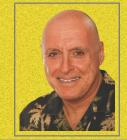# # 1555 Keeping Workers Employed Longer — Part 1

There was a time — not all that long ago — when it wasn't totally unreasonable to hire someone and have them spend their entire career with your organization. Today, this is a rarity in the private sector. You do find it in the military and government, both federal and GovGuam. What I offer my clients are ways to keep people not with an eye to the long term, but to *longer.* Longer is the goal now. There are many things you can do to get people to stay longer. I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll get into this, next on The Extra Point.

So how do you keep workers longer, which means you replace workers less often and you reduce your overall HR costs.

If you want to know all of what I let clients know, we can arrange a consultation. For now, we'll give you a some things to think about over the next few days.

1. I'm going to lead with something that most people don't think about right away. Get your workers involved in the decisions that affect their jobs.

Nobody has ever liked to have the people in upper management or — as they like to call themselves now…leadership — making decisions on their job without getting input first. I mean, it's simple courtesy, right?

Quick story. A thousand years ago there was a radio station called KUAM-610. The morning guy was named JQ Fanihi, and the afternoon personality was Joe Cunningham, Uncle Toting, or Uncle Tote for short.

We had a special chair in the radio control room. One day, Tote broke it by rocking back and forth until the back came off.

The station replaced the chair the next day, but didn't ask the on-air radio folks to go to the store and pick one out. A station employee grabbed what they thought would work, and there it sat when I came in the next morning, and it was terrible.

I complained and asked why we didn't get a vote. I was told that there was no time for that. It had to be replaced immediately, so they did the best they could. We'd get to choose the next time one was needed.

Basically, it was "Suck it up, Fanihi, that's the chair…live with it." The worst part was that the one Tote broke had been in use for about three years. We'd have this lousy chair for that long or longer?

I relayed the message to everyone else, and nobody was happy about it. That being said, the story did have a happy ending. Tote busted that one on day two. Station general manager Jon Anderson was not amused.

So, now we needed another chair. As it turned out, the store where we bought these unique chairs had received a new shipment that day, included the same model as the one that was initially broken. I ran to get it.

After a brief consult with Tote, explaining that we couldn't have any more broken chairs, he agreed to tone things down a little.

What would have happened if we had been told to go pick out the chair we wanted, right from the beginning? We probably would have asked if it was possible to get the original chair again, and we would then have been told that it was due in the store within days.

More important, the people who had to create compelling radio for listeners and advertisers would have felt they had the confidence of management to make that kind of decision.

I spoke to Jon about it, and he agreed that the on-air team would make those kinds of decisions in the future.

It may not always be possible to get feedback from workers, or allow them to make a decision, but I strongly suggest you do whenever it is possible.
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Doing this says good things to workers about how the organizational leadership feels about them. This improves overall relationships, and it's worth the effort.

Tomorrow, we'll look at skill building from a couple of different angles.

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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