

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 594 6 Great Quotations from Thomas Sowell

Today, a few of the best quotes from leading economist and thought leader, Thomas Sowell. If the name's not familiar, I think you'll like what you hear. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's next on The Extra Point.

Thomas Sowell is a highly respected economist and social commentator. He grew up in Harlem section of New York City. He served in the United States Marine Corps during the Korean War. Sowell graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University with a bachelor's degree in 1958, and earned his doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago in 1968. A Black man, he is a noted libertarian conservative, has written over 30 books, and is connected to leading think tanks and universities.

His quotes are generally based on social issues but we'll look at them in a business context today. He said:

1. "The problem isn't that Johnny can't read. The problem isn't even that Johnny can't think. The problem is that Johnny doesn't know what thinking is; he confuses it with feeling." Just because we feel a certain way doesn't automatically mean we've thought things through, have a clear picture of the issues in front of us, and know what's best for the organization.

Like you, I want people to understand problem solving and make good decisions, and I want all that based on facts and understanding. If we get to the point where we have two good solutions and need to move forward, then I want to know which one you have a better *feel* for.

2. "Intellect is not wisdom." I have worked with many really smart people. High IQ types that could debate you on any topic. The trouble was, some of them lacked understanding. They couldn't connect the dots on dealing with people. Many times they had trouble

applying their knowledge...they knew what to do, but not how to do it.

3. "Competition does a much more effective job than government at protecting consumers." Absolutely true. The free market, left alone, generally delivers value the way it should. There are times when markets get out of whack and government needs to step in. However, what government most needs to protect consumers from is government overreach.

4. "Whatever we wish to achieve in the future, it must begin by knowing where we are in the present. Not where we wish we were, or where we wish others to think we are, but where we are in fact." Every worker should have a clear picture of where they stand with their employer. No sugarcoating is necessary and you don't have to try to make me look good in front of others. Just help me get better.

If I'm not up for a promotion because I'm lacking a certain skill, then tell me so I can improve. One of the goals of every employer should be to have a plan to advance each worker on the payroll.

5. "If you have always believed that everyone should play by the same rules and be judged by the same standards, that would have gotten you labeled a radical 50 years ago, a liberal 25 years ago and a racist today." Obviously, this statement certainly applies to the events of the past couple of weeks with protests, riots, and a lot of hate being thrown back and forth. Let's pivot and make it about the workplace.

First, we'll marry this up to another one. "When people get used to preferential treatment, equal treatment seems like discrimination." I've worked in organizations where the quote-unquote "talent" was treated differently than other employees.

(Con't.)



I've seen top salespeople take liberties with some rules, and totally ignore others.

These sales reps got away with it because they brought the money into the organization and the boss didn't want to ruffle their feathers and possibly lose them to a competitor. So, they had special privileges, even as other workers silently hated it.

When that preferential treatment was taken away they screamed, and indeed, being treated like everybody else seemed like discrimination. The word equality means different things to different people.

Too many of us want equality, even if it results in others losing it. Too many of us want equality — but we want to be just a little more equal than others.

6. "It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance." In other words, it's a smart thing to know what you don't know. It puts you worlds ahead of those who don't know what they don't know... or worse, who think they know and don't.

Thomas Sowell is one of the clearest thinkers around and you can find many more quotes like these on the Internet. Drink them in and use them wisely.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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