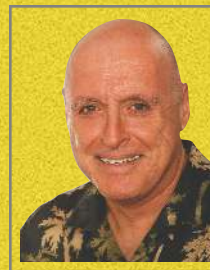


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1129 Small Talk Can Yield Big Results — Part 2

Yesterday, we spoke about the importance of making smalltalk, along with some things we do and don't want to do. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we go deeper into the topic, next, on The Extra Point.

The ability to engage in casual conversation with someone, helping them to be comfortable with you, and you comfortable with them, is a key factor in building a business relationship. Let's recap what we talked about yesterday.

Never mind "mastering" smalltalk. Just get used to the idea, and use it. You get better the more you do it.

Toss in a little creativity, not settling for the stiff routine questions and answers everybody else rattles off.

Avoid any direct pitching, or immediately asking for appointments; and don't push your business card when you meet someone for the first time. Establish a little rapport and if things go well, then you can swap contact info.

Here we go with a few more tips that will add value to your time in networking, and making smalltalk.

1. At least be somewhat aware of what's going on in our community. You don't need to be tuned into the news 24/7, but listening to your favorite talk radio station won't hurt, as well as spending a few minutes with a newspaper.

If you can't catch TV news and Kandit News, you can find those on the Web whenever you're ready.

If you're incredibly pressed for time, go with some combination of those for even 15-20 minutes a day, and you'll be more informed than the average person walking around.

2. Ditch the phone. Unless you're in the

middle of some emergency or expecting an important call or message, don't pull it out and interrupt your conversation. Ditch the phone.

3. Make casual eye contact. You'll see people you might want to talk with. Don't stare at them like they're a buffet and you haven't eaten for a week.

4. You say hello first. Don't wait, introduce yourself. In our civilized society, that more or less requires a response. They'll do the same. Then you can ask a question and the chat is on. This also shows that you are a confident person.

5. Listen. Be present. Don't daydream. When the other person finishes talking, because you listened carefully you can ask a question about what they said. They'll be impressed with you.

A good rule of thumb is to listen more, and talk less. We only learn when we listen.

6. Keep things positive and light, and remain enthusiastic.

7. Finishing the conversation well is big, and should include an action step. "Phil, it's been great meeting you. I see a couple of people I need to catch up with, and I'd like to chat with you again. How about grabbing a cup of coffee next Tuesday?"

Making smalltalk is actually fun when you stop overthinking the process, just try to learn about people, and relate to them. You can do it.

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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