

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



748 More on Asking the Right Questions

Yesterday, we were reminded that if we want to get the right information, we're going to have to learn how to ask the right questions. I'm Jerry Roberts and let's find out what some of those questions are, next, on The Extra Point.

In yesterday's Extra Point, #747, which you can download at guamtraining.com, we used the example of how a manager could determine if workers were listening in a meeting, by asking people specific questions. Not "do you understand," which can be answered with a "yes," but "what do you understand and how do you intend to proceed?" If the individual wasn't tuned in, you'll know it right away.

Asking the right questions is a critical skill. Let's examine how we can use them. You're back in the meeting and you've made a presentation. Unfortunately, you're getting resistance from George, who is pushing back against it.

Even if George is a jerk and counters everything you say, you're going to use your emotional intelligence, and reply with something like, "George, please take another look, and tell us how you think it *could* work?"

Alternatively, you might try, "George, you're good at expanding on ideas. What would you add or subtract from what you now see, and what impact do you feel that would have?"

If you're with me on this, both questions are similar and — if George responds as we hope he will — we accomplish something very important. I'll get to that in a moment. First, let's examine those two questions.

"George, please take another look, and tell us how you think it could work?" The key thing here is we're moving him away from negativity as he tries to look for reasons the idea could be successful.

"George, you're good at expanding on ideas. What would you add or subtract from what you now see, and what impact would that have?"

Right off the bat, we've dropped a little praise on him by saying he's good at expanding ideas. That's likely an attitude changer. Asking him to add or delete elements of the idea and consider the impact is, in essence, another positive stroke, because it suggests we believe he has the ability to do that.

What's that important thing we accomplished? We turned the idea from a solo deal, my idea, into a partnership. I may have to field questions and even criticism, but we're all on the same side. I'm not facing adversaries.

Inviting partners gives my idea greater support, plus I'll have the benefit of different viewpoints, some of which I may not have considered. Inclusion can be a beautiful thing. You get there with questions like, "How do you see things?"..."What would you add or change?" Give more people a chance to participate, and you might be surprised at what you get in return.

All in all, this gives the idea a better chance of being used and succeeding. We got to that point by asking the right question at the right moment.

The workplace offers up a multitude of scenarios, and asking better questions can give you better results in just about all of them. What kind of questions are you asking?

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.

###

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