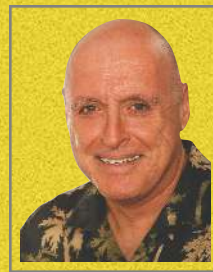


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1131 If Accountability is Missing – Grow it

I recently caught an exchange between a couple of business owners, one of them not happy because he couldn't get workers to be more accountable. "What's wrong with these people today," he said. "They just don't care." I'm Jerry Roberts, and let's dig into this issue, next, on The Extra Point.

So the one owner tells the other owner that he's not seeing much in the way of worker accountability. He says, "I don't think most people really care about their job." The other owner chimes in with, "Yeah, it's not like it used to be."

I'm guessing you're familiar with conversations like this. A large number of employers might agree with those sentiments expressed, but I think you have to peel back the onion to get at the reality.

I came across a quote in the early days of getting into the training business, and it's so powerful that I've used it in my courses ever since. An educator named Alfie Kohn said: "Pay people well, pay them fairly, and then do everything possible to help them forget about the money."

When a person is looking for a job, the main thing on his/her mind is likely money. Bills have to be paid. However, once they agree to the salary, assuming it is what they need and hopefully a little more, then money is no longer the main issue. Now, how you treat me comes into play and that's what I'll focus on from now on. Very few managers understand this.

Let's back up. Accountable workers display a level of maturity and responsibility that others do not. If you want workers who will give you accountability, it helps to hire for the attitude you're looking for, then train for the skills you need.

Frankly, too many employers do it the other

way. They hire with the particular skill in mind, and don't pay much attention to grilling the candidate on work ethic, ability to function in a team culture, character, accountability, etc. "He was a great technician, but nobody could stand the guy. It's hard to figure."

No, it's not. It's predictable. Hiring is part art and part science. It's not a simple task to fill a job with the person who will be a great fit. If you're not very good at it, get some help from someone who can put together a list of the right questions for your applicants.

If you combine the last two thoughts, asking good questions to get the best possible person for the job, then pay them fairly — you should be on solid ground with a good chance your new hire will stick.

Then, per Mr. Kohn, you do everything in your power to make sure that they never think of the money.

If you're asking what that means exactly, it's bringing them on board with the attitude that you're going to help build something special.

- You'll train them regularly to build their skills.
- You'll coach them and build their confidence.
- You'll build a foundation of trust and respect.
- You'll delegate work with a greater degree of difficulty, to build a sense of responsibility.

When skills, confidence, trust, respect, and responsibility mix together, it's easy to cross the bridge to accountability, and "ownership."

When an employee does this, it changes the way they look at their job, the company, their coworkers, customers, everything.

Every time we plant a seed, we're looking for a tree some day.

(Con't.)

It's the same with hiring talent. The intent should be to help it grow. It's an active process, and doesn't happen on its own.

This all works the same at every level of the organization, all the way from the front line to senior leaders.

It is certainly possible that you'll be incredibly fortunate and hire people who show strong levels of accountability right off the bat. It happens, and maybe it'll happen for you.

That said, I believe you should be proactive right from the beginning. Follow Alfie Kohn's advice, pay people fairly, then do everything you can to make them forget the money.

Be an accountability builder. You'll have a much better chance to see what you're after if 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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