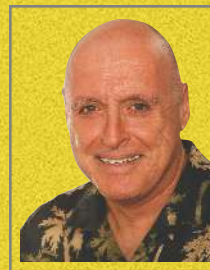


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1064 Handing Off Authority is Important

If you're a general manager or CEO, lend me your ears. How you hand off authority to a new manager or supervisor is important. Not everybody sees it that way. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I've got a story about that, next on The Extra Point.

John gets a call from his CEO early on a Friday evening. "John," said the boss, "Paul Martin got a big job offer in Florida and needed to leave right away, so I let him go because he said you were ready to take over as supervisor. What do you think?"

John said he was a little nervous about it, but it would be okay. Then he asked when the CEO wanted to make the announcement on Monday.

The response was unexpected. "Uhh, John, I won't be able to do that. I'm leaving tonight for a week. It's no big deal. Just tell the team Paul got a big job out of town, and you have been selected as the new unit leader. It'll be fine. I'll check in on you when I get back. If you need anything, ask my assistant Peggy, and she'll take care of you."

John thought, "Great, I have to make my own introduction as manager." Then, his focus turned to two of the team members whom he was sure also were interested in the promotion. He figured there might be some resistance to him getting the job.

He came to work Monday, but didn't feel the timing was right for the announcement. He said nothing. In fact, he said the same thing — nothing — on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

The department had a small emergency that week and John handled it, which made some of the workers ask, "Hey, where's Paul?" That question went unanswered. Friday morning, Peggy called John to her office.

She said: "Paychecks come out today and it's your job to distribute them. It's time you tell people that Paul is no longer the supervisor, and you are in charge."

John nodded, "Okay, I've been trying to find the right time. I need to talk to Bill and Jenny, as both wanted the job. It's going to be weird for me to make that announcement, and I want to make it easy for them. They're key players and I'm going to need them totally on board."

John did speak with the two workers and they gave him their support. Both acknowledged that it would have been better if the CEO had waited until his return, then made the formal announcement. Still, they were happy for John.

The CEO returned Monday, was no wiser that the transition hadn't been perfectly smooth, and everything was okay.

Here's the thing. You want to make the move from one leader to the next in a formal way, for three good reasons. Formal, as in planned, but not stuffy.

Reason #1. You give respect to the outgoing manager and the work done, as well as wish them well in their next job. That's a positive.

Reason #2. You give a boost to the incoming manager, and there is a visual that he/she is the choice of the executive leadership to carry on the work. Another positive.

Reason #3. This little bit of pageantry allows everybody involved to congratulate everyone on the team for their good performance and dedication. Then, have some food. In total, this is a big positive.

(Con't.)

It's also not brain surgery, and the whole thing, minus the food, can be completed in just a few minutes.

Can you get away with none of it? Yes, but I think you do so at a loss all the way around.

In my opinion, the CEO in the story should have waited until he got back, then set up a time to make the announcement with the team — even if Paul, the outgoing manager, wasn't going to be a part of it. Who knows, they might have been able to patch Paul in via videochat or Zoom.

When it's time to hand off authority where you are, spend the time to do it right. Everybody will be better off when you do.

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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