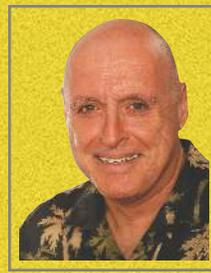


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 831 Deep Work and Busy Work Aren't the Same

It is a term that likely got its start with Millennials, then other generations picked up on it, and eventually a book came from it. I'm Jerry Roberts, and the term is *deep work*, and we'll chat about it today, on The Extra Point.

Deep work has been called the holy grail of productivity. Deep work is important work, our most important work, whatever that is. Deep work isn't just about the nature of the work, it's about our individual focus, and the productive state of mind we're in while doing the work.

Deep work is about being in what I call "the zone", where everything seems to flow our way. The mind is totally engaged in what we're doing, and every movement seems to have purpose. If this was a symphony, each note would be perfect. Even the difficult tasks offer little resistance.

We go from job to job like a machine. In our deep work frame of mind, instead of feeling exhausted, it's much more likely we'll feel supercharged and excited. Some people claim it's better than sex.

We don't stay in the deep work zone all day, and we might not put ourselves there every day. Deep work is reserved for the special times when we have to be our best.

Deep work is not the same as "busy work," the state in which most of us anchor ourselves for most of our working day, day after day.

Cal Newport authored a book by the title *Deep Work*, which he called a way to manage attention. We live in a world of constant distractions, with many things competing for our attention. In that environment and without focus, deep work isn't possible.

Newport says we settle for is shallow work, things of lesser difficulty and lesser importance.

Let's talk about being busy. Everybody is busy. We cram more and more into each day, almost as if the smallest increment of time that isn't covered by some task or activity is some kind of sin.

We live in a growing hustle culture. We use words like grind to describe what we do. "Yeah man, I'm grinding. Gonna be grinding all day!" Busy, busy, busy we are as we mow down the days, weeks, months, and years. Well, newflash! — grinding isn't necessary productivity.

Our society teaches that we must be doing something all the time. When we're not actually busy, we try to make sure we look busy, so the boss won't get on our case. This is how four hours of work turn into an eight-hour workday.

I was so fortunate to have a boss like Big Ed as my first one, who taught me the importance of getting the work done well, and by closing time, but how I used that time was up to me.

If our team finished our work ahead of schedule and up to Ed's standards — which quickly became our standards — we could relax during the last hour until we clocked out. Frankly, we could have relaxed the first hour. It didn't matter. It was about the work being finished by the time we checked out.

Most people can separate their job into regular work and deep work, dividing tasks of greater and lesser difficulty, requiring more or less of our intense focus. Maybe 80% of what you do isn't highly challenging, and needs only average focus, while the other 20% falls into the category of deep work.

You set Tuesday and Thursday mornings as your scheduled deep work sessions. You allow nothing to get in the way of those. (Con't.)

You mentally prepare for them, make sure somebody takes calls for you, set your phone to vibration mode, and dive in.

Deep work can become habitual. When it's regularly scheduled on our calendar, we may actually get to the point where it's not just about our mindset, but our body will give a physical response. Like preparing for an intense gym workout or long run, energy levels and focus rise to meet the need.

Deep work, highly focused, work where our state of mind makes it seem like anything but work. It can be good for us, and might change forever how we view work.

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](http://guamtraining.com)

