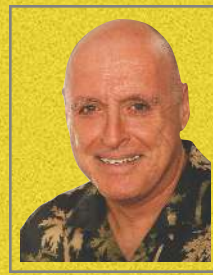


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1171 Are You a Manager, Leader, or Both? – Part 3

Today, part three of our series on the roles of managers and leaders. I'm Jerry Roberts, and let's look at which role is best, most important, and what does that mean for your future? That's coming next on The Extra Point.

The transcripts of the first two parts of this discussion are ready for you to download at guamtraining.com, see transcripts #1169 and #1170.

Let me start today with some questions.

1. Which job is more important, manager or leader?
2. Which job is better, manager or leader?

For the past two days, we've highlighted the distinction between the roles of a manager and a leader. A lot of people don't see any specific differences. Some don't care as long as the individual does whatever is necessary for them to get their paycheck every two weeks. So, let's answer those questions.

You've probably guessed that the answers to both questions are "it depends," or "a matter of preference." If you answered like that, you're right. In fact, there are no wrong answers here, just opinions.

As for importance, the leader might say that without the right vision and direction, a team won't know what to do and an organization will fail.

The manager could respond that without the right person properly handling the process and getting the necessary results, it doesn't matter what leaders want.

Both would be right. You can argue these points until you're blue in the face, but the real answer is that you absolutely need both to perform successfully, or the organization and those within it will suffer the consequences.

In my case, the most impactful person I ever

worked for was my first boss, Big Ed. He made a huge difference in my life. He was wise and savvy, and was a great teacher. Yet, he never showed ego.

The other thing was that Ed was happy where he was in the organization. He could have made a move to climb the ranks, but chose not to. He wasn't much for internal politics, which is often a necessary part of advancing. He was fine to manage a team, fine to grow talent, and fine to mold young minds like mine.

Question 2 comes off differently. It seems we look over in the next person's yard and judge the grass to be greener for them. I've known managers who were envious of the job, pay, and perks of leaders. "They have it easy," some have said.

I've also heard leaders comment on managers having it better: They say things like, "Managers get to go home and eat dinner with their family a lot more often than I do. I work into the night and sometimes the weekends, too."

Some leaders find it challenging to disengage, to get off their laptop, or to avoid texts and emails on their phone. It takes them longer to unwind at night, and sleep deprivation is often a constant part of life for them.

As for Ed, it was just him and his wife. Their kids were grown and had started their own families. The house was paid off, cars were paid off, and they had a few investments. It was at a time when one paycheck was enough to live on, so the high-level corporate life had no pull on him. He said he wanted that dinner with his wife every night.

Ed reinforced what my mom had always told me, that good work was its own reward, and that you worked hard for your benefit first, not the employer's benefit. You did it because it was a reflection of who you are. (Con't.)

This is true, whether you're a leader, a manager, or work on the front line. It's always about your work ethic, your credibility, and living up to the image you have for yourself.

Organizations need great managers, great leaders, and great front liners. Do what makes you happy and gives you fulfillment. One is no better than the other, it's just a matter of finding what makes sense for you.

In my time I've been privileged to work for a couple of outstanding managers, one great leader, and worked alongside some extremely gifted and loyal front line talent.

I've also worked for and with some people whose incompetence, intolerance, and flat-out arrogance made each day anywhere from difficult to miserable.

On the plus side, it did make me appreciate the good ones more. I hope that's also been your experience, and will always be.

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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