

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



615 The Smart Use of Personal Pronouns at Work

Something different comes your way today. A little bit of a workplace English lesson. I'm Jerry Roberts and we're going to talk about ways to use some personal pronouns on the job. That's up next, on The Extra Point.

According to the website grammarly.com, a personal pronoun is a short word we use as a simple substitute for the proper name of a person. In example, I, you, he, she, we, they, me, him, her, us, and them are all personal pronouns. We all use them.

Today, I want to discuss how, when, and why to use some of them. Hopefully, the examples will ring true and valuable.

Let's start with "I." How could we use "I" to our advantage? I don't think I'd use the Muhammad Ali line, "I am the greatest!" That might not warm coworkers up to us. "I" is really good to use when you're accepting responsibility when things go wrong. "Boss, the team worked hard on this project. They deserve praise for that. If there's criticism to be taken for the results, I accept that."

If you're a manager you'll score some serious credibility points when you take the heat for mistakes, shielding your team. On the other hand if the team scores a big win, you forget about "I" and you deploy "they." Try "Each person on the team gave it their top effort and came through, exceeding projections. They deserve the credit for a terrific performance."

Let me put it another way. When it's raining compliments and praise, step aside and let your team bask in the glory. When you're facing a storm of negativity, you shelter them from it and stand alone. It's a major league move, one they won't ever forget, and one your boss ought to file away in the folder labeled character.

When else can you use "I"? How about when

you want to support your boss when a tough decision has to be made? "I believe in your leadership and your approach, and I want to help in any way you feel I can."

Let's say you're sitting in a one-to-one meeting with a team member who needs a jolt of confidence. You can see it in their eyes, their self-esteem is wavering and they're sinking into a bad place. Maybe "I have complete confidence in your talent and ability to get the job done."

And by the way, you don't have to be someone's supervisor to do this. We should all be ready to lift the spirits of a coworker who needs it.

We were talking about "they" a few moments ago in reference to letting the team enjoy their recognition. This is also where it's advantageous to use "us" and "we." Again, these are terms that indicate togetherness, so it's best to use them in positive ways such as "We doubled our production last month" ... or "We can hit the next level with your support."

For the word "us" and in a team situation, I always like to hear someone say "You can count on us. 'We' won't let you down." That sounds better than "You can count on me. 'I' won't let you down."

The strategic use of personal pronouns allows us to take responsibility, give recognition and praise, boost confidence and self-esteem, and indicate faith and loyalty, among other things.

We might come back to this topic at some point because it's important. How we use these words is a tipoff to others for where our head is at — whether we're geared to team and enterprise growth, or more to personal growth.

(Con't.)



How are you doing with “I”, “we,” “they,”
“us”?

“I” believe in you, and “I” know you’ll use them
well.

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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