

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1101 How to Score at the Job Fair – Part 2

There's a big job fair on Friday, and yesterday we talked about how to prepare for that. If you're looking for work; as well as the kind of questions you might expect to be asked by the HR teams who are recruiting talent. Now, let's turn the tables and reveal questions you the job seeker can ask of the hiring folks. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's up next, on The Extra Point.

Most people who are looking for work just sit in their chair, answer questions, hope for a second interview or a job offer, and never take advantage of a big opportunity to make a big impression.

If you want to have the HR people thinking about you, you should have a resume that is focused on your performance, achievements, and talents. You should also have done some research on prospective employers.

Another area is to have intelligent questions for them, when they ask you, "So, do you have any questions?"

You don't have to interrogate someone like a TV cop show, but you should have questions. Some may be job-based, some company-based, and some may be personal for the interviewer. Are you nervous yet? Let's see where this takes us.

Let's start with job-based questions. If the job is for a technician or mechanic, I might ask what the typical daily production is at their shop for others in the same role. I might ask about the level of technology they're using, and what certifications I could pursue, if hired.

Company-based questions could focus on which success factors the company values most, if there are plans for expansion, to what degree does the company commit to the professional development of its workers, and strategies for workers to get ahead.

The answer you'll likely get on the last point is something like, "Work hard and do your job well." That's about as generic as it gets. If I'm talking with the HR manager I'd respond, "Yes, I intend to do that. In this case, however, I'm very interested in your opinion on *what else* it takes to move forward at this company."

If the HR manager's head is screwed on straight, they'll see that as the applicant being different, and they should get deeper into the discussion.

You could also ask personal questions of the interviewer, which will take them off script and have them focus on an answer. Questions like:

1. What do you like most about working for this organization?
2. What do you think are the biggest challenges?
3. How would you describe the company culture?
4. Why are you excited about your future here?

The purpose in asking these questions, besides getting answers, is to make yourself stand out from the rest of the applicants. If you're really shy and terrified to do this, that's okay. I think you'll miss an opportunity, but I also don't want you to get lost in fear and worry.

Now is a good time for job seekers. Most of the employers have had a challenge in filling jobs. Many have raised pay levels to a degree in the hope of attracting more candidates.

In the recruitment business, this is what is known as a "seller's market." That means the job seeker has an advantage in that pay, benefits, hours, and working conditions may be a bit more negotiable than in prior years. This will especially be true for more qualified, more aggressive, more tuned-in candidates. (Con't.)

They may be seen as more attractive, simply because employers know that their numbers are limited.

That said, there will be jobs for people at all levels. If you want to work, come ready to convince the interviewers that you can bring value to their workplace.

Do your homework on the employers, have an updated resume that tells them what they want to know, and be ready to both ask and answer relevant questions.

May Friday's event be a positive turning point for job seekers and talent seekers alike.

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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