

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1718 The Hidden Benefit of Working in Guam

A lot of people have left Guam, seeking more money, greater opportunity, and a far lower cost of living on the U.S. mainland. Most of my family is there, and that's why they moved. I wonder, though, if after working there for a while, they've ever missed one of the hidden benefits of working in Guam. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll talk about that benefit, next on the Extra Point.

After 15 years of living and working, and enjoying a reasonable level of success, I left Guam in the mid-1980s. A failed marriage, and working for a broadcasting company that was stuck in bankruptcy made me long to hit the reset button.

I moved to California and after about a year in the San Francisco Bay Area, I ended up back in L.A., where I'd grown up. I went to work and over six years I did new things, got involved in projects that changed the course of my career, and then in 1993 I came back to Guam.

During my time in California, I worked for a broadcasting network for three years, got involved with creating national radio programs for another year, then spent the last two years learning about producing tradeshows and the publishing business. Those are the businesses I started here when I returned.

During all of this time, I worked with dozens of people, and socialized with them as well. Six year's worth and there was a lot of fun, good times, and some shared success. Yet, I only had communication with two of them for a couple of years upon leaving.

Conversely, after my moving from Guam many years before, I was in touch with a lot of folks and that continued until I got back.

Friendships last longer in Guam, including workplace friendships, than they seem to over there in that far-flung 48 states.

Was it just a California thing? You know, there are so many things to do there that keeping up

long distance communication takes a back burner? Was it a "me" thing, that people didn't feel as close to me as I felt to them? I don't know and I never will, so I don't worry about it.

That being said, A recent poll from job search and workplace review site Glassdoor indicates employees may no longer seek out friendships with their co-workers in the way they once did.

This won't necessarily impact folks people who intend to remain in Guam, but those who have left or are thinking of leaving may have something to think about.

According to Glassdoor, remote work, short-term career thinking, and job layoffs have resulted in fewer workers having interest in developing workplace relationships.

Having a best friend at work has always been a positive marker for retaining talent, and now this is changing.

Fewer than 25 percent of survey respondents said they had stayed in a job because they had a "work bestie".

More telling still, and this relates to my earlier point about having interest in building closer friendships, some 53 percent of respondents said they actively avoid close connections with coworkers because they prefer to keep their work life and their personal life separate.

Play that off against the social side of Guam, where being invited to family gatherings is a regular highlight of living here.

Survey respondents also mentioned higher job turnover as a reason that developing workplace friendships is harder now than it used to be.

More people in Guam "job-hop" than in prior years, so this may be an issue for us as well.

(Con't.)

While wages may be higher back in the mainland, the “hidden” benefit of working in Guam, one we might not find across the ocean, is that the relationships we build here may well be deeper and longer-lasting than what you’ll often find over there.

It’s not really hidden as we see it play out in front of our eyes all the time. Maybe we ought to stop, inhale the goodness, and appreciate one of the real gifts of Guam for what it is.

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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