

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



943 Which Group Do You Work Best With?

There are three possible groups you have on the job. The people you report to, the bosses; your peers, those on the same organizational level as you; and people who report to you, those underneath you on the org chart. Question: Which group do you work best with? I'm Jerry Roberts, and let's jump into that, next, on The Extra Point.

The best situation is where everybody on all levels gets along with each other, and we all work well together. Ideally, you'd be scratching your head on this question, because you work so well with each group.

However, that's not reality. For each of us, there is a clear choice in who we work best with. For me, it's almost always been my superiors. I'm all about high production, pushing the envelope, getting further and doing better. Managers, particularly those higher on the chain as you go up, love that stuff.

My peers probably saw me as being highly competitive, and that could be a threat if they were looking to advance. I think I was a decent teammate, holding my end on commitments, doing what was expected of me, and maybe a little more.

That said, I wasn't the guy who hung out after work, grabbing a couple of beers in the parking lot. I didn't look down on those who did, but I always had a class, an event, or something to do. I showed up, did my job, and left.

As for those who reported to me, I wanted them to work under conditions I liked for myself. I didn't hover over them, micromanaging every aspect of their job. I figured my role was to make sure each person had what they needed to do the work successfully, and then to leave them alone.

I think the majority of people appreciated that approach, especially if they had come from a

far more structured workplace, or a manager who was on top of them all the time.

However, I will say that my method wasn't a great fit for everybody. I came to learn that some workers need more structure and daily guidance, or they are less productive.

To be honest, that was an adjustment for me, and it wasn't easy. I had work of my own that had to be finished on time, and it put me behind when I had to focus on others.

There's one more part to working with direct reports. I had the opportunity to help them build skills, and grow. To me, that's a huge part of being a manager.

The idea of transferring what you know to someone else, then seeing them take advantage of that and advance their career, is exciting. I suppose that's what led me to what I'm doing now.

Of course, there is one big qualifier to all this. If you asked my bosses, my peers, and the people who reported to me, what they thought of me, you might get a totally different picture. "Oh, Jerry Roberts...let me tell you about Jerry Roberts!"

This question of which group we work best with is a good one, because it's not something we think about. So, I turn it over to you. Be honest, which group do you work best with — bosses, peers, or direct reports?

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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