

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1211 Buy in on the Team Before Asking Them to Buy in on You

Point listener James Howard sent me a link to a story I think we can all learn from, especially if you supervise a group. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's coming next on The Extra Point.

It is a story of a woman in the Air Force who was promoted to senior management, the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. She was deployed and given her very first command, taking over a job where the previous five leaders had been fired.

This was historically a poorly run group. Her unit had people from multiple branches of the military reporting to her, including Air Force and Army, some of whom were much older and more experienced than her.

She approached the job undaunted, figuring her passion and hard-driving style would carry her through. She was determined to turn the unit around and prove herself in the process.

She had studied and practiced leadership, and she was ready. This was going to be her time. She would shine, and this experience would be a springboard to bigger things.

It didn't work out that way. Instead, it was a failure. People ignored her. No matter what she tried, it didn't work. The frustration of seeing her dream crash and burn around her led to emotional distress.

What was something exciting at first now had become a regret, and she didn't know what to do. She was ready to quit.

Then, the thought struck her that she was stuck with six months left in her deployment, the same as everybody else, and admitted to herself that she was not going to succeed in transforming the group as she had wanted.

Further, she dedicated herself to ensuring that the people in her command really enjoyed the remainder of their time. She thought, "I'm just going to make it more fun for them to come to

work every day, because they're also away from their families and normal lives."

What followed is along the lines of much of what we talk about here on The Extra Point. As the team members realized her efforts, they started to listen to her and take her seriously. They showed greater respect.

In short order, the transformation she had imagined at the beginning came into reality. From normal lackluster results, the unit developed into a high-performing operation.

In the beginning, it was all about her. She was going to fix them, transform them, do what nobody had ever done before. It was about the metrics, the results, all about performance. That didn't work, because people knew they weren't the focus.

The lesson she learned was if you get beyond that mindset and make it about the people, then the people take care of everything. You get the results, and you get there in a manner that is far more appealing to everyone.

Focus on your people, and help them to enjoy their job, while growing their talents and career.

Once they know you've bought into them, they'll naturally buy into you and the organization.

The story is from leadership guru Simon Sinek, and my thanks to Point listener James Howard for bringing it to my attention.

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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