

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



522 Changing Eating Habits is About Changing Culture

If we can just get workers to change their eating habits, better health would be the result. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, more of what Google has done to push this idea. That's next on The Extra Point.

The last couple of days we've talked about tech giant Google and their ongoing effort to help workers become healthier. If you missed one or both episodes you can download them at guamtraining.com; download numbers 520 and 521 and get all the details.

What we're after here is workers enjoying better health, longer lives, and not having to rely on prescription medicines to get by. We've all seen too much of this already. If we don't have the health issues then it's people in our family or our friends. We've lost people we care about because of food. Whether it was they couldn't change or wouldn't change, the fact is they didn't change — and they suffered as a result.

Employers would like to see healthier and more productive workers. They'd like to see health insurance premiums go down and if they did, could a case be made for sharing a healthy chunk of that savings with workers?

Very quickly, Google limits portion sizes, they eliminate foods that blow up diets and are universally recognized as unhealthy, they emphasize water over soda, fruits over desserts and sweets, vegetables over meat. They moved the less healthy snacks farther away from the coffee and people began to choose the healthier snacks. There's more in those last two programs but that's a quick summation.

There's a few details we didn't get to yet that may surprise you. Two years ago Google's New York office, which feeds 10,000 people each day, served exactly zero salads for breakfast. Today they serve 2,300 breakfast

salads every day. Have you ever thought of having a salad for breakfast, rather than a high fat, high carb meal? In the same office, seafood consumption has jumped 85%.

Dr. David Katz, director of Yale University's Prevention Research Center, said this: "What Google is attempting here is culture change, and that's the level we have to reach to transform behaviors and health for a lifetime."

Culture change. It's the hardest thing in the world. People who have eaten one way for their entire lives are now faced with making significant changes to their diet, or the prospects of heading down a road that leads to chronic disease and premature death if they don't change.

Google discovered something that Millennials and Generation Z folks won't like to hear, that the younger generations don't really know food. They've mostly grown up in households where both parents worked and family meals weren't as much a part of their experience as in previous generations. Even those who want to make great food choices don't know how, so they grab something fast, or something fashionable.

After spending boatloads of time and money on experimenting, Google learned something very important, and is in fact the foundation of their success in their health and wellness program. It's a critical component and we'll have that tomorrow as we wrap up this series.

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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