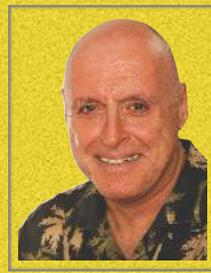


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



649 Workers Burn 15 Weeks a Year on a cellphone?

A workplace survey has just been released and newflash: workers are using their cell phones a lot during working hours, but usually not for working purposes. I'm Jerry Roberts and, actually, there are some numbers that are pretty interesting, and we'll get to them next on The Extra Point.

Tuesday, a Minneapolis non-profit research group named Screen Education released the results of a survey entitled "Digital Distraction & Workplace Safety," detailing smartphone habits earlier this year, involving over 1,000 US employees across various industries.

The headline is always how long employees spend on their phones, doing stuff that has no relation to their work responsibilities. In this case the numbers showed that overall, workers spend about 2.5 hours per day on non-work activities.

If you're keeping score at home, after holidays and vacation days, that's about 240 days times 2.5 hours a day, and that equals 600 hours a year. Given the standard 40-hour workweek, and they people were on their phones for 15 weeks. Every time I give out a number like this, workers usually laugh. Employers usually don't.

That said, not every worker burns 2.5 hours a day on their phone, and not every employer is totally focused on all this. In example, if the worker is highly productive the rest of the time, the boss will probably look the other way on the phone issue. It's the old story, gimme results and I don't care what you do the rest of the time. On the other hand, 47% of organizations have restrictions in place — and a large percentage of workers ignore them.

This isn't just a productivity matter. Digital distractions are a safety issue, too. In fact, one in seven surveyed (14%) reported that a smartphone distraction had resulted in at least

one workplace accident. Overall, 59% of these accidents resulted in property damage and half resulted in death or injury.

In industrial settings, 26% of workers reported distractions led to accidents. Of those, 75% of the accidents resulted in property damage and more than half led to death or injury.

We're talking about patients in hospitals falling because attendants were distracted by music. A driver in a company car rolled it off a cliff, while texting and driving. Someone gets into an elevator and looking at their phone, doesn't notice the door closing. It catches their jacket and as the elevator moves up or down, they start to get choked by their jacket.

The survey report gave another surprise. Nearly one in five respondents (19%) overall and 27% of those in industrial work, want help from the employer to defeat the cell phone distraction monster. "I'm on my phone and I can't get off. Help!"

I've always advocated that people sit down and arrive at place where everybody is comfortable. I prefer the results' orientation. You want more freedoms in the workplace, here are the results we need to achieve. If that happens, then use the phone all you want. If the results aren't there, well, we'll need to observe a tighter set of restrictions. Does that sound fair?

What do you think? How would you handle the situation?

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.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

THE POINT
93.3 FM / 1350 AM / 104.3 FM HD-3

GUAM TRAINING