

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1509 Inquiring About the Boss's Life and Career – Part 1

How much do you know about your boss? Do you know how he/she got started in their job and career? How about the ups and downs of their path to where they are now? I'm Jerry Roberts, and today is about getting to know your boss better, and that's next on The Extra Point.

I've always thought that working for someone is about relationship. It's my relationship with the boss, and our relationship with the work we agree I will accomplish.

Wherever I worked, I usually sought to expand my role, trying to become more valuable to the organization. That usually began with getting personal with my manager.

One of the key pieces of advice my mom gave to me was, "If you want to make a friend, be a friend." Another was, "If you want to get somebody interested in you, first you show interest in them." That didn't always work with the women in my life, until it worked with the one who mattered most.

I've found it also works on the job. Starting with my first boss, Big Ed, to Jon Anderson at KUAM and K57, to the man in California who taught me the publishing business — I asked questions to learn about the background of each.

There were others along my personal career path, but those three stand out as unique experiences and relationships.

It didn't lead to more money in the short term, but there were other payoffs.

1. Once they knew that was sincere in my questions, that I really wanted to know about them, each person was comfortable to open up to me.

2. They all appreciated the opportunity to tell a bit of their story, and — more than once — it was revealed that nobody had ever asked them such questions before. I was the first

employee to ever do so. Bingo!

3. In all cases, my boss would turn the tables and ask me questions. It's human nature that if you ask personal questions of someone, that they'll usually reciprocate and want to know something about you.

4. This extended the time I spent with them, and it led to a stronger and more enduring relationship. Maybe you've heard me say it before, one of the key things I counsel young workers on is the need to separate from the pack as soon as possible.

One way to do that is to ask questions of the boss, showing him/her that you're not like everybody else, that there's something different about you and they need to know more about you.

Asking your boss about their life and career can provide you with a deeper understanding of their professional journey, values, and experiences.

Their insights can offer valuable lessons and guidance, helping you navigate your own career path more effectively. By showing a genuine interest in their story, you can build trust, and likeability, and something else that is potentially pure gold for you...you earn the privilege to come back and ask more questions.

Tomorrow, I'll have the second part of this topic, including what to do when your boss doesn't show much (or any) interest in having this kind of conversation with you.

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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