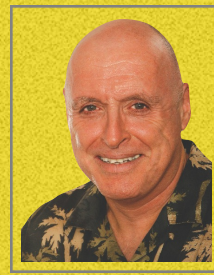


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1216 Unsure About a Career Decision? That's Good

Almost everybody reaches a crossroads in their career, at least once. They are faced with two or sometimes more options, and they're unsure what to do. Is that a negative, showing that we lack decision-making skills — or could it be a good thing? I'm Jerry Roberts, and the answer to that question is coming next, on The Extra Point.

We're sailing along in our work and we feel things are going well. We're happy where we are, and we figure we'll stay there — at least for the foreseeable future.

Then, all of a sudden, things change and we have to decide to stay with what we've got or move on to a new option. What follows will depend on circumstances, but we begin to compare the options.

Is one clearly better than the other, or are they comparable and we know we'll be giving up something we value in order to gain other benefits? This is the case, more often than not.

The Harvard Business Review calls these moments "career inflection points". These are decisions that often see us choosing between different, and maybe conflicting values, both professional and personal. It's hard to prioritize them, and stress can easily take over.

The research from Harvard shows that when we are ambivalent in these moments, it can play out in our favor. Ambivalent, in this case, means that we're simply unsure what to do, or we have conflicting opinions. This is good, as we're more likely to seek the advice of others, leading us to a more informed and balanced choice.

Leaving a situation where we really like the people we work with is tough. Often, very tough. I've talked with people who had great memories of earlier jobs and the relationships they developed.

They said they had made career progress in

the moves they made, but the relationships were never as good.

For some people, these decisions are painful. Harvard's advice to make the most of career inflection points is to not allow the discomfort push us into making a premature decision. At the same time, we don't want to delay our decision in order to avoid the pain.

Here is where we have to be completely honest. What is it we really want, and why? This is important, especially when we're giving up something good to pursue a new career path — and the new path turns rocky. Revisiting that *why* is going to get us back on-track, and hopefully see us through.

I've faced this kind of decision more than once, and I think I'd give myself a mixed score on the results. When my choice was purely for professional reasons, I think I did better. When I let personal concerns filter in, I probably should have called a "time out," and slowed the process.

While we definitely care about our careers, and we should, sometimes we place more weight on personal feelings. I can't tell you that's a bad thing, but I will say that being ruled by emotions in these moments can lead us to trouble.

In the next several years, a lot of people are going to come to Guam to take advantage of opportunities, while a lot will leave to restart their careers elsewhere. It's highly likely that a number of people now hearing my voice will be included in the departing group.

If this includes you one day, I hope you see the opportunity as a good thing, a chance to dig in and really figure out your *what* and *why*.

I suggest you spend ample time weighing the pros and cons of what you have and what you're reaching for.  
(Con't.)

**THE POINT**  
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GUAM  TRAINING

Are you gaining more than you're sacrificing?  
What are your non-negotiables? That is to say,  
what must you get or what do you refuse to  
give up?

If you ever hear people talking about these  
career inflection points, you may pick up some  
incredible stories of how decisions were made,  
and how things turned out.

May all of your career inflection points and  
stories be good ones.

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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