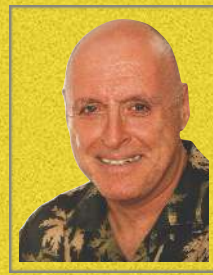


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



638 How to Change Someone's Mind

Would you like to be able to change someone's mind? Would you like to have the right words to say to bring someone over to your way of thinking? It's not easy. I'm Jerry Roberts and I'll give you a 5-step plan on how to do that, next on The Extra Point.

So, you want to change somebody's mind, do you? We'll, let's get specific. Whose mind do you want to change, and why? Is there a face coming into your mind's eye? Okay, now what is it you want to change their mind about? Got it? Okay, let's proceed with a handful of steps.

1. Can you clearly explain what change you're after in, say, a couple of sentences? The shorter this explanation, the clearer you understand what you're after.

2. Since you know whose mind you want to change and what change you want, now write that person an email, telling them why the change is good idea. Don't edit the message as you write it. Just write, and lay out the details. Don't worry, you're not going to send it. This just helps you be clear on the changes you want to see.

3. Here's where it starts getting interesting. What does this person believe right now? What is their position? Do you know why they believe what they believe? What are the underlying reasons? Have they always felt that way? If not, what was their opinion before and why did they change?

I know that sounds like a lot to get your head around, but if you really want to change someone's way of thinking, understanding how they arrived at their current belief is a huge step. "How do I find this out," you say? You can ask.

Ask those questions and give the person room to answer. Don't try to challenge what they say, you want them to give you details.

4. Put yourself into their world and ask this question: If I believed what they believe, what would it take for me to question my belief?

People spend so much time and energy trying to change minds, but they use the wrong tools. Telling them you have a better way won't work. Being snarky, like many folks Facebook won't work. Throwing a bunch of facts against the wall and hoping something sticks is unlikely to move the other person. They'll resist. However, when you understand them and what drives their beliefs, they'll naturally open up to you.

5. The next step has two options. Most people fumble right here. 5a) Don't try to go for the homerun right away. Instead, introduce and gain agreement on a small point that is associated with the larger issue. If you can get this agreement without touching off a battle, you're in pretty good shape and you can move on.

5b) Introduce a disturbing question. It could be something like, "I'm glad we agree on the last point, and now I'm curious. How would you say that relates to...?" — and then you lay out the key point you've been waiting to bring up.

If done well, this kind of sequence has a possibility to get someone to question their point of view. You see, if I question your belief, you're likely to become defensive.

However, if you question it, there's no defense. I greatly improve my chances to change your mind if I enlist your help to do the heavy lifting.

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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