

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 696 Dysfunctions of a Team — Part 3

We've been talking about dysfunctional teams. Are you a member of one of those? Most of have been at one time or another, from mildly dysfunctional, to massively, neon sign-like, fireworks generating, dysfunctional with a capital D. I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll get into more of that today, on The Extra Point.

To an extent, dysfunction exists in every team. I've never seen one that's perfect. You probably haven't, either. Most teams, if they can really be called that, muddle through from issue to issue. In far too many cases, perhaps the majority, a so-called team consists of a handful of high performers who carry the operation, and the rest just go along for the ride. There's one key component missing.

That brings us to dysfunction number three from Patrick Lencioni's book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, a lack of commitment. It's here where I should interject that this lack of commitment is silent. People generally don't stand up in a meeting and proclaim, "I am not committed to the direction of our leadership."

Instead, they just don't put out at the same level as they would if they were totally on board. You, as the manager, might wish they would be vocal about it so you could address the issue and reach them, but it rarely happens.

Why don't they commit? There are numerous reasons, and what I find is common are: One, they want to commit but leadership hasn't made a good enough case to convince them, or they feel there are better possibilities. Two, they've got a problem with their leadership. Three, if not the leadership, they have a problem with their boss.

Now reason number four, and here's where I feel some of the problem is — they're not "committers," likely never have been, and may never be. Perhaps there's a fear of commitment.

When should you have figured this out? Before you offered them a job. Thanks, Jer.

Okay, that boat has sailed. They've been on the payroll for a while, and what do you do now? One thing is to put your idea or plan together, painting a picture of why you feel it makes sense for them to get on board. Show confidence and enthusiasm.

Look, people want to know if you've done your homework and really believe in what you're trying to sell them. If you're not excited, why should they be excited?

Let them feed back to you and listen when they do. When workers feel their voice is heard by leadership, they're more apt to agree to sign up for where you tell them you're headed.

At the same time, the feedback can help you make a better plan. Don't try to go it alone. The more brains involved, the better the plan can be. If not on the strategy side, maybe the feedback will help on the implementation side.

Show them the options you see. Make a case for why your choice is best. Tell them what's in it for them if they go along. Explain the consequences of your selection as well as other options, or in taking no action at all.

Help people to be a part of the discussion, and you may find that they can more easily unite behind decisions, even if they're still uncertain whether it's absolutely the right way to go.

Lencioni also believes in setting clear deadlines for deciding whether to commit. Don't leave it open-ended. If you need people to be on board, they need to decide.

(Con't.)

Giving a firm deadline will put people in a position where they have to consider the issues and decide what's right for them.

We'll wrap up our look at Patrick Lencioni's *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* 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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