

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1155 Make Sure What You Say and What You Do Are in Sync

Did you ever work for an organization that seemed to say all the right things, seemed to believe in all the right things, and yet what actually took place was sometimes different? I'm Jerry Roberts and today, we'll compare what companies say and what they do. That's next, on The Extra Point.

I was reading an article in Forbes magazine from a management consultant, who raised the issue of companies that preach one thing, yet do something else.

I know from my 26 years in the training and consulting field that this is always irritating to workers. Before I got into this business, it was irritating to me when I encountered these inconsistencies.

In the article, the consultant told a CEO that some employees regarded their workplace as sexist. The CEO didn't agree, and asked for proof. The consultant was ready.

He said he noticed that female employees were all called by their first names, while men were referred to as "Mr." or "Dr." This had been the case for a long time, and therefore had become an unwritten rule.

Why was this such a big deal? Because one of the company's official policies was mutual respect.

It's likely the CEO was surprised by what the consultant mentioned. In my experience, most senior leaders have a hand in developing the company policies and values, but aren't necessarily aware of how things are carried out from there. When there is a disconnect, it usually is a surprise.

The consultant talked about a retailer he once worked with, that made a big push to promote teamwork and collaboration. The problem? All of their rewards were focused on individual performance — not team results.

He cited many manufacturers and utility companies that say everything right when it comes to safety, but in actual practice they put more importance on schedules and budgets.

Virtually every employer today describes their operation as "family friendly." Yet, how many managers have no problem asking a worker to toil through the weekend to meet a deadline, or even postpone or cancel a vacation?

How many managers say they are transparent, yet don't share information?

How many tell workers they promote open and honest communication, yet shut people down when their positions are challenged?

When you think and say that your workplace is one thing, and the reality is that it's very much different from that, it produces mistrust.

Workers either feel you're not being honest with them, or you don't have a clue as to what is really going on. Take your pick, neither one of those is attractive.

My suggestion is to get people together over food, and ask them if there are disconnects in your operation — things you do not see.

The fact that you're asking is a big plus. If the answer is no, then it was a good exercise. If there are issues, discuss them openly, come up with solutions, and move forward. Either way, you win.

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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