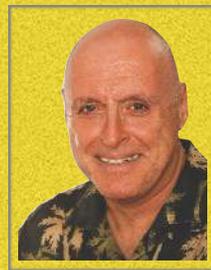


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



637 A Different Way of Looking at a Career

Persistence is a wonderful quality. But what if you're persistent about producing work that nobody wants? I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's next on The Extra Point.

His name is Matty Benedetto and he lives in Burlington, Vermont. He's an inventor and his workshop is filled with buckets of screws, nuts, bolts, spray paint, tons of miscellaneous things you'd find in a hardware store, and maybe a junkyard. He has Five 3D printers. Whatever strange thing he comes up with, he can have a sample knocked out the same day.

It's not easy to call him an inventor in the common use of the term. Serious inventors create solutions to solve problems. Benedetto creates solutions to problems that don't exist. I'll give you a few examples.

Pants with transparent pockets to hold slices of pizza; a solar-powered t-shirt; gloves fashioned to look like Crocs, the popular casual shoe.

He got his start with at age 14, when he began crocheting ski wear. Today, at 30, he makes a full-time living making things nobody else would ever dream of. He has compiled a ton of notes for products which would have no practical purpose whatsoever.

He began with a pair of chopsticks that snap onto the bottom of Apple AirPods, calling them Benedetto's Airsticks. He posted the invention on the site Reddit, getting 54,000 upvotes. He leveraged his newly found fame, launching a website, channels on Instagram and YouTube — and began building as many as 7 new inventions each week. A year later, he has 187 such inventions. Such things as:

- The Hoverbrella: A mini umbrella attachment for a drone.
- The Sobbing Spectacles: A pair of glasses with built-in sponges to collect tears.

- The FingerBeanies: A set of mini beanies that cover just your fingertips.
- The Century Charger: A 100-foot iPhone cable.
- The Cuisine Curtain: A cloth that attaches to your nose and covers your mouth, allowing you to "eat in privacy."
- Chip-Xtractor: A suction device that retrieves the last chip from a Pringles can.
- The Mixer Mask: A face mask that doubles as a beer receptacle.

The typical invention costs Benedetto between \$5-20 and he doesn't sell them. So how does he earn his living? Through viral internet fame, guest appearances on talk shows, and more than two million social media followers.

The money comes through partnerships with the likes of the Call of Duty video game, delivery service DoorDash, and the Almond Board of California. These organizations pay him to create custom unnecessary inventions.

The message here is that Benedetto loves what he does and has fun, letting others have fun with his craziness. He says, "When people see my stuff pop up in their Instagram feeds, they often think they're seeing ads for real products," when what he's creating is actually a parody, a joke of the original.

It's a different way of looking at a career. Not the normal thing to do, but it's worked for him. Could this approach work for others?

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

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