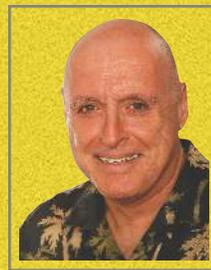


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



702 Commanding Respect is Key to a Manager's Results

Two workers start to argue in the workplace. They're barking at each other, and they won't stop. Even when the supervisor walked in and tried to restore order, they still kept at it. What's wrong with this picture? That's next, on The Extra Point.

Have you ever seen workers get into an argument, and it escalates, getting louder and louder. Maybe names fly, and accusations. During a training many years ago, an attendee told me this had happened in their workplace. Everybody in the department could hear these two men, along with a couple of customers.

The manager was called and showed up, and immediately, they both began to blame the other, and they were still raising their voices. The manager asked them to calm down and follow him, but they were so busy yakking at each other, they didn't really hear him.

Finally, the manager raised his voice, telling them to "Shut up!" They did, and he led them into the conference room, where they could talk, away from ears that had no business hearing their squabble.

So, what was right and what was wrong about this?

1. The manager was able to get the two battling workers away from everybody else. That was the right thing to do.
2. The fact that the manager had to raise his voice and tell them to shut up, is a red flag. His mere presence, him just walking in the room should have caused both of them to immediately stop; either to take their disagreement someplace else, or just end it.

Quick story. I had been working at the fleet vehicle operation — my first real job — for about three months. One night, one of the mechanics was upset over a repair job that

wasn't going well, and he knocked over a couple containers of fluid. The mechanics normally cleaned up after themselves, because our little three-man wash and wax crew had our hands full.

Instead, the mechanic yelled at me to come clean his mess. I had several cars in various stages of being soaped up, rinsed, dried, waxed, and buffed. I told him I'd get there as soon as I could. That wasn't good enough for him, and he proceeded to scream at me, and cuss me out. Well, I was 19, and I gave it right back to him.

The boss, Big Ed, had been on his lunch break, heard the ruckus, and he walked in the mechanic's bay. Both of us stopped, without another word. Ed said, "You fella's going to be okay?" We both nodded, the mechanic walked away, and I went back to my cars.

Did we fear Ed? No, we had the greatest respect for him. So much respect that we wouldn't even think of carrying on like that in his presence.

Ed took the time to know us as people, and he asked questions, so he could figure out what made us all tick. We learned from him. We knew he respected us, and that meant the world. We would never want to dishonor or disappoint him.

That was missing in our first example. The two combatants didn't feel that way about their manager. In our course, RPM, Recognition, Praise, and Motivation, we help managers cultivate deeper and stronger relationships, and to command respect.

That's different from demanding it. Commanding respect means the individual gives it willingly. That's the relationship you want.

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3. Workers who have that kind of respect also show it to coworkers and customers, and would avoid a heated argument in front of them.

If you're a manager, get to know the people on your team. Plant seeds for better relationships. It'll pay off.

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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