

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



911 How to be a True Leader

Many people want to be seen as a leader. They want to win public office because the term “leader” usually accompanies that distinction. They want to be selected as a senior manager, because leadership is associated with that role. Too many end up bitter, and feel incomplete, because they never experience what it means to be a true leader. I’ll tell you why, next, on The Extra Point.

In my years I’ve known leaders, and I’ve known people who thought they were leaders. In far too many cases, it was true only in terms of their position, not because of anything they accomplished.

Positional leadership, in the absence of having a worthwhile vision that moves the bar in the direction of helping others, is empty. It’s a waste of time. It’s a waste of opportunity.

Whether the people to be helped are employees, and all other stakeholders associated with a company; or whether it’s the public as it relates to elected officials, leadership is measured by the effort you make but, more important, the benefits you create for the people you claim to represent. You are an advocate for that group of people.

Too many “wannabe” leaders want the spoils of leadership, including money, perks, opportunities, and adulation from those they know as well as those they’ll never know. They wish to be exalted among men, and women. “Look, there he goes...look, there she goes.”

They love the image — the optics — of being a leader, never realizing the real thing is available to them anytime they choose it. The real thing. The respect, admiration, and followership that is earned not by what you say you will do, but by doing what you say.

You want to be a leader? It’s easy, take a stand for something. Take a stand against

something. Make it something that concerns and will benefit those same people you represent. Leaders take a stand.

Business leaders can take a stand against harassment in all forms, or a stand for equal opportunity. A stand against government overreach, or a stand for better working conditions and better health practices for all employees.

True political leaders will also take a stand against government overreach, or a stand for right-sizing government. They can take a stand for a decades-old promise to finally build an economy that doesn’t rely upon a fragile tourism industry, as well as military spending, or a stand against poor maintenance practices that lose taxpayers millions each year as equipment and facilities fall into disrepair.

Whatever you take a stand for or against, don’t just talk about it so you can say you wanted it. Commit yourself to the results. People can tell the difference.

You want to be a leader? You don’t need a fancy title. You just need to genuinely want to make a difference, and then make that difference. People will indeed take notice. Anyone can do it, if you want it enough.

I don’t know who said it, but these words are true: “A leader isn’t a leader unless somebody willingly chooses to follow.” Real followers are there because they want to be there, not because of fear or a misplaced sense of obligation.

So, if you think you might be a leader, turn around and see who might be following — and why? I wonder if what you’ll see will surprise you.

(Con’t.)

When people see you truly leading in an area or issue which matters to them, they will naturally fall in line behind you, because we all want to be a part of something bigger than ourselves.

We all want to stand with someone who has a vision we believe in, and who will help us to get further and do better.

Will you be a real leader?

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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