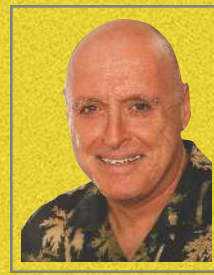


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



881 Managing Up – Why You Want to do it

If I asked you to manage up, would you know what to do, and why it's one of the most important decisions any employee can make? I'm Jerry Roberts, and the concept of managing up is coming next on The Extra Point.

When the concept of *managing up* was first floated in the workplace, it was presented as a method for employees to somehow "control" the relationship between them and their boss. I've placed emphasis on the word control, because that seemed to be the goal.

The thought was, if we could be successful in being proactive and establishing a relationship with the boss, on our terms, we could in some ways manipulate that relationship for our benefit. No, it obviously wasn't presented that way, but you could read between the lines and see how it worked.

The idea was that the vast majority of workers steer clear of the boss, and would never even think of trying to expand into an ongoing relationship. Therefore, if you did, you would be way ahead of the others, when it came to getting special projects, being brought into the "inner circle" where important issues were discussed, and you stood a better chance to get training and advancement.

That was the theory, and it worked. It worked then, and it works now. It works at all levels of an organization, whether that's from front line employee to supervisor, supervisor to middle manager, middle manager to department head, department head to senior director, and from senior director to CEO.

It works at all levels because of the circumstances of the person above me in the organizational chart are identical — they must deliver certain results to their boss.

The specifics are different in every situation, but the fact is, everyone in management has

the task to hit a goal set by the leadership. What that means to me, the person working for that manager, is simple: If I know what my boss's goal is, I want to make my number one goal to help them hit theirs.

Although nobody ever said this to me when I was hired, I was hired to help them achieve those goals. It needs to be my #1 priority.

Managing up is about relationship. When you have a strong, trust-based relationship with your supervisor, it can help you solve — even prevent — problems. Frequent "face time" with your boss leads to the strengthening of that bond. Face time, in this case, doesn't refer to the Apple software, but a one-to-one meeting.

My boss can also be my mentor. This is fast-tracking the relationship. A mentor is a guide, an advisor. They take an interest in my success, and feel rewarded when I do well. One-to-one meetings become a type of ongoing performance review system.

If you're nervous about asking your boss to be your formal and ongoing mentor, here's another way I've used. I ask for the one-to-one time, bring a load of questions and get the answers. I apply the information to my work, and go back to tell my boss what I've done with their advice.

Then, I ask more questions. Since they know I actually used their wisdom, they're happy to give me more answers. It's not formal, but it is mentoring.

Eventually, maybe I ask a big question, "What else could I do to better help you succeed even more?" If your boss is dialed in and on top of his/her game, that might get you a new project, and lead the way to even bigger things. When your boss sees greater value in you, it's more likely they'll take advantage of it.

(Con't.)

Today, I've provided the foundational idea in managing up with your boss. Tomorrow, we'll address a few challenges you may encounter in making this happen. Don't miss it.

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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