

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1190 Things We Don't Want to Hear at Work

There are words that instantly get a worker's attention, make them cringe, make their hairs stand on end, and send chills up their spine. Words that people don't want to hear. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll have some of those words, next, on The Extra Point.

Things we don't want to hear. What words would get your attention if you heard them in your workplace? Let's try a few on for size.

1. "How much did you have to drink at the Christmas party?"

The holidays are almost upon us, and there will be a lot of parties, including those put on by companies. Many of us have attended a few where drunk folks had strange behavior. Be careful.

2. "There's going to be a lot of changes around here."

Change is disliked by most people, and feared by a large segment of them. If you're in a position of authority, put a plan together to highlight the changes before you start talking about what is to come.

3. "If I don't see some improvement fast, I'm going to write you up."

I'm not a big fan of the words "write you up." If you're going to reprimand a worker for a lapse in behavior or poor performance, just do it. It's not a very effective deterrent, especially if what you are seeking is positive change.

If the individual is struggling in the performance of his/her job, that's a reason for coaching, not reprimanding. If it's about attitude, then give them a legit counseling session to try to work out the issue. If they don't respond well in either case, maybe they and the job aren't a good fit.

4. "Ray, how long did it take you to finish that project."

That's a productivity question. Maybe the boss thinks you work too slow. The answer to that question is another question: "Boss, before I respond to that, can I ask if you like the quality of the work?"

If the reply to that is a yes, then you can add: "Well, good work sometimes takes a little longer than expected." Don't abuse this one. Be straight up with your manager, and don't milk the clock.

5. "There's no easy way to say this..."

In most cases, nothing good ever follows this sentence. It's a tough one.

6. "George is leaving and we've decided not to replace him. We're going to need to add a few things to your schedule."

This line is one of the reasons cited by folks who have participated in the Great Resignation. Staff shrinkage led to extra duties, and often without extra compensation. Yeah, people do not like these words.

7. "See me in my office at closing time."

Over 30 years ago I heard a story related to that potentially frightening phrase. The worker's boss came to his desk, looking upset, and said to report to his office at 5:00 pm. This was at nine o'clock in the morning.

The worker worried for eight hours about what might happen. He heard coworkers whispering his name. He called his wife and told her that he thought he was going to lose his job, and she cried and worried. That made him feel worse. He had a totally miserable day.

At 5:00, he went to the boss's office, and he was terminated. Whatever the reason, it struck me that there had to be a better way. That would be to let the worker go as early in the day as possible. (Con't.)

Reason 1. If you're going to let someone go, make it a quick process and get them on their way, final check in hand. There's no reason to prolong the situation. Would you want to spend a day with that hanging over your head?

Reason 2. Terminations have the potential to upset a workplace. Do it in a respectful way, so workers aren't saying to themselves, "Good Lord, that could be me."

Workers are always watching and judging how a manager handles tough situations.

Seven examples of words that we don't want to hear in the workplace. No doubt, there are many more we didn't get to. If you've got something to add to the conversation, drop it in the Facebook comments and maybe Ray will use yours on the air.

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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