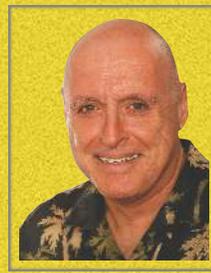


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 605 How Top-Rated Workplaces Self-Describe

Do you think your workplace is as good as any around? What words would you use to describe the characteristics of the place you earn your living. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, we look at those words and ask a few questions. That's up next on The Extra Point.

Every year Inc magazine runs a promotion to select the best workplaces in the U.S. Most cities do the same with local companies. It's been tried here in Guam as well.

In 2019, more than 139,000 employees rated their workplaces, and 346 organizations came out with top ratings.

I don't know the criteria for grading but it's likely a combination of things. You'll grade your employer from 1 to 10 in all kinds of areas, then total all the points. From there you can make comments and the publisher adds 10 points every time somebody says "This place is awesome" and deducts 10 each time somebody says "It sucks." I don't know. Just guessing, but I'll bet it's closer than some people would care to admit.

Like most contests the winners tout the results and the credibility of the event as if it was a deliverance from God on High, while losers says it's trash, ill-conceived, had poor criteria, and showed favoritism.

In the Inc promotion the management team for each winning organization is allowed 100 words to describe why they think they are a great place to work. Before we go any farther, if somebody gave you 100 words to paint a picture of your employer, presumably to attract potential job seekers, what would you write?

David Schramm, whose work at Utah State University includes flourishing at home and at work, was asked to analyze the words used by those 346 organizations. Schramm said: "I could hardly believe the pattern I discovered.

It turns out the 15 words used most frequently in their descriptions aligned precisely with the same three needs for human flourishing."

According to Schramm, the focus was on meeting physical and emotional safety, using words like benefits, care, environment, help, and support. He said the best businesses also fulfill the need for satisfaction, using words such as "fun," "flexible," "happy," "perks," and "growth."

Words also were used to cover the human need for connection. The use of the words "culture" and "team" dominated the descriptions, as well as "people" and "values." Schramm reported that the word "family" was also frequently used.

Many HR departments like to use terms like "family oriented" when they advertise job openings," but how many businesses truly live up to that?

In fact, I'll bet most of the organizations that were not selected as winners use all of the same terms to describe their companies, even though their employees might not. Are they wrong? Are they just saying it even though they know it's not true? Are they delusional?

If you'd like to create a workplace that people would write glowing 100-word descriptions of, here are a few things to consider. The basic needs at work are safety, job satisfaction, and human connection. If you can hit on those three, you should be in good shape. Here's a quick breakdown:

Safety — Right now the topic is COVID-19 but safety involves more than that. Make safety a topic in your organization and give everybody a voice to discuss it.

(Con't.)



Job satisfaction — Interesting and valuable work to do, the tools to do it, opportunities to grow, good compensation, as well as aggressive recognition and praise.

Human connection — This is harder but it's worth the effort. Managers need to talk with workers, not at them. Build trust throughout the organization. Show people they are valued and one way to do that is to listen to them. Show kindness and a personal interest in each worker and their career. Finally, have some fun together and celebrate your victories.

Do these things and you'll create a company culture that will have workers screaming your praises every chance they get.

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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