

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1581 How Can You Leverage Your Smartest Talent?

If you've got smart people working on your team, that opens up options for you which you might not have considered. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we'll toss out some thoughts on how to get more mileage out of the brighter folks on your roster. That's coming next on The Extra Point.

Do you have smart people working with you? I hope you think so. Now, let's look at how we can help our smart people help us even more.

1. Smarter employees learn faster. Given that, they're usually out front on new technology and systems, and can help others who aren't so quick to pick things up.

This lightens the load on the manager, who might have always been the one to do most of the teaching and coaching in the past.

Something to consider here is that just because an individual is bright and is quick to learn, it doesn't always follow that they can teach others. A little instruction from you on how to deliver information is helpful.

One more point on this. When you are asked to help a teammate learn and grow, and you can do that effectively, it can be a huge boost to the new teacher.

This is the kind of thing that bonds one to the teammate, to the manager, and to the organization. It also adds value to one's self-esteem.

While we may not see it as a big deal when we offer the task, it may be more impactful than we think.

Okay, we can leverage this person's smarts if we add some teaching skills, and they can mentor other workers. It's a good start.

Before I get any more involved in this, I'd probably get with my HR manager and find out as much as I can about the employee's work history and experiences. This may give

me clues to other skills this person may have.

2. Involve them in strategy and decision-making, if you are involved in that at your unit's level. It doesn't always work out as you may hope, but it's worth the effort to see how a person thinks, and processes information.

3. I wouldn't hesitate to get their input on whatever systems your team uses to deliver the work assigned. Are there gaps, barriers, things in the way of optimum productivity?

4. Empower them to lead projects. Give this smart worker opportunities to flash a little leadership ability. Can they take an initiative from start to finish?

You can begin with something small and see how they do, and how others react to their leading the team. If successful, add an extra degree of difficulty the next time.

What's really happening here is that aside from the actual work involved, you're adding to this talented employee's skill set, and helping them to see themselves in a different light.

If they like what they see, maybe you can whisper in the HR manager's ear that you have an option when it comes time to fill your next open supervisory position.

Then you go off and find your next smart worker, and start over. If you like growing talent and building people up, maybe after a while, your leadership will come to the conclusion that you're pretty smart, too.

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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