack this and see what we can learn.

1. *"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."* Was this one person — let's say the boss — dominating the process and making the decision, or was it the decision of the group? Was it a totally informed choice where we had all of the needed data and options available, or did somebody move on a hunch?

It's a fact that a huge amount of business and political decisions are made without having adequate information in place.

2. *"We can't solve problems by using the same mindset we used when we created them."* Are problems solved by people with a positive or somewhat negative mindset? Are we talking about a person — or people — who possess a hopeful or fearful mindset? Would you say the decision makers involved at your place of work

think they know everything they need to know, or do they know they need to know more? Mindset is a major factor in the process.

3. *"We can't solve problems by using the same minds we used when we created them."* There are two chief reasons people struggle with trying to solve issues that are created through their own decisions. First, they have biases in how they interpret facts and situations. Some of those run deep and it's tough to back off those beliefs.

Second, and just as important, they are invested in the decisions and will often defend them tooth and nail against critics. If a decision required weeks of work to develop and many factors were painstakingly considered, there will also be a feeling that their choice was the absolute best possible, and that anything else is inferior.

Many effective leaders understand the wisdom of getting some new eyes on a problem. They go outside of the leadership team, even outside of the organization, to gain perspective they can't get from the original decision making unit.

Trying to solve problems with the people whose decisions led to the problems, is often like paddling upstream against the current. It's not impossible but it usually won't be as easy as you want. Whatever Einstein had in mind with these words, it's worth it for us to think about the best way to recover from decisions that don't work out the way we plan.

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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