

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



700 Celebrating Guam's Linchpins

Have you ever considered the term “linchpin” when it comes to the job you do, the organization you’re with, and the significance involved? I’m Jerry Roberts and we’ll toss this around, next on The Extra Point.

Linchpin. If you go to the dictionary, one of the definitions you’ll find is “a central cohesive element.” Central, in the middle of things. Cohesive, you keep things together, keep them moving. It’s a good way to describe what we’ll be talking about.

According to author Seth Godin, who wrote a book with the title *Linchpin*, “Every successful organization has at least one linchpin; some have dozens or even thousands. The linchpin is the essential element, the person who holds part of the operation together. Without the linchpin, the thing falls apart.”

When I was hired to do the morning show on KUAM, and called it *The J.Q. Fanihi Show*, the owner of the station, a man named Bob Berger, told me a morning show is supposed to generate 55% of the total station revenues. He said, “You’re the linchpin to us hitting our target.”

In a few words he had totally changed my perspective. It wasn’t just about winning in the morning as a disc jockey, it was about total revenue and winning all day long. He had a bigger vision than the one I’d had. I gave it all I had to live up to the linchpin description.

I’ll fast-forward a bit. After helping launch K57, Jon and I parted ways and I returned to KUAM. It was there that I learned what a linchpin really was, as the station fell into financial trouble and eventually filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

From then on, it was a struggle just to stay on the air and stay in business. Paydays were often dicey, as money was tight, and the

station also owed money to vendors. Somehow, we made it through each challenge, and this was due to a lady who exemplified that word “linchpin,” a lady named Patty Fausto.

She had come to KUAM as a teenager, and stayed for over 30 years, I believe. She knew a lot of people on-island, and they knew her. When the chips were down, those relationships became all-important.

When people tried to collect money the station owed, Patty knew who to call to get more time. When it looked like Payroll wasn’t possible, she could jump on the phone and with a few calls, get enough advertising invoices paid, so KUAM’s employees could get paid.

Whatever anybody needed, they took it to Patty. She struggled with the pressure, with the constant balancing act to keep things together. At the same time, she was raising two great kids, Patrick and Janet. She was also their linchpin.

Eventually, I left the station and moved off-island. Patty held on until the station was sold to the Calvo family a year or two later. We ran into each other a couple of times after I returned to Guam, and I regret we didn’t spend more time. She passed away a few months ago.

If you’ve got a Patty Fausto-type linchpin where you work, take a moment today and just thank them for what they do, for all they do. Thank them for the things you know about, and for the things you probably know nothing about.

Linchpins, like Patty, and like the linchpins you know, are absolutely indispensable — but they would never see themselves that way.

(Con’t.)

Being a linchpin, being in the middle of everything; being the cohesive element, the glue, is just who they are.

Take that time today to appreciate them. Stop by their desk, or call them. Let them know that you know, that you couldn't get along without them.

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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