

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1752 Bosses Who Are Tough to Deal With – Part 2

Yesterday, we began to talk about the trials and tribulations of having a bad boss. We're going to give you some ideas on how to handle yourself if you've got one of those in your life. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's next on The Extra Point.

Before we start on the list of things to do if you're dealing with a bad boss, I'd like to remind you that you can get the transcript for today's Extra Point, as well as yesterday's, at guamtraining.com. Download numbers 1751 and 1752.

Just so there is no confusion, a tough boss is not necessarily a bad boss. As well, a bad boss is sometimes a good boss, and a good boss is sometimes a bad boss. The folks in charge are just like you and me, they have good days and bad days, positives and negatives. Have an open mind while you're deciding to put a label on your manager.

That being said, if you're struggling to get along with the person you report to, and the situation is weighing you down, I've got a list of things to consider.

1. Let's change the language. Instead of bad or tough, let's ask if they're fair or unfair. Is this person balanced in how they deal with workers?

I never asked for special treatment from any employer. I also didn't want to come up short because the boss played favorites. Treat me fairly and we're on solid ground. Then, it should be all about my performance and my attitude. If it's not...

2. Get a meeting with the manager and explain your concerns. Don't make it a complaint fest, just say what you need to say in a calm, direct manner.

Ask the manager if he/she has any concerns over your performance. If so, get the details and ask for a plan to improve. There's a thing called performance management. It's about getting better and it's part of the boss's job.

Well, what if the manager tells you there will be no improvement plan, just get better or else?

If it goes down like this, go to the HR manager and explain the situation. Ask for their help in getting you help. Don't complain or whine about your boss being unfair. Just say you were told to improve or your job is on the line, and you need their assistance to do it.

Most HR pros can come up with a solution. They can do so directly, or provide resources to your boss. If you get no help and your boss is still on your case, then I'd be testing the job market.

3. Find common ground. Do you have anything in common with your boss? Anything at all? Are there any shared interests? I'd be looking for any excuse to have a normal human chat with this person. Sometimes, that's all you need to bring about changes.

4. Choose your battles wisely, and toughen up your skin. I'm not saying you are one of them, but some people have very little tolerance for criticism. Stay focused. If the boss raises a specific issue that is causing you problems, and even if their language isn't complimentary, say this: "I understand your concern and I need your help to get better."

Now they have to decide to help or blow you off, and maybe have to explain to somebody why they did that.

5. Pay for your own improvement. This seems to be a foreign concept for many in Guam. If your employer hasn't got money to invest in you, or refuses to, then you should look at making that investment yourself. It's your life, and your career.

6. Now we get a bit controversial. Keep records of important discussions and decisions. This can be helpful if you need to address issues later and want to have a grasp of details.

(Con't.)

Managers should do this, too. Relying on our memory is a poor substitute for hard copies or digital notes.

7. Plan for the future. I mentioned testing the market. People change jobs all the time. I know this might be more difficult if you're employed by the government.

Still, if you're in a troubled situation and you absolutely need a change, you should start exploring your options.

This list isn't complete by any means, but it should give you things to think about if you want to save your job, or need to move on.

Navigating a relationship with a difficult boss requires patience and strategy. Above all, be professional, do your work to the best of your ability, and stay positive.

Then, do what you need to do.

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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