

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1242 Is the Music You're Playing Going Unnoticed?

There he was, doing the work he so often did, and performing at a level that few people can match. Yet, almost nobody paid any attention to him. His talent went virtually unnoticed. I'm Jerry Roberts and today I have a story that is sadly played out in too many organizations. That's next, on The Extra Point.

I've heard them in small towns and big cities; in America and elsewhere. They're often in train stations, malls, near restaurants and theaters, downtown areas, and beaches. They are street musicians. I think Guam has had a number of them over the years.

Maybe you've been entertained by them, and maybe you've dropped a little money in an open guitar case or cup.

I caught a story about one such musician, a violinist, who put on a baseball cap and played in the New York subway one day in 2007. The music coming off his instrument was a delight, but very few people took notice.

Just a handful of them stopped, only a couple clapped. There are probably dozens of street musicians playing for coins during any day in New York City. It wasn't a big deal, no matter how good he was.

The violinist raised \$32.17 in tips for the 45 minutes he played. Normally, that might be a decent haul for a street player, but not this one.

The violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the finest musicians in the world. In that subway, Bell played one of the most intricate pieces ever written with a Stradivarius violin that had been created in the year 1713; a violin he had paid \$4 million to acquire.

A few days later, JBell sold out a theatre in Boston, the seats averaging about \$100, and they were filled with people who enthusiastically responded to Bell's performance.

What if I told you that Bell's experiment in the

subway with nobody caring, and then his experience with the audience in Boston, might have a lot to do with you?

Let's see. Bell's experiment proved that doing the *extraordinary* in an *ordinary* environment is very often overlooked and undervalued. A lot of high-value workers suffer Bell's experience every day, toiling for a manager — or managers — who don't (or can't) recognize the value they bring to the job and the organization.

They're starved for appreciation, have little hope of growing where they are, and feel stuck.

Maybe you're one of so many talented people who aren't receiving the recognition and reward they deserve. Maybe the concert that you're delivering in every day has the wrong audience. Maybe you need to change venues to a place where you can thrive and grow.

If this describes your situation, don't be angry with your manager. Most managers have never been trained, and they're simply not equipped to deal with talent. And yes, there are managers who aren't interested in that.

There are also a growing number of employers who are dialed into the reality that talent does matter, and recognizing and growing talent is the key to surviving in today's economy.

If you need to look, I hope you and one of them find each other. Even without a \$4 million Stradivarius, may you make the kind of music together that has everybody taking notice.

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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