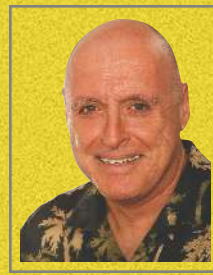


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1021 Should We Take a Day to Show Our Appreciation?

I was reading an article on a site that claims a sizable audience among senior leaders, and I came across a story that made every hair I don't have stand on end. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'll tell you why, next, on The Extra Point.

Employee Appreciation Day, which, by the way, was this past Friday. How did you celebrate? A barbecue and a day at the beach? Did you attend the parade? I understand it was incredible.

The writer had advice for CEOs and business owners, saying that the proper way to recognize this joyous occasion was to give workers thoughtful gifts because that shows you really care. I'm going to quote from his article, because I want you to feel the love.

"Your team members' personal lives can directly impact their professional lives, and as a leader the onus is on you to take inventory of the relationships, situations, milestones, and celebratory moments that happen within your team—even beyond the walls of your company."

What he is saying is your job would be to consider each worker carefully and — again — thoughtfully — and buy a gift that is a match for their circumstances. You certainly wouldn't want to get everybody the same thing, right?

Since employee burnout is a common complaint, you could save the time it would take to buy those gifts, and instead grant everybody some bonus time off. Or, you could write each worker a handwritten *thank you* note for their service.

Okay, so am I against all this? The answer is yes and no. I am against a made-up holiday as an excuse to do something nice for someone. If you want to give your workers a gift when they get married, have a baby, or celebrate a special occasion — then do that.

If you see a worker who is giving off obvious signs of work fatigue and this is impacting his/her productivity and job enjoyment, give them the option of a day off or two to hit the reset button. If you do this, tell them on Wednesday afternoon, which gives them a four-day weekend. As for the handwritten note, I suggest doing this on a regular basis.

What's the problem with all this? Employee appreciation is limited to one day? March 4th was it? We can ignore workers the rest of the year, except for occasionally abusing them?

So, on the surface, it seems to me that it's a dumb idea. Every day should be employee appreciation day. You don't need gifts, time off, or handwritten notes. How about a little respect, praise, recognition, acknowledgment that they exist and bring value to the team and the organization.

If you manage at any level, and if every member of your team doesn't get some of that kind of love from you every week, you're flat doing it wrong. That goes if you're in the private sector, government, or military.

The writer finished by saying, "Celebrating Employee Appreciation Day is a must for leaders looking to demonstrate how much they value their teams." No, no way. You demonstrate it every day.

By the way, Monday, April 18th is another silly made-up thing, National Customer Appreciation Day. Tell 'em you care on April 18th, and you don't have to even think about them the rest of the year. Nice.

Something else...October 16th, another Monday, is Boss's Day. I know everybody will immediately circle that one on their calendar.

(Con't.)

Curiously, the word ‘appreciation’ doesn’t appear anywhere on that one. I wonder why.

Now, I’m sure the writer of the article doesn’t believe appreciation should be limited to a single day. I’m simply making a point here.

One more thing, that if you and your team actually recognized last Friday as Employee Appreciation Day, then good for you. I congratulate you on caring for your team. Keep it going.

I’ll just add, you don’t need a holiday, especially a phony, made-up holiday, to serve as an excuse to treat people well and show interest in them. Make every day an appreciation day for workers, customers, and — yes — even bosses.

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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