

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1665 3 Things HR Managers Wish Their Boss Really Understood

Smart CEOs, business owners, directors, and commanding officers put a strong HR leader on their team. Even smarter ones listen to what their HR managers advise them to do. The smartest ones, however, take another step in the process. They take action on the advice and suggestions of a talented and wise HR professional. It isn't always the case. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today three things HR managers wish their bosses really understood. That's next, on the Extra Point.

Over the years, more and more human resource professionals have earned a place at the table with other key leaders, forming the braintrust that takes an organization forward.

That being said, sometimes the advice and counsel of the HR leader gets pushed aside and isn't implemented.

Maybe it's a timing issue, or pressing matters force the team to head off in a new direction. Or, it could be that the ultimate leader has a clear understanding of what their HR manager proposes — or they think they do — and see things as good enough for the time being.

Many HR leaders have three things they wish their boss understood better. Here we go:

1. How to make employee engagement real.

Engagement has been a corporate buzzword for decades. Today, my bet is that most CEOs and others who lead organizations, believe that engagement is something you do with programs, activities, and initiatives. That is a part of it, but if it ends there you are screwing it up.

Engagement is about relationships, and HR managers want their bosses to help spread the engagement gospel all throughout the enterprise, and to make sure that every manager understands how to create better working relationships.

Events, contests, and all that other stuff is

frosting. Frosting means nothing without the cake. Relationships are the cake.

2. Managers must be trained continuously, and held accountable for what they learn.

Do you follow up on your technical talent and others who earn certifications that you pay for, to make sure they're actually using those skills for the benefit of the organization?

If the answer is yes, do you also follow up on training taken by managers, to ensure they are using what they learn? No? Why not? Didn't you spend money there, too?

Maybe you, the top leader, will say, "Come on, that's the HR manager's job." I'm sorry, it's not. It's the job of each manager's manager, and that top leader is included in that if he/she is the direct supervisor.

How can you expect supervisors and middle managers to support training if they see their bosses not taking it seriously.

3. Retention is everybody's job. Employee turnover can severely impact an organization's bottom line. HR managers understand that the costs associated with replacing employees extend far beyond recruitment expenses; they also encompass training new hires, lost productivity during transition periods, team issues and maybe client/customer issues.

HR can orchestrate the effort, but do you know who the #1 retention advocate has to be? By now, I'm guessing you're way ahead of me. Did you say the organization's top leader? If you did, you're absolutely right.

These three issues are critical for every kind of enterprises, whether it's private business, local government, federal civilian government, or the military.

All three share one characteristic: People think each is a job for the HR manager. (Con't.)

HR will play an important role, but the overall leader is the one who has to lead the charge, do the cheerleading, and has to be accountable for keeping others accountable.

All you top leaders, in whatever sector you are, and whatever your job title is, give me one more word before you get mad at me for adding to your job description.

You're the perfect person for the job. You're the one people look up to. You're the leader each teammate has chosen to be a follower of. You're the one who can be the example they need.

If you want engagement and retention to be more than words, and to finally make sense like they've never made sense before...you're the one who can make that happen.

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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