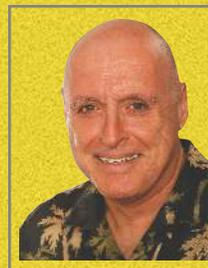


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



712 Accepting a New Project — Part 1

Your boss comes to you and says, “Wow, do I have a project for you! You’re going to love it, and it will look really good in your employee record the next time the company is considering promoting someone.” You say to yourself, “Oh, happy day. My ship has come in. Whatever it is, this is my ticket to the big time.” I’m Jerry Roberts and today, some project management basics to supplement that enthusiasm you have, next, on The Extra Point.

The boss is going to give you a project you can deliver, one that will make you shine. You are ready. I’ve got just a few words that might make a big difference for you.

Years ago, management consultant, author, and leadership guru Tom Peters, electrified an audience when he said this: “Never, ever, never, ever, ever, never accept a job as-is.”

According to Peters, if you want to put your mark on a job, you’re going to have to know as much as is possible about it before you say “yes,” and then you’re going to have to negotiate some freedoms with your boss, so that you can make that mark.

Don’t get scared. This is a good thing, and potentially big. Here’s why. Number one, the boss figures you can do it, so is already comfortable with you. Number two, a boss who is thinking right wants people who can think for themselves.

Number three, someone who is willing to put themselves on the line to try to improve on the existing process, system, service, or whatever it is, is taking a risk, and we need more people who are willing to take well-thought-out, measured risks.

Number four, people who want to step up and do more, and do better, are self-selecting themselves out from the pack, and making it easier for the boss to think of them in potentially

bigger terms. Are you with me so far? Some of this is from Peters and some is from me. When you lump it together, it puts you in a good position, so long as you deliver results.

Project management is governed by three fundamental constraints, and this is the same whether it’s a big project or a small one. By the way, everything I’m about to say holds true for any industry, or personal activity.

The first constraint is the project’s scope, the work that must be done. If you’re going to accept a job, it only makes sense to know what success looks like. I call this knowing where the end zone is. Ask the boss his/her idea of success for the project.

I had a friend named Dave, who was a top-notch salesman, and who wanted to be a sales manager. The job opened up when his boss left the company and the owner offered him the job. The scope of the work? Increase overall sales by 30%.

Dave thought that was doable, until the boss dropped the second constraint. You see, the second constraint is the time to complete the project. In Dave’s case, the owner wanted that 30% increase in six months.

They had generated \$2 million in the year just ended, an average of about \$170,000 a month. So Dave was going to have to hit \$220,000 a month by the end of that sixth month. The time period was so short, he wasn’t sure he could do it. Dave was struggling with his decision.

If he moved up, they would have to find a good replacement to handle his accounts and build more business. That might take a while. Dave really wanted that job and knew he might not get a second chance if he declined.

(Con’t.)

Have you ever been in that position? You're so close to what you've worked hard for, but you worry the situation may not be right?

The third constraint in project management told the story. It was the determining factor. It was why Dave made the decision he did.

We've got it for you, 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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