

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1327 Managers Need to Lead Through the Storm

For some, today is going to be confusing, and maybe worse. The last time a big storm visited Guam, in 2002, almost everybody was dialed into the same weather reporting sources. We all had the same information, more or less at the same time. There was less confusion. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll talk about that, plus what managers should be focusing on today to help workers do better. That's next on The Extra Point.

In 2002 when Typhoon Pongsona hammered Guam, social media didn't exist. If you wanted news about the storm, you got it from radio, and likely from one of a half-dozen stations.

Today, a large percentage of people have turned to social media to get much of the news they care about. Right now, a lot of reports about our current storm are being read on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

Those reports may contain accurate facts taken from official reports, and they may also be full of inaccuracies, exaggerations, as well as opinions. Some folks who do have the correct details may be one or two official reports behind. Like I said, there is going to be confusion.

How strong are the winds? Where is the storm and, more important, where is it headed?

If you're a manager, your key role today is to help the people on your team get through this time the best way possible.

The typhoon coming our way is currently tracking to bend to the south, and not make a direct hit on the island. Still, there are concerns.

If people are working today, is their situation at home figured out, with them secure that they and their family are fully prepared? If not, what can you to help?

Many old-line Guam employers have stepped up in the past and provided amazing support

for their workers. That being said, it's been over 20 years since the managers of those organizations were faced with the extreme challenges brought on by Pongsona, Guam's third strongest storm in recorded history.

Many of those leaders are no longer on the job, and the majority of managers who are in place today have never have dealt with similar circumstances.

What's today about? For seasoned managers who have been down this road before, what follows may be a refresher; and for others it will be new information.

1. Eliminate uncertainty about storm news. You be the source. Get the official reports and update your team regularly, as needed.

2. Check on each worker and gauge their emotions. For people who haven't had this experience, it can be a curiosity and it can also be unsettling. Again, you might have workers who weren't even born when the last big storm hit. Don't assume everybody is okay.

You'll also have workers who are veterans of the typhoon business. Your Baby Boomers may have been employed when Pamela rolled through almost exactly 47 years ago. They can be a calming influence if someone needs one.

3. Go over workplace procedures, and how the day will play out. If some of the work will be conditional depending on the weather, do your best to explain that.

4. Again, make sure people are okay at home. If they need something, do they have money to get it? If not, can the company help?

5. Walk around and be seen. This goes for the CEOs and business owners, too. Your most critical job today might be to show face to the people on your team, and to let them know you're there for them. (Con't.)

Yes, there are likely a ton of operational issues that have to be handled, but you stepping up in support of your workers is the major role today.

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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