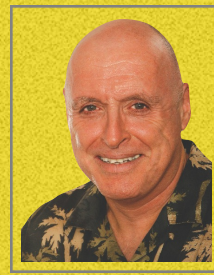


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1572 Perceptions in Production and Workload

Vince was in his third month as a production manager at XYZ Corporation, and he was having some issues with Mike, whose job it was to handle customer problems and oversee any needed repairs. One day, Mike loudly complained that he was overworked, saying to anyone who would listen that the company wasn't paying enough for the amount of work they demanded. Vince had to figure out what was happening with Mike. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll see how Vince approached the situation, next on The Extra Point.

Vince, the new manager, was surprised one day when Mike, a worker who seemed productive, registered a complaint that his workload was too heavy, forcing him to work weekends to catch up.

Vince knew the company had a zero overtime policy, and asked Mike who gave him a key to the facility for the weekend.

It turned that Vince's predecessor had given Mike the key, because Mike had long ago said he needed time on weekends to keep his level of production within the expected range.

When confronted by Vince, Mike pleaded his case for a reduced workload, saying that Vince didn't understand how much of a burden his workload was, and that it took a lot longer than anyone knew to achieve his daily assignments.

Mike emphasized his long-standing dedication to the company, and that he was committed to delivering high value.

What Mike didn't know is that Vince had been in management for just two years. Prior to that, he had performed Mike's exact job in a town 200 miles away.

Mike could only sit in silence when Vince told him that he had done the same work and very clearly understood the time requirements.

Vince made it clear to Mike that there are often significant differences in the production of one worker to another, even when doing the same work. While one worker is able to have a laser focus on the job, another might lose time to a series of distractions, or just work slower. He offered to coach Mike to add a new level of efficiency to his routine.

The only thing he asked in return was that Mike stop groaning in public about his workload and how unfair the company was. Mike agreed to that.

Over a period of weeks, with Vince's help, Mike was able to ramp up his efforts and achieve the same output without the need to labor over weekends.

The lesson to learn is that it's rare when any two workers turn in identical work. One is usually going to get more done, or display a higher quality of work while still falling into an acceptable range for quantity.

The reasons for the disparity in results could be misunderstandings, underlying issues that you know nothing about, or something so simple as the reality that the slower worker just likes to work slower. They may ultimately deliver the same results as others do, if given enough time.

Of course, the problem there is that labor laws are clear that the 40-hour per week limit has to be honored, and it's overtime pay beyond that.

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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