

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



975 Managers and Leaders Must be Self-Aware

Self-aware leaders are better leaders. How self-aware are you? I'm Jerry Roberts, and today, let's talk about what we really know about ourselves, next, on The Extra Point.

I came across an article in a British architectural magazine the other day, that caught my attention. I don't dig into the world of architecture very often, but this particular piece pulled me in. The idea that self-awareness is incredibly important in the development of every manager.

It's the idea that you should know you far better than I know you. Therefore, you knowing you, if you do know you, might be of value when it comes to helping you improve your management skills. Otherwise, it's a bit of a guessing game, wouldn't you say?

Before we go further, maybe we should distinguish between management and leadership. Using the definition provided by Harvard Business Review, "Management consists of controlling a group or a set of entities to accomplish a goal. Leadership refers to an individual's ability to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards organizational success."

In general, people who start a business will have the role of managing it. Later, if the company grows and the employee roster expands, leadership will hopefully come into play. In any case, both the manager and the leader need to know themselves well, in order to be effective.

One of the writer's key points was that most of us are far too busy to get to know ourselves, yet we should know. Doing so can be an uncomfortable and challenging process.

Before one concentrates on managerial functions such as delegating, planning, problem-solving and decision-making, they

might do well to ask themselves how good they are at listening, empathizing, creativity, strategic thinking, and time optimization, among other things.

"Wait a second Jerry," you say, "Do you mean to tell me I have to be really good at all that in order to be a decent manager?"

No, but in keeping with the theme of this Extra Point, I think you need to be aware of just how good you are at the qualities needed to manage effectively.

I know what I'm good at, and what I shouldn't mess with. The stuff I shouldn't do, I don't do, unless absolutely necessary. If I'm in a group setting and one of multiple managers, and one of them performs a certain function almost as if they had invented it, why wouldn't I recruit them to help me or teach something to my team? Maybe I can return the favor at some point.

A lot of managers think it's a bad thing to admit you don't have specific expertise, that your boss will mentally downgrade you if you admit a weakness. Thanks for bringing that up.

First, if your boss looks at you cross-eyed because you inform him/her that a certain skill is not a strength, then maybe you're working in the wrong place.

Second, if I'm your boss, I'm thanking you for telling me now, before I assign a job to you in the belief that you can do it, only later to have a disaster on my hands when you fail.

I would love someone to sit down with me and say, "Boss, here's what I'm good at and here's what I'm not good at. Rather than focusing on my weaknesses, I'd like to strengthen my strengths, and I think — with your help — I can turn some of those into superpowers to help advance this organization."
(Con't.)

Boom, where do I sign up for that?

Self-awareness may lead us into admissions that are uncomfortable. We want to be good at everything, and be recognized for that, but it's not reality for 99% plus of those listening right now. It's just not, and that's fine.

If you've never done this, take the time to evaluate where you are, and what you're capable of. If you're struggling with it, ask for feedback from your boss, or coworkers, your spouse, and good friends. Figure yourself out.

Self-aware managers and leaders are better managers and leaders. I wish you well in this journey.

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.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

