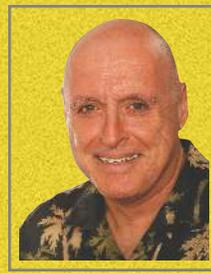


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1206 Employers Report Significant Gaps in Skills and Will

Is it possible you might be open to trade a white-collar job for blue-collar work? Maybe you're in college and you're not exactly sure of your career path. Or, perhaps you have a child in high school, thinking about his/her future. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today's program with job and career info might have been written for you. It's coming next, on The Extra Point.

You may know the name Mike Rowe. He was the host of the TV show *Dirty Jobs*, that will again be featured on The Discovery Channel. In the show, Rowe performs difficult, strange, or messy duties alongside the job's current employees.

Rowe has also developed into a powerful voice for the working world, and his insights are sought after by news media.

A few days ago he weighed in on the serious concerns he has on the near-future prospects for employers to find the workers they need in the current economy.

On top of the *Great Resignation* where millions of people have given up their job and are sitting on the sidelines, now we see a number of the big tech companies laying off thousands of people.

Another side to the story is that a tremendous number of employers are still screaming for talent to fill their open positions.

While you'd think many people laid off could slide over and take available jobs, Rowe says there is a gap...a big one. People coming out of the tech sector don't have the needed skills for the openings.

Rowe says America went from a "skills gap" To a "will gap," and now we're headed into a "skills gap and a will gap."

When you add the two problems together, the people who don't want to work and those who don't have the right skillset, employers will be

challenged like never before to keep enough people on the payroll to function normally.

Rowe says that industries which rely upon blue-collar workers are being hit hardest. He detailed talks with owners of companies that build houses, do renovations, plumbing work, electrical, clean swimming pools and more, and all are having huge trouble just getting people to show up. They say they offer more and more money, and it doesn't matter. Not enough people want to work.

According to Rowe, this is a problem that has been building for the past four years. It's very difficult to find talent, and many who will work don't have the same dedication shown by veteran workers.

Employers are scrambling to bring back older workers, but many of these jobs are physically demanding and they can't produce as they had in years past.

Rowe used simple math to drive home his case. He says that every year, for every five people in the skilled trades who retire, there are only two who come to replace them. Five out, two in, and it's been that way for the last 15 years.

Contractor after contractor reports that they have jobs piled up, and get more requests to do work every time they listen to their voicemail. Customers are frustrated because they have no alternative except to just wait. They still pay top dollar for services, but they wait.

So, where is the silver lining in all this? Some Guam blue-collar workers have already figured it out. They've moved to the mainland, because better paying jobs are available.

I'm sure some of them will eventually start their own companies, if they haven't already. The opportunities — at least for now — seem to be endless.
(Con't.)

Others get trained at places like the Guam Trades Academy, to learn the skills needed to enter a good field.

Learning enough to get hired in a trade takes less time than college, and costs less. As well, with current economic conditions, GovGuam hiring can't continue as it has. Getting involved with a trade can be a solid option in both cases.

For many people, the economics of learning a skilled trade make sense. Greater emphasis must be given to show young people the numbers and job prospects.

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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