

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



882 Managing Up – There’s More to the Story

Today, more on the concept of managing the relationship you have with your boss. I’m Jerry Roberts and it’s called managing up. We’ll get to it, next, on The Extra Point.

Yesterday, we began talking about the idea of “managing up,” focusing on the needs of our boss and becoming a more valuable resource. There’s more to consider, and in the next couple of minutes, we’ll chat about that.

Managing up is about making an effort to gain influence with our boss. We know they likely have responsibilities which prevent them from focusing on relationships with those whom they supervise as much as they might want to. So, if we take the initiative, we can create a situation that helps both parties.

Is it worth the effort to try to manage our relationship with our boss? When you consider the influence they carry over what assignments we get, as well as what opportunities may come our way, my answer is a resounding yes!

If I want to get ahead with my current employer, my boss can help me. It is worth the effort.

Still, we have to be realistic. If we want greater engagement with our manager, we’ll have to give them a reason. The best one I know is that we handle our job at a high level, so they can recognize our value. Then, when we suggest a one-to-one meeting to ask questions and get some mentoring, we’re unlikely to be denied.

Also, we need to observe the boss and recognize his/her flaws, ego, needs, possible career or personal goals and aspirations. We also need to understand that our view of the boss may not match up to their own self-awareness.

However you see your boss and whether that boss might agree with your assessment, managing up can work. Yesterday, we discussed

aligning our goals with the boss’s goals, and helping them to deliver on them should be our top priority. There’s more to this picture.

We should identify our boss’s strengths, weaknesses, and know how we can make a greater contribution. A friend once had a boss who wasn’t good with delegating jobs, and let things pile up. Then, he’d spring the work on the team all at once and everything was fairly chaotic. My friend established a regular one-to-one routine, and offered to have those jobs routed through him instead. The boss agreed to it. It was a little extra work, but it eliminated the mess and the stress.

Let’s also be clear on one more thing. None of this is about sucking up to anyone. You don’t build a relationship that way. It’s all about adding value to the boss, and adding to our own value in the boss’s eyes.

Now, what happens if the boss declines our invitation, and claims they’re too busy to be involved in an ongoing arrangement? Then we ask if it’s okay if we poke our nose in their office once in a while to keep them up to date on our progress, and maybe ask questions.

They’ll likely agree to that, and it accomplishes roughly the same thing, without them feeling cornered by a long-term agreement.

Managing up can separate you from the pack, and give you added visibility in the organization. It can also make a nice difference for your boss.

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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