

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1759 Playing Mind Games With a Super-Confident Leader

You work for a high-powered, highly successful and super-confident leader. Some people call this person a narcissist. This leader thinks they are always the smartest person in the room, whatever room it is, and they are not easy to persuade. You want to gain their confidence and support for your ideas and projects. So, understanding their personality and the way they do business, what tactics and strategies would you employ to successfully deal with them? I'm Jerry Roberts and if that's your situation, I may have an approach that can pay off for you. That's next on The Extra Point.

Dealing with a high-powered, confident leader, sometimes perceived as a narcissist, always seen as a tough individual to deal with, is not going to be easy and will require a strategic approach to gain their trust and support. Let's see if we can devise some components of a plan.

1. Don't waste their time. When you come in to sound out your concept and want support, you need to anticipate the questions the leader will ask, and you want to be able to give solid answers.

This means you must prepare for the meeting. Never, ever just "wing it" in the presence of this type of person. Make sure you have your key points in writing in case they ask for it, and back it up with the best data and evidence you can get.

2. Show confidence. If this is a super-confident individual, it's doubtful they'll be interested in what you have to say if they get the idea that you're not totally sold on why you're there.

Looking weak or wishy-washy won't inspire this leader, and you may be criticized.

3. Keep your cool. As hard as it may be in the presence of an intimidating boss, muster up every ounce of composure you can, and stay calm.

If they start going off on you and your idea,

maintain solid eye contact, and listen intently, nodding when appropriate, and giving indication that you are totally engaged in the conversation. Be able to respond if you get a question.

I had this experience when I worked for a man in California who imagined himself to be the Donald Trump of the late 1980s, the *Art of The Deal* guy.

He dressed like Trump, had his hair cut to match Trump's style, the whole enchilada. It was no fun when he got his engine fired up, but if you were prepared and calm, you could get through it okay.

4. Understand their motivations. Is what you're proposing in line with the stated goals and objectives of the leader? Will it help them get further, or is it going in a different direction?

If they see it as being in line with where the organization is already headed, maybe you'll get a quick approval.

If it's not aligned, then you have more work to do. Divide your reasoning up by: a) Here are the benefits of moving forward; and b) This is what happens if we don't. Which has the most power? Number two, the consequences of not taking action.

5. Last point. Axios came out with a report yesterday that claimed Trump has to receive a thick lathering of flattery in order to get his attention, and to be able to influence him. That very well may be true. Depending on where you lean in terms of politics, you'll believe that to be true, or completely reject it, or not care.

I would never "lather" flattery. I think there's a far more productive way to do it, one that makes you look intelligent. That method is to include them in the thinking process.

(Con't.)

“You’ve had great success because you’ve been able to see things clearly and make solid decisions. I’m here to gain the benefit of that talent. I can make this happen, and I believe it will be even better with your input.”

I don’t see that as straight-up flattery. I see it as giving a successful person respect and inviting them to weigh in on my idea.

Maybe they throw me out of their office, but I don’t think they will.

Maybe they’ll say they’re too busy to deal with it, and for me to come back when the idea is totally developed. I can live with that.

Or, maybe they accept my invitation and spend some time working with me. If so, that enhances my chances of gaining approval, and I had some personal time with the boss. For me, that’s a total win and worth the effort.

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Tough leaders, even some with a narcissistic edge to them, eventually understand that they need people they can count on, and who can put up with the stuff they throw out. If you show them you’re not afraid and you can function well in this environment, you might end up with a decent working relationship.

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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