

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1324 Succession Planning: Thoughts on Moving Up

Every employer in Guam that has more than one worker on the payroll has a potential turnover and succession problem. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'm going to combine those two issues today to see if we can scrounge up a bucket full of opportunity for somebody — maybe you. That's coming next, on The Extra Point.

Let's talk turnover. Not too long ago in another Extra Point, we learned that about one in three new hires quits before 90 days. A major chunk of those are gone inside of 30 days.

For many, the job didn't match up to their expectations. Others walk away because they had applied to multiple employers, and got a call from one of those others with a better offer. Sayonara.

Turnover also includes people leaving Guam, or retiring, or being terminated. In total, a company may find that they have to replace 10%, 20%, maybe 30% of their workforce every year.

Except for entry level positions, every time a worker vacates a job, some adjustment is called for. In the case of a manager leaving, the employer will now need a new manager to either step up from the ranks of supervisors or perhaps front line workers, or they'll fill the position from outside of the organization. In any case, somebody is going to be offered an opportunity.

As I said at the beginning, every employer faces this issue. Senior leaders, HR managers, as well as business owners live on the edge of a possible talent problem that could bite them at any moment.

So what does this mean to the worker who wants more than the average employment experience, and truly desires to get ahead?

It means that if you play your cards right, you could be handed a chance to advance sooner

than you might have thought possible. I've had people ask me if these opportunities are more likely to happen in larger island businesses with a more rigid organizational structure, or smaller family-owned companies.

I don't know that one is better than the other. Almost every employer is going to have to replace lost talent in any given year, and some will be under pressure to do so. If you're a person who seeks opportunity, I think you'll find it.

If I wanted to put myself in line for a chance to step up, here's what I would do.

1. Make sure you "own" your job. That means your work is absolutely world class. Nobody could do it better. When people think of the job you do, they think of you.
2. Get to know your HR manager and find out what positions may be opening up, and when. Is anyone retiring this year, or next? How does your skillset line up with that job? What do you have to do to be considered for a promotion?
3. Get on the ultimate decision maker's radar screen. Maybe you've heard me talk about this before. I know it's a scary idea for some folks, but I feel it's an essential part of the mix for the person who wants to advance faster.

Maybe you're thinking, "Why can't I just do my job well and wait for the big boss to notice?" Two reasons. First, big bosses are busy and may not pick up on your brilliance right away. Second, somebody else who listens to The Extra Point may do what I'm suggesting, and beat you out of the opportunity.

This is easier than you think. If you are doing your job at a high level, and you've connected with the HR manager, just ask for a brief meeting with the CEO, business owner, etc.

(Con't.)

If a meeting isn't possible, stop by their office after closing time, or catch them in the parking lot as they're going home. Whatever it takes, get in front of their face.

Once you do, let them know how much you love your work, that you're looking for long-term opportunity, and that you'd like their help.

If they want to know how they could be of help to you, simply say you respect their leadership and ask if you can come to them with questions once in a while. I don't think they'll turn you down, and you just signed up your big boss to be your unofficial mentor.

When you ask those questions, use the answers you get in your work, and then come back and tell the boss what you did and how it went.

Then, ask more questions.

All of this identifies you as a someone management wants to keep around. Do you think that might eventually result in you being considered for a job opening?

I think so, too.

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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