

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1265 Becoming a Leader Away From Work

If you believe that you will never be a leader, primarily because you're not one now and doubt your employer will ever train you for that role, I've got something for you today. I'm Jerry Roberts and is there a back door of sorts to the world of leadership? We'll answer that question, next on The Extra Point.

You're not a leader at work and you don't see leadership in your future. You'd consider it if it was offered, but you doubt that will happen. "My bosses don't see me that way," you say.

No problem. Millions of leaders have had the same experience. They did their job well enough, but maybe they didn't bang their own drum very loud, calling attention to their skills and potential to advance. Maybe their boss is too pre-occupied to notice.

If that's the case, when a path to a leadership position opened up, their name may not have been added to the list of possible candidates. They were passed over.

You noticed I said "millions of *leaders*" have gone through this. That means they eventually became leaders. Some finally got their break at work, but others had their first taste of leadership away from the job. That's where I want to focus today, the kinds of activities that teach leadership.

You can start within your family with organizing an event. In most families, the responsibility for setting up a gathering usually falls to the same people every time. What if you stepped up and volunteered to take on the job? Do you think you'd be denied?

What might you learn by doing this? For one, recruiting help and delegating assignments. Maybe dealing with internal family politics as you try to get things done. Planning and a little problem-solving might be part of the package.

If you've noticed that your neighborhood has accumulated trash, you might pass on calling

the village mayor, and instead organize a small group of neighbors to stage a weekend cleanup. Nobody will argue with you if you do the organizing.

Perhaps you've got a favorite environmental cause, or a project to benefit kids. Who else do you know who cares about the same thing and will join up with you? Since it was your idea, it's unlikely that anyone will argue that you handle the details. If you begin to lead, most people are only too happy to let you.

Another source of leadership opportunity is Guam's large number of non-profit groups. In almost all cases, they need help in carrying out their mission and goals. Even if you're not yet a member, why couldn't you offer to get involved with a project, and eventually lead one?

Volunteering is a great way to develop your leadership skills. Here's a side benefit that a lot of people never consider. Many employers will pay membership costs for their workers to be involved in the community, as your good efforts reflect well upon them.

Another thing is that once you make it known that you're joining a group, that likely puts you on the radar of your senior leadership, the people who are always on the lookout for the next person who wants to advance.

There's one more I want to add to the list, and I've mentioned this before. It's quite possible that your senior leadership, perhaps the CEO included, has a few small projects that either got started and weren't finished, or are waiting for someone to get them to square one. I believe it's worth the effort to find out.

The conversation might start this way: "Boss, if you've got a small unfinished project that you'd like to see completed, and you think I can help, I'd be willing to take it on in my spare time."
(Con't.)

Now, you might get paid for it, but I'm going to initially offer my free time. I'm trying to build some leadership points, which I know will one day result in a promotion — either with this organization or the next one. I don't have to get paid for this work.

If it's me, I successfully deliver the project and then ask what else is waiting to get done. What I've done here is put myself in a position of performing directly for key decision-makers, and that's priceless in my opinion.

If you want to rack up leadership points and the opportunity isn't available at work, this is a handful of ideas that might pay off for you. Get transcript #1265 at guamtraining.com. Click on "XP" on the menu and you'll see it on the top of the list. Click the download link, pick one of those ideas, and get after 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.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

