

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



780 Is Our Character on Display?

What are the things you and I do, every day, that tell others about the kind of person we really may be? I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we look at habits that reflect well or not so well upon us. That's next on The Extra Point.

All of us have habits and behavioral patterns that send signals to others about our character, and people pick up on those things to decide whether or not they want to be our friend, be our life partner, and maybe be our employer. Sometimes, these things are subtle and hardly noticeable, and other times they're like a neon sign going on and off, a distinct warning sign.

One of those small things I learned many years ago was the way we eat can send a message. I recall a story of a business leader who would always take a prospective new hire to breakfast, raving how the restaurant made the best egg dishes in town. Except for strict vegans I suppose, everybody ordered eggs with their meal.

When the food came, the tip-off was whether the person put salt and pepper, and ketchup on the eggs, before trying them. The leader saw that as a test of one's decision making, that they may make decisions without knowing key information. What else do we do that would lead others to make decisions about us?

1. How we treat service staff. Malcolm Forbes, founder of Forbes magazine, said: "You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him." It obviously goes for women as well.

Do we see restaurant servers, workers at the grocery store, department store, gas station, government agency and more as being "beneath" us? Do we talk to them as if they are? Do we make them feel like we feel like we're superior? That leads us to the next one...

2. How we act with people whom we feel can do something for us. When we're with people who are wealthy, are we different? Do we give preferential treatment to those who can make a decision to buy our product or service, or accelerate our career?

When we combine these two — people we may see as being above or beneath us, do we appear to be two different people, depending on who we're with?

3. What our car looks like. This has nothing to do with the kind of car someone drives or how much it cost. It is about the car's cleanliness, and that doesn't necessarily include the exterior.

In Guam, it's often tough to keep cars clean on the outside. This is specifically about the interior. Is it clean of food wrappers, soda cans, and other debris? Is there a place for trash, or is the whole car seemingly the place for trash?

4. How a person acts when they make a mistake. When we make an error in judgment and things don't turn out as hoped for, do we own up to it, or run from it? Do we apologize and set out to clean up the situation, or do we get defensive? Worse, do we seek to set the blame for our mistake off on someone else? Further, is it a different story when we get to number five...

5. How a person acts when others make a mistake. Do we allow them room to explain and own the situation, or are we quick to blame and condemn them for it?

Overall, when we look at what happens when mistakes are made, do we project a double-standard — that we try to escape blame for the ones we commit, but seek to assign blame to others for theirs?

(Con't.)

6. Do we keep our promises? When we tell someone we'll take care of a situation, or be somewhere at a certain time, do we show a pattern of not following through? If people could hang a score around our neck, from one to ten, as to how reliable we are and how well we keep our commitments, what score would that be?

This is just a short list of factors that indicate character. We all display a set of behaviors to the world. What do those behaviors tell them about us?

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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