

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1726 Positive Ways to Suck Up to the Boss

Have you ever worked with someone who seemed to spend most of their time “sucking up” to the boss? I mean, they weren’t terribly good at their job but found ways to get on the boss’s good side by doing and saying things that, well, you would never do...would you? Today, we’re going to flip the script. We’re not just going to highlight how to suck up in the way that, uh, those suck ups do; we’re going to teach you how to suck up in positive ways. I’m Jerry Roberts, and that’s coming next on The Extra Point.

First of all, when I asked if you had ever worked with someone who sucked up to the boss, did you see faces flash in your mind?

Okay, do you recall what they used to do to earn the title of “suck up”? I’m going to give you five ways it’s often seen, and maybe you’ve witnessed some of these. Then, we’ll present another way of thinking about it.

1. Excessive flattery. “Boss, you’re so smart.” “Boss, have you been working out?” “Boss, what would this company do without you?”
2. Agreeing with everything the boss says. “Yes boss”. “You know it boss.” “If there was a prize for the boss who was right most often... er, I mean all the time, you’d win it, boss”.
3. They bring the boss his/her favorite treats. “I baked these myself boss, because I know how much you love them”.
4. They’re always available. “Sure boss, I’ll work nights, weekends, holidays, whatever it takes to be a valuable member of this amazing team you’ve built”.
5. They regularly praise the boss in meetings. “Wow, isn’t that a totally awesome idea the boss just had?” “Boss, you’re amazing!”

Okay, you get the idea. I can only hope you haven’t had to work through some of the more extreme examples just given.

Now, let’s look at positive ways to suck up to your boss, if you don’t mind the continued use of that expression.

1. Show appreciation for their efforts. You can praise your boss for decisions that made a difference for the team. “Hey boss, I just want you to know that I appreciate how you led us through the last month’s challenges. We all saw what you did.”
2. Display your gratitude for them offering you guidance, support, or opportunities. They could have spent the time with somebody else. “Boss, I want to thank you for helping me make it to the next level. I know I couldn’t have done it without you.”
3. If you finish your work earlier than expected, maybe you can take something off the boss’s plate. “Boss, I’ve completed my work a little ahead of schedule. I’ve got two hours free. I know you’re up to your eyeballs as usual. Can I somehow lighten your load?”
4. If the boss says no, make the same offer to one of your teammates. One day, when you’re up to your eyeballs, maybe they’ll return the favor. Managers love to see this attitude spread throughout their team.
5. Be prepared for meetings. Find out what a meeting is about and come ready to make a solid contribution. Too many meetings are dominated by a small number of people. I always liked to see more people participate. What if you’re one of them?

Bonus. Every time you report a problem to your boss, come in with a potential solution. It may not be the ultimate method selected, but it shows the boss you took the time to think things through.

Now, I know that no reasonable person will likely look at this second list and consider any of it to be sucking up.

(Con’t.)

This second list shows your manager that you're different, engaged, and focused. As I've said before, it helps to separate you from the pack.

I've always thought that's a good place to be.

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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