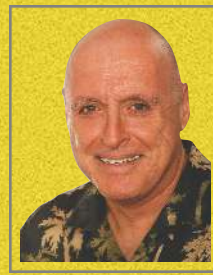


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1203 Everyone is All Atwitter About Elon Musk — Part 1

Maybe you've been following the unfolding story about Elon Musk's purchase of Twitter, and its rocky transition under his leadership. I may end up with some different feelings in time, but I want to share a few thoughts about what we can learn here. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's coming next, on The Extra Point.

Let's start with the basics. Why did Elon Musk want Twitter? His letter to Twitter advertisers says: "To have a common digital town square where a wide range of beliefs can be debated in a healthy manner." Facebook can't really do that at this point, so Twitter has the inside path to achieving this goal.

To those who say that Twitter will become the headquarters for hate speech, Musk was clear when he said Twitter "Can't be a free-for-all hellscape where anything can be said with no consequences." There will be standards.

He has been called a threat to democracy by all of the usual liberal voices. As if controlling media and social media so only one viewpoint — the one put forth by the democrats, fronting for the elite of the world — is somehow better.

Musk is lining up to become a protector of democracy. What he is a threat against is the liberal stronghold that controls media, the tech sector (other than him), and the corporate elitists.

Musk says the buyout of Twitter is all about bettering humanity, not making money. Well, what he wants for Twitter may benefit people, but he's going to make an enormous profit at the same time. We'll talk about that tomorrow.

Helping humanity will cost money, and Musk first has to stop the losses, tabbed at \$4 million a day. That's about \$1.5 billion in a year. That's job one, clean things up and return to profit.

To do that, Musk got rid of the people who had created the mess in the first place. He fired the executive leadership team, and then

dissolved the board of directors. That's exactly what you would do if it was your money and your decision to make.

Don't shed a tear for the three executives. The last report I saw indicated they got cashed out to the tune of \$200 million plus.

He then brought in his tech team from Tesla to look under the hood at Twitter's engine, the software. What was good and what was bad? What changes are needed?

He cut payroll in areas that made sense, firing half the total Twitter staff. Twitter employees tweeted out their negative opinions of Musk and that they didn't feel they could work for him. He made their decision for them, firing them as well. Publicly berating your boss is not a way to ensure job security. Just sayin'.

To the rest of the Twitter workforce, he made the same speech he had given to his Tesla team — no more remote work. Why would he do that, to be mean?

No. Musk's businesses rely upon innovation. He knows that creative people do more and better creating when they are in the presence of each other. That fact cannot be denied. It made sense for the auto company, and it would make sense for Twitter. Wouldn't you want the same?

Musk then sent all remaining employees a midnight email, giving them 24 hours to decide if they wanted to be a part of Twitter 2.0. That would require long hours and high intensity work. Again, the same thing he demands at Tesla. For those who refused, they got three-months severance pay and goodbye.

He was blasted by the media for this. Couldn't he have given them three days, or a week? I think he was making a point. "Here I am, you know how I do things. You either want to be a part of it or not, so decide now."
(Con't.)

If Musk was about style points, maybe it all would have been done differently. Instead, he made it clear that the old ways were over. He wasn't wishy-washy about it, and I think he did the employees a favor by being so blunt.

Let's recap, highlighting the moves that any reasonably intelligent businessperson would make once acquiring a company.

1. Remove the leadership that had driven the company to its negative position. Check.
2. Bring in proven experts who know business and technology, and come up with a plan to move forward. Check.
3. Stop the losses. Expenses exceeded the revenues by \$4 million a day. You have to reduce costs any way you can. That means a lower payroll, and cutting things like free food for everybody. Check.
4. Get rid of those employees who are fighting you in public, and give the others a chance to stay — figuring most should be able to make a quick decision. Check.
5. End the censorship, and let it be known that freedom of speech is once again alive and well at Twitter. Get on track to becoming that digital town square that Musk mentioned. Ultimately, that's the only winning position to have. Check.

Like I said, Musk may not get a total "A" grade on style points, but if you wanted to turn things around as quickly as possible, I can't imagine not doing all of the things he did.

Tomorrow, where Musk may be headed with Twitter.

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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