

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1563 Growth = Expanding Capabilities and Measuring Results

You're lifting weights and doing okay, and then you find that you can't go any farther no matter how hard you try. You're stuck and without help, you're likely to stay stuck. I'm Jerry Roberts, and in just a moment I'll tell you why this situation mirrors the experience of countless managers who are also stuck. I'll also explain how one solution is the same cure for both. It's coming next, on The Extra Point.

Four years and about 1,000 Extra Points ago, I told a story of bodybuilding in the 1980s, after I'd left Guam for the San Francisco Bay Area.

It was a good gym, my diet was solid, I was taking the right supplements, and I was seeing excellent results. Then, everything seemed to grind to a halt. For a month, I wasn't able to add weight to my exercises.

I got all kinds of advice. Work out less often, work out more often, double my protein, stop any form of cardio (then called aerobics), and on it went. I was frustrated by the whole thing.

Finally, I asked a gym regular for help. He was an airline cargo agent, about 6-3, maybe 260 pounds. A huge guy who lifted massive weights.

He told me that getting stronger and eventually bigger was only possible if I broke out of my routine, and expanded my ability to lift more.

He had been just like me a few years earlier, lifting more than he ever had before, but hit a wall and couldn't go higher. Then, he used a strategy to break out and never looked back.

I'm standing next to this guy, looking at the full-wall mirror in front of us. I looked at him and then looked at myself, then back to him again. I just figured what did I have to lose. If I learned even a little from him, it had to be a benefit.

He looked at my notebook which charted my progress; how much weight I lifted and how many repetitions I did, then he said I needed

to change how I lifted. No more three sets of progressively heavier weights, trying to do 10 reps per exercise. He wanted me to try going much heavier and only doing one or two reps per set.

I followed his instructions and it worked okay, but I had severe muscle pains from not taking time to warm up properly, and lost days in the gym. So, we changed course.

He suggested the "531" approach. That was lifting 30% more weight than my previous maximum, but only for five reps. If I could do six reps or more, the weight was too light. If I could do only four or less, it was too heavy.

The second set of three reps was 40% above my previous max, and the last set was one rep for 50% higher.

I had to continue to chart each exercise, so I could clearly see the progress. The ultimate goal would be for me to break out of the zone I was in, and get stronger. It did exactly that. After a heavy "max" week, the next week my previous maximums felt lighter than before. I was able to add more weight at the normal 10 reps.

I continued with this system, using one max week and then follow it with three regular weeks...rinse and repeat.

Over a four to five month period, my strength increased by 30-50%, depending on the type of exercise I was performing. The experiment was a total success.

Over three decades later, I've been reminded that growing a manager's skills require the same solution and discipline.

Managers hit walls, have plateaus and ceilings, and stop growing. The way you break those down is to shock those managing muscles.

(Con't.)

If your manager is fine with doing the daily transactional things, like assigning work or writing reports, but hasn't got a clue when it comes to worker relationships and the whole topic of engagement, which leads to keeping talent on your payroll, then that shock would be training.

From the training (in other words how to do the workout, you get to doing the reps, and then charting progress.

Because you know that what you measure gets results, you check in regularly to see how it's going, and if the system needs tweaking.

Over a period of time, if your manager follows the plan, and if you follow up the way you should, then you should see improvement.

By the way, the same process is good for training front line workers.

If you need help, go to guamtraining.com and send me a message. I'll walk you through 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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For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

