

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 848 The Language of the Workplace

The language of the workplace. It doesn't always convey a message that really puts us in the best possible light. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today let's examine some of the words we commonly use at work. That's coming next, on The Extra Point.

Most of us use words that are meant to give a certain impression of us. It might be confidence we're trying to show, or humility. Whatever the purpose and goal we have, sometimes we use words that don't send the message we want. Let's take a look.

1. "I'm available any time that's good for you." When we say this, perhaps we're thinking it sends the message that we value this individual so highly, we'll clear our schedule for them. What it said to me is, this person doesn't have anything going on. They are not in demand. I doubt that's the message you want to send even if it's true.

What if you said it this way: "I'm already blocked much of the week, but there are scattered openings. Do you prefer mornings or afternoons? Mornings? Which day is best for you? Thursday. Actually, Thursday is okay for me. Would you like 8:30 or 11:15? Pin the individual down to a day, morning or afternoon, then work out the exact time.

2. "I'm So Busy." Stop saying this. Most people are busy. Saying you're incredibly busy could be taken as bragging. Worse, because I want to meet with you, it obviously indicates that I'm not quite as busy as you are, and I have the time.

We often use the busy excuse because we don't want to tell the other person we aren't interested in what they have to offer. Instead, we say how horribly busy we are, in the hopes they get the message and move on.

In recent years, being super busy or "grinding"

has become a badge of honor. Some people think it puts them in a special class of people. I might agree. It could be the class that doesn't optimize time effectively, or fails to delegate work to others. Nobody should ever be too busy to hear a good idea.

3. "I Could Be Wrong, but." This phrase is often used when we want to put a layer of insulation between us and negative feedback. We might believe strongly what we're saying, but we still try to shield ourselves from criticism if something goes wrong.

Instead of saying it this way, how about, "I found something we might be able to use. Apparently, it's worked for others in similar circumstances, and maybe it's the answer we're looking for."

When I say "I could be wrong," it's also saying I could be right. This makes the situation about me. Is that necessary? We're part of a team, and the goal is for everybody to come up with ideas that make us more successful.

Therefore, saying you discovered an idea doesn't indicate ownership for you, and it also doesn't say you're backing it. All you're doing is offering it up for consideration.

4. The words "just" and "only." They don't think they have the experience or the right to discuss issues of importance in the presence of more senior people. So, you hear, "I'm just the assistant team leader," or "I've only been in my position for six months," prior to making a statement, or providing an idea.

Let me break it down for you. First, everybody you'll be talking to felt the same feelings at one time or another. They were "just" and "only" once themselves. Spare them the memory of when they were indecisive. Instead, impress them with your confidence.

(Con't.)

Second, this is similar territory to number three, "I could be wrong, but." All people care about is what can you contribute to solving problems. Do that, with confidence.

The language of the workplace. Words matter. Treat them that way. Get further, and do better.

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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