

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 616 Ooching – For When You Need to Finally Decide

You have a decision to make and the boss is calling for it now. You stand up in the meeting, in front of the rest of your team, and you say “I suggest we ooch it.” A coworker giggles, while the boss looks perplexed. I’m Jerry Roberts and what did you just do? We’ll find out, next, on The Extra Point.

Did you ever have to make up your mind  
Pick up on one and leave the other behind  
It’s not often easy and not often kind  
Did you ever have to make up your mind

An ode to decision makers from John Sebastian and The Lovin’ Spoonful.

Every day we have to make choices,  
decisions, and as Sebastian told us, we pick  
up on one thing and leave the rest behind.  
Sometimes that’s not easy. Unless, of course,  
you master the art of the “ooch.”

So what is the “ooch”?

According to brother authors Chip and Dan Heath, their book *Decisive* describes ooching as the middle ground between being frozen by indecisiveness and rushing into snap judgments. They say ooching is taking small steps to test a choice before you make a final decision. It’s an active strategy but one that doesn’t require a commitment.

When you go to a car dealer and narrow down your choices to two models, asking to take both for a spin, you are ooching. The salesman will allow you to test drive both vehicles, though you have made no formal commitment to make the buy.

Software and technology manufacturers ooch with select customers before commitment big money to a project. Restaurants do it, too. Before they make major recipe changes they may ooch with a small group of customers, to get feedback on how they like the taste before

they roll it out to everyone.

The Heaths highlight the story of John Hanks, an executive at National Instruments, a scientific equipment company. Hanks and his team use pilot customers to test out new technology before spending big bucks on it. Hanks said, “Part of the culture here is to ask ourselves, ‘How do we ooch into this?’”

Ooching allows for experimenting before we need to get serious about a product, project, or plan. It lets us minimize risk. There usually are costs involved, but the potential of losing money on a wrong decision is greatly minimized.

I knew a man who had the idea to leave Los Angeles and move to another city. He was a freelance graphic artist and as long as he had his laptop, he could work from anywhere. He just wanted to get out of L.A. He narrowed his choices to San Diego, New Orleans, and Austin.

Rather than doing endless research online, or asking friends their opinion, he decided to ooch. He jumped in his car and went to live in each city for a month. He experienced all of them and picked up on things that you just can’t learn from hearing stories. By the time he’d completed the three months he chose San Diego.

He was leaning toward Austin but then witnessed first hand how rapid population growth had affected Texas, Austin in particular, as Californians and others were pouring in by the hundreds weekly. Ultimately, he saw San Diego and what many believe is the best weather in America as a better option.

Ooching is also a tool that can be used for recovering perfectionists.

(Con’t.)



If you're one of those, raise your hand. There's got to be a 12-step program somewhere for people who want to bust out of perfectionism. You see, perfectionists have anxiety every time they think they might be making a wrong decision.

A perfectionist likely won't use ooching in the right way. That is, they'd never stop ooching, because they would think it can be even better than it is today, I have to keep going.

However, a little ooch here and there could be a Godsend to someone who suffers from the paralysis of analysis — not being able to choose because you have too many choices and you have to study which is best — over and over and over again. Progress is frozen because of it.

If you need to make a decision and you're not sure what to do or how to do it, you don't want to rush and you don't want to get caught up in an analysis that doesn't change, you just might see a breakthrough with the power of the ooch.

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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