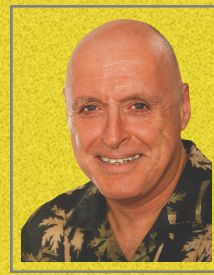


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1527 Should Job Candidates Turn the Tables on Interviewers?

Question. If a job interviewer asks you to provide three references so they can check you out...would it be fair for you to ask them to let you talk to three happy employees, so you can check them out? I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll get into this, next on The Extra Point.

Ray sent me a Facebook post from a page entitled *sarcasm_only*, and it posed the question I asked just before the break, where the person being interviewed turned the tables on the interviewer, asking to get some time with happy employees.

What do you think of that? Is it appropriate for a prospective employee to ask to talk to people on the payroll, so they can get a better feel for the company and the environment they would be working in?

Would most interviewers be happy with the question? Would they be amused? Would they be offended and terminate the session right then and there? "I mean, how dare they ask for such a thing? I'm the one in control, and I ask the questions."

I say that for dramatic purposes only, and hope nobody would actually react that way. For myself, I love the idea.

First, the candidate is showing some spark and independent thought. Don't we want to hire people like that?

Second, doesn't it seem justified? Have you ever taken a job where you went through the normal hiring process, not meeting anyone you'd actually work with until your first day on the job, and later you wished you would have known more about what you were getting yourself into? I have.

Over time I realized that I wasn't a good fit for every organization, and some organizations wouldn't be what I was looking for. What if we figured that out before we all said, "I do"?

What if we narrowed prospective employees

down to a final interview list, then gave them a tour of the facilities and set up a two-way Q & A session? Maybe just a half-hour.

If you have a big staff and hire a lot of people, then the same people wouldn't be involved in every interview. Spread the experience around to more employees.

For most companies, the numbers won't be an issue. Let's say 10 people apply for a job. Your HR process gives you a final list of three. How hard would it be to bring three people in and give them an expanded look into you and your opportunity; while you get an expanded look into the candidates as they ask and answer questions?

You would get to see them in a different light than if they sat in your conference room with only the interviewer.

Would this scenario work for every employer? No. Some would judge it to be uncomfortable, bothersome, perhaps chaotic, and certainly more trouble than it's worth.

Some companies value control over almost everything else, and they likely wouldn't be game to try.

Yet, this kind of open attitude might fit in with other places because it matches their culture.

One more thing. This is just one idea on how you can change the normal, cookie-cutter job-filling process, to make it more exciting, more fun, and more valuable for everyone.

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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