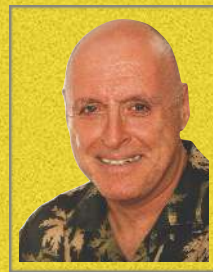


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



645 Angry With Workers Who Aren't Performing?

Do you have any coworkers who are on the lower rungs of the performance ladder, and you can't figure out why? How do you deal with them when their results aren't what you want — and do you ever sort of "lose it"? I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll wade into that topic, next on The Extra Point.

Jessica Powell, the former Google VP who wrote *The Big Disruption*, says a lot of managers have trouble communicating with workers who are — and I love this term — "inconsistently motivated." Can you repeat after me? Inconsistently motivated.

She's had managers ask her how can they work effectively and without anger with people of different levels of motivation and performance. In other words, how can they stop being a jerk to lesser performing workers?

Powell said, and here comes that term again... "Most likely, inconsistently motivated co-workers are not bad, but rather have different priorities than you. It may also be the case that they don't feel inclined to go the extra mile because no one is communicating to them — through good pay or proper recognition — that their work is important."

In case you're keeping score, that lays the poor performance not at the feet of the poor performers, but at the feet of their supervisors. And would you believe, a lot of supervisors don't agree with that judgment?

They would counter that such workers are lazy, and never should have been hired. It was HR's fault.

According to Powell, the first step toward getting someone to do better is to find out what motivates them. The idea is that if you can identify the right motivators, the employee might display more interest in their work.

Now, before I give you my take on this, understand that Powell dealt with some of this as well at Google, and we're not talking about minimum wage workers. Some of those inconsistently motivated people were knocking down pretty serious money.

The HR folks might have been wondering if it was the workers who were at fault, or their managers who couldn't figure out how to reach them.

First, there's no reason to get snarky with anyone. Don't make it personal. You just want better performance and most workers want to give it to you. Let's start with entry-level employees. There are two categories: those who don't care and are there for eight hours and a paycheck; and then there are those who really do try, but don't measure up to some others.

For me, I favor those who stumble around a bit but have a great attitude and want to get better. I'm going to find a way to help this person improve their competence level.

So what do you do with those who are with you for the pay only, and spend a lot of time wasting time?

I suggest adding to their workload a little, with increasingly more challenging tasks. Some will grow and that may change their attitude more toward what you're looking for. Others may not want more responsibility, and will leave you for a simpler job. I've seen both scenarios play out.

As for the more expensive, higher-level worker who isn't hitting on all cylinders for you, it's not always as easy to figure out. Maybe there's a personal issue, conflict with another worker, or maybe they just don't connect with you. Hey, that happens.

(Con't.)

Don't get mad. Grab a cup of coffee with them and build a connection, or a better one. Find out what makes them tick, and figure out how to reach them. Ramp up recognition and see how they respond.

You won't win them all, but that's a good place to start.

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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