

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1478 Some Negative Traits Can Pay Off

In the workplace, certain character traits and behaviors are often labeled as negative. However, a wise manager and maybe others will recognize that these traits can be valuable assets when channeled in the right way. I'm Jerry Roberts, by understanding the positive potential behind these traits, individuals can leverage their unique strengths to achieve success in their careers. We'll talk that over, next on The Extra Point.

Has anyone ever labeled you as having certain traits that didn't exactly go over well with other folks in the workplace?

Maybe you were too aggressive, or perhaps not aggressive enough. Too opinionated, or not contributing as much as management hoped you would. Once you take an opinion you don't change, or you're all over the place and never stand your ground.

I'm not talking about bringing a bad attitude or being a behavioral problem. I'm suggesting that maybe you have had or now have unique ways of expressing yourself and doing things, but other people see your uniqueness in a negative way.

Rather than dismissing these characteristics outright, it is crucial to identify the right outlet and figure out ways to allow these traits to flourish. Let's start with...

1. Assertiveness. I mentioned aggressiveness. If there's anything in the list that people have called me on over the years, this is it. If you want to use assertiveness, that's fine. Either way, it comes out the same.

Some people are rubbed the wrong way by individuals who are not afraid to speak up, share their opinions, and be an advocate for their ideas. Does that make them pushy?

On the other hand, I can tell you that a large percentage of employers are just waiting for workers who will step up, speak up, and be more aggressive.

2. Attention to Detail. Now, what on Earth could be wrong with that? When it's seen as being overly nitpicky. Have you ever worked in a company where one person had a comment about almost everything? No meeting was complete without him/her picking some idea apart on the smallest of issues? Definitely a negative, right?

Right, up until they see something that saves the organization money, or from making a big mistake. Then. Mr. or Ms. Negative is hailed as a hero. People who can see through noise and distractions, to make sure that details are not overlooked and work meets high standards, is an asset to any employer.

3. Skeptics, cynics, and critics also fall into this category, but there's more to add. Those are terms that many people don't like applied to them.

When I've worked with people like these, I've tried to see what they're seeing and why. What do they know that I don't know? If I can learn that, maybe I'll agree with their conclusion.

These people tend to question assumptions, challenge conventional wisdom, and seek evidence before accepting information. While skepticism can create tension under certain conditions, it is an asset in critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making.

All of what we've offered up today can be seen in a negative light. That being said, by reframing our perspective, we can unlock the positive potential for the workplace.

I only mentioned three specific traits that may be considered negatives. There are obviously more.

If you feel that any or all of these do apply to you, I believe you should ask yourself one key question: "How can my aggressiveness, focus on details, and skepticism provide a benefit to my employer?" (Con't.)

To me, that's a great position to approach almost everything with. Let's rephrase it a bit. "Okay, I know I tend to tweak some people out of shape, and I don't really want that; but is what I do and how I do it making a positive difference for the company?"

Depending on how you answer that question may be the difference between refining that trait so it tweaks fewer people, or dumping it. If it bothers people and has no perceived value for the organization, then why continue doing it?

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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