

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1325 Bill Gates: 5 Ideas for College Graduates

Bill Gates recently gave the commencement address at Northern Arizona University to engineering graduates. He called himself “a college dropout”, and he wanted to share some wisdom he’s picked up over the years with young people just starting out. I’m Jerry Roberts, and though I’m not a huge Bill Gates fan, I believe in valuing good advice and solid ideas, regardless of the source. We’ll see what Mr. Gates had to offer the students, next on The Extra Point.

Bill Gates stood in front of graduates at Northern Arizona University, and offered five ideas for them to consider. Let’s talk about them.

1. “Your life isn’t a one-act play.” Graduates are supposed to have a clear picture of what they want to do for the rest of their life, right?

KUAM-AM 610 radio, may it rest in peace, once aired a short daily feature entitled “Our Changing World,” voiced by Earl Nightingale. It was hugely popular.

One day, Nightingale put forth the idea that it would be just fine for a person to have a new career every 10 years, if they had a number of interests and ways to be useful. Five decades ago, that was revolutionary thinking.

Gates said. “What you do tomorrow — or for the next 10 years — does not have to be what you do forever. Not only is it okay to change your mind, reinvent yourself, or have a second career, it can be a good thing.”

2. “You are never too smart to be confused.” Lifelong learning should be a part of every person’s future plan.

Gates added that such learning is best taken from others who are experts in their field — or perhaps just a little further along than you. Often, a person who just learned what you want to know is a great resource.

3. In his third point, Gates advised the students

to focus on work that solves a problem. This is so important. Too many young people go into debt for an education that has little or no practical application in today’s world — or the world we’ll have as artificial intelligence begins to change every industry.

Gates told the students: “New industries and companies are emerging every day that will allow you to make a living by making a difference. Advances in science and technology have made it easier than ever to make a big impact.” He went on to say, “When you spend your days doing something that solves a big problem, it energizes you to do your best work ...and it gives your life a stronger sense of purpose.”

4. “Don’t underestimate the power of friendship.” Gates told a story of a fellow student he met in college, who shared his passion for science fiction novels and computer magazines. They stayed friends and that student, named Paul Allen, was Gates’ co-founder at Microsoft.

He said that students should rely upon each other as sources of support, information, and advice. These could be relationships that lasted a lifetime.

5. “You are not a slacker if you cut yourself some slack.” Gates noted that it was the one concept he could have used the most — and that it took the longest for him to learn. He described his workaholic mindset during most of his years in leading Microsoft.

He said: “When I was your age, I didn’t believe in vacations. I didn’t believe in weekends. I didn’t believe the people I worked with should either. In the early days of Microsoft, my office overlooked the parking lot — and I would keep track of who was leaving early and staying late. But as I got older — and especially once I became a dad — I realized there is more to life than work.” In other words, work-life balance.

(Con’t.)

Gates urged his listeners not to wait as long as he did to learn this lesson. "Take a break when you need to. Take it easy on the people around you when they need it, too."

I don't agree with some of the things that Bill Gates has pushed onto society in recent years. That being said, I think he scored 100% on this test with Northern Arizona University's graduating class.

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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