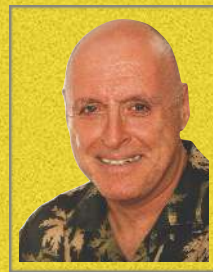


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



632 Secret Files of The New Boss – Part 1

You just got promoted. Congratulations! What's that, you have to manage a group of people who used to be your peers? Oh, condolences? I'm Jerry Roberts and this is what the British might call "a sticky wicket," and it's next on The Extra Point.

Jessica Powell, the former Google VP who wrote *The Big Disruption*, was asked: "I just started managing someone who used to be my peer and it's awkward. I'm trying to act like everything's normal, but I think they resent that I'm now their manager. What should I do?"

This grabbed my attention because I created an entire course around just this topic. It's called *The New Boss* and it's meant to help new managers get past troublesome issues like this one.

Powell says it's an awkward situation and I agree. If you were friends with your former peers there is going to be some weirdness about you now being their boss. However, that's what you now are, so don't try to pretend that nothing has changed.

The reality is this: almost all new managers mess this up, if we were promoted from the ranks. I've heard people say something like this: "Come on, this group I now manage — we were all friends. We were buds. We hung out together. Lots of memories between us and I don't want to throw all that away."

The brand new manager acts as if everything is like it was. Lots of laughing and joking, lunches together, and maybe going out after work. It's the first challenge, accepting the fact that relationships have changed. You don't have to forget the past, but you don't allow it to influence the future.

You want to be successful and so do they. The difference now is, you get to play a larger role

in helping each person to be successful. You can help them grow. To do that, each person will have to see that new manager differently than they did before, so trying to hold on to what you had before is actually counter-productive.

Powell outlined the second issue and it's a tricky one. She wanted to make a worker feel comfortable with the new arrangement, telling her she was highly competent and wouldn't need much direct supervision. Powell figured it was a compliment and her friend would love it. It wasn't until years later that this worker told her that's not how she interpreted the meeting. Instead of the compliment the worker heard, "You and your work don't matter as much, so I'm not going to pay as much attention to you." Powell was stunned.

The third point is that workers need to know you can handle the job. They remember the good old days when you all partied together, but that was then and this is now.

At this moment they realize that their success and immediate career growth has a lot to do with you, even if that thought hasn't yet crossed your mind. Powell says, "No matter what we may say about bosses and authority, we generally like having a clear sense of who is in charge." This is absolutely true.

If we don't have confidence in our leader, we're going to be nervous about how things are likely to go. More on the topic of becoming the new boss, tomorrow.

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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