

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1256 What is the Price to Steal Away Your Talent?

She was a teacher and loved her job. However, she came to learn that the job didn't love her back. It's a realization that has come to others like her in the business of education, and in other businesses, too. Like many, our teacher left the field, a field she once thought she could never leave. The reason is relevant to every employer in Guam. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we're going to jump into the conversation, next on The Extra Point.

Maggie Perkins loves teaching, but she left it behind, at least for a while. She's working on her Ph.D. in Educational Theory and Practice, but right now works at Costco. Her research is focused on teacher attrition, examining why quality, experienced teachers quit the profession.

Here's the thing, she says she's never been happier. Less anxiety, no more migraines. She sleeps through the night.

She makes less money than she did teaching, but not so much less that it makes a difference in her lifestyle — and she goes home from work happy at the end of the day.

Perkins feels respected and valued as an employee at Costco — far more than she did as a teacher working in various schools and teaching various grades in two different states.

Anyone who owns or manages a company should have their ears perked up. She makes less, is physically and mentally better off, and is happier being away from her former job.

Teachers, nurses, executive assistants, sales reps, customer service reps, and countless others have been leaving jobs, and we chalk it up to low pay as the main reason. That ain't necessarily so.

It's more likely to be burnout, lack of support, the feeling that their efforts are not appreciated, and no particular hope that things are going to get better anytime soon.

All of that is what a teacher's life is about in our times. Stress, disappointment, curriculum that fails young people and dumbs down every generation it touches, never having the needed resources to effectively do the job, and dealing with incessant politics — from administrators, school boards, and elected officials.

When I came up, it was different for teachers. The respect level was higher. They definitely needed to be paid more, just like today, but the title of teacher carried more weight than it does today.

Our educational system was once the best in the world, and now it's ranked in the middle of the pack, at best. How did we get from being the best, to teachers deciding to cash in their credentials for a blue-collar gig at a Costco?

Nurses are leaving medicine, police officers are leaving law enforcement, workers across all industries are walking away...walking away from jobs that — in many cases — pay better than a company like Costco does.

For the majority of workers, it gets back to the two words Maggie Perkins used when asked about her job at Costco — “respected” and “valued”.

Costco pays well, their benefits are solid, and they cover all of the bases for compensation. That being said, so do many other employers. The difference is in how supervisors and managers build relationships with workers, and how workers feel about that.

Costco trains their managers to take care of workers, to grow them, and to make their experience as an employee better than they are likely to find anywhere else. Maybe that's why they have an annual retention rate pegged at 94%. People love coming to work there.

So the question is, do your people love coming to work? If not, why not?  
(Con't.)

Would they stay with you if offered more money?  
How much money would it take to pry them  
off of your payroll?

Fifty cents an hour? A dollar? Two dollars?  
Five dollars? A five-dollar increase is \$10,000  
a year. Would a competing employer have to  
offer one of your best people \$10,000 a year  
more to get them to leave you?

If you're not winning in the value and respect  
conversation, the price to pluck your talent  
away from you won't be so high.

The relationship I'm referring to drives that  
cost up, and that's what you want. Make  
people love their job and the environment they  
work in so much that it will be very expensive  
to get them to walk away.

The best way to do that is to train your managers  
to create that kind of environment. If you want  
to know more, reach out and I'll walk you  
through it.

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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