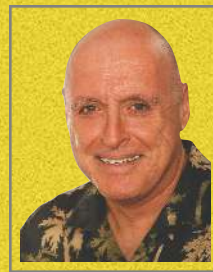


The Extra Point

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1037 Checking Out Job Applicants Avoids Trouble

Do you do a thorough job in checking out all applicants for jobs with your company, especially for the more important positions? Have you ever put someone on the payroll without looking into their background? I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll get into that, next, on The Extra Point.

We'll call her Marie. She was pretty, athletic, bright, personable, and seemed to say all the right things. Her resume was solid, even if her work history didn't exactly fit the sales job the company was advertising.

She said she wanted a change from what she had been doing. Chris, the owner of the company had interviewed a half-dozen people that week and none were even close to what he wanted.

He was also trying to fill his vacant HR job, which was left open when the lady in that role got married and moved across country with her new husband. He was cursing the hiring process and hated the thought of it going on for another week or longer.

Even without experience in sales, Marie checked off all of the other boxes and Chris hired her without a second interview or background check.

Marie was likeable and since that's a big part of selling, Chris was sold on her. He put her on full salary with a bonus program.

Her first month held great promise. She said she was seeing clients and many were close to signing or renewing contracts. Nothing had been finalized but she had scheduled callbacks, and it was only a matter of time.

Chris was opening up a new sales territory in a small city about 200 miles away. He assigned two of his better sales reps to drive there and spend two weeks making calls to introduce

the company. Learning of this, Marie asked to be included, saying she had a friend who lived there and had many influential contacts who might be good prospects for the company.

Chris agreed. He booked her into the same hotel as the other two reps, and would cover all meals — with the hope that many of those meals would include prospects.

The lead rep called in at the end of the first week to give his report. There had been a number of sales, and chances were good for more. That said, Marie had not signed any deals, and had only invited one person to a meal, her friend, twice. She said they were working on a few big prospects the friend had great connections with, and something was sure to break soon.

A couple of days later, something did break, but it wasn't what Chris expected.

A client called and asked him to send a rep around, that he needed parts for a machine. Chris said that Marie was out of town, but he would fill the order and have it delivered.

The client, sounding confused, said, "Marie? Who's that?"

Chris responded, "Your new rep. It says here she met with you on April 8th, per her sales report, and said you were getting ready to make a big order."

The client said, "Chris, I haven't met with anybody from your company in the last three months. I have no idea who Marie is."

Now Chris had all kinds of thoughts going off in his head. He had his assistant call the companies on her sales report, and his worst fears became fact.

(Con't.)

Of the four dozen clients and prospects she had listed, less than half had contact with Marie. Only about half of those were in person, the rest were quick phone calls.

The assistant pulled Marie's resume and said she knew a manager who worked at the last employer listed. After being given complete assurance that his name would not be mentioned, the manager said Marie had been fired for not completing assigned work, and — can you guess? — falsifying reports.

Chris was stunned. He realized that even though he was frustrated with the interviews and the hiring process, if he had put forth a little more effort to check Marie's background, he could have saved himself a lot of money and anguish.

He reached Marie by phone in the other town and confronted her with the evidence. She conceded that it was all true. However, she liked the company and thought Chris was a good guy, and hoped that, somehow, she could stay on to make a go of it.

Chris couldn't believe what he was hearing, and ordered her to be back in the office the next morning. She walked in, and he fired her. Few words were spoken, and she left.

Hiring can be a pain in the butt. In my career, there have been a few times I shortchanged the process and just put someone on the payroll. In about half of those cases, I regretted it. I needed the job filled, and I know you do, too. Even so, do the work, and check people out.

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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