

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1652 Senior Leaders Ask Entry-Level Workers Three Questions

Yesterday, as I was catching part of the Dodgers and Yankees in game three of the World Series, I was thinking about the different worlds of entry-level workers and senior leaders. I've got a number of friends and clients who are getting close to retirement, and on the entry-level side, I think of the students in teacher Eric Chong's hospitality industry class, who will be joining the workforce soon. I imagine those two groups sitting across from each other, with three questions. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, I'll tell you what those questions are, next on the Extra Point.

Before we begin, I have invested nearly 30 years of my life into the concept of helping people to get further and do better. It started out as a business opportunity, and somewhere along the line, it became a calling.

I'm invested in Generation Z. I have one in my house, and I think we need to do all we can to mentor and strengthen this group, because it won't be long before they will be moving into positions of leadership.

It's also been my privilege to work with many senior leaders over the years, and I've learned from them.

Eric Chong is a gifted and motivated teacher who — besides his curriculum — delivers life lessons from the workplace to his students. I'm honored that he thinks what we do here on The Point has a place in that.

So, if his students could each square off with a senior leader and ask them three questions; and if each senior leader also had three questions to ask — what would, could, and maybe should those questions be?

I'm going to start with the senior leaders.

1. What made you want to join our team, and what are you most excited about in your new job?

Now, sometimes a young job seeker takes a position because they just wanted a job, and it could have been any job. I hope their answer is better than that. In any case, the second part about why they're excited might open a small window into their personality and hopes for the future.

That is information a leader can tap into to better communicate with and support a new worker.

2. What challenges do you anticipate facing in your role, and how can I or the team help you deal with them?

The young worker has been briefed on their position and they understand what's expected of them, but have they thought it through well enough to clearly understand what the leader is asking for here?

Do they understand the job well enough to know what kind of help to ask for? If they do, I think that's a bonus and you may have found someone worth keeping tabs on.

3. How do you prefer to receive feedback and recognition?

This is really bonus time if you get a serious response on this question. I'm not sure that the majority of young workers have even thought once about the topic of feedback, let alone that they have a choice in how they receive it.

You may have to explain exactly what you're after with this question, but eventually you'll get what you're after.

What have we accomplished with these questions? Besides some useful information and a glimpse into the mindset of this young person, you are a senior leader who is taking the time to have a friendly conversation with them — and this little Q&A is going to make an impression. (Con't.)

I remember when senior leaders took time out of their day to spend a few minutes with me. I was impressed. Maybe you can think back to when that happened to you.

Well, I told you that the entry-level workers also had three questions to ask. We'll have those for you tomorrow.

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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