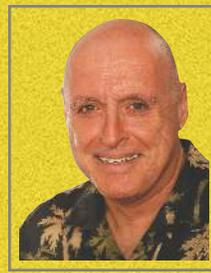


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 751 Want to Hire People the Way Elon Musk Does?

Elon Musk seems to be everywhere, and for the most part, when he makes a move, it's the right one. He says he has a foolproof system to spot a liar, which might prove valuable in the hiring process — and we'll dig into that, next, on The Extra Point.

Elon Musk has recently been switching places with Amazon's Jeff Bezos as the world's richest individual. It seems he has made a lot of good decisions of late.

He is critical of Facebook's censorship, as well as most of what the company does, which makes him a hero to untold millions of people around the world. He also has supported the "little guy" in the Gamestop stock situation.

Musk hires people on instinct. Yes, he has an HR department, but he also likes to interview top candidates, and he has a question he likes to ask that he says tells him what he needs to know, and whether to offer the job.

As you might expect, Musk has some of the same problems we all do when considering a job candidate. One problem is that people can tell you anything about their skills and capabilities, and it's pretty much impossible to know whether they're being truthful.

He says he has one question that he asks every candidate, and it's a good one. This is it. "Tell me about some of the most difficult problems you worked on and how you solved them." When the person answers, Musk probes for details. In his words, "The people who really solved the problem know exactly how they solved it, and can describe the little details."

A study published in the Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition, backs up Musk's approach. One of the authors of the study found that people who are honest and tell the truth, generally want to demonstrate

their innocence. They commonly provide more detailed information to questions. In contrast, those who are making things up as they go will likely choose to be more vague about the details. You might be asking yourself, "How accurate is this? The study claims an accuracy rate of 70%.

Musk goes a step farther, and it's an important one. He wants to make sure that the individual who is claiming a specific achievement, actually was the one responsible. Was this person the key factor, or was somebody else more responsible for the win?

Can you replicate Elon Musk's success in hiring by probing deeper? Yes, you can, but you have to be prepared to keep asking questions. "How did you do that?" ... "What did you do then?" ... "Why did you pursue that course of action?"

Keep in mind the purpose here. For Elon Musk as well as everybody else who is looking to bring in the right talent, the ultimate prize you're after is hiring a critical thinker, a problem solver, a solid decision maker. So, ask more and better questions, to uncover those skills.

You may never be the richest person on the planet, but you can approach the interviewing of your potential workers the way he does, and maybe that will lead you to greater success.

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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