

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1770 Younger Workers May Not Want to be Managers

Imagine, if you will, that you have a manager's job open. The way it's always been in Guam is to select your best front line worker in that department and offer them the job. Okay, so you do. However, they decline the promotion. You move on to the second best worker, and, oh, they decline it as well. You keep going and keep offering, and everybody keeps declining. What is going on? I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'll tell you what it might be, next on The Extra Point.

Okay, we left our employer with an open management position and nobody wants it. This is the way it's supposed to happen. Now what?

Do we offer more money? Okay, let's offer more money. They still don't want the job. Should we offer even more money?

Well, money may not be the issue here. Let me explain. Deloitte Global, the big accounting firm, has just released their annual Gen Z and Millennial survey — and the news for senior leaders may be concerning.

Let's give a little backstory, things we're all familiar with. Many in the Millennial class were either just getting their career going when the 2008 financial crisis hit, resulting in bad times for a large cross-section of society.

In 2019 when Covid hit, Gen Z folks were somewhere between elementary school and graduating high school, and the pandemic didn't work out well for school kids in any grade level.

Therefore, both of these groups have seen major interruptions at critical points in their development. These events have profoundly shaped their expectations regarding work and success.

We've talked about it before, Millennials and Gen Z are the first generations in America's history where its members don't expect to live as well as their parents.

If you think this is a survey that takes place "back there" and has nothing to do with Guam, I believe you'd be making a mistake. I've heard similar conversations here.

Young people look around and see a society that was built by preceding generations, and they're having trouble connecting with it. One thing is true for many: They aren't interested in having the same working life as their parents had or have. They see things differently.

They want to develop skills to match the needs of the marketplace. They also want work-life balance. They don't want to slave away for a paycheck.

As for the scenario we began with, our poor HR manager trying and failing to promote someone to management, this isn't a joke.

I've seen research where both younger groups clearly had the opinion that moving up to a management role meant much more work, and it wouldn't be the kind of work they'd be interested in.

Deloitte's survey revealed that very few Gen Zs aspire to reach senior leadership roles. Only 6% view attaining such positions as their primary career goal. So much for your succession planning.

Let's talk about finances. Guam's high cost of living changes the equation. A chance to bring home a bigger paycheck and be able to do more than just have the basics is a big deal. Still, for some, the thought of management is a negative.

Is there a silver lining here. I think so. About half of the members of both groups have a favorable view toward mentorship. This then presents an opportunity for leadership to get personal and help people grow.

As this growth takes place, attitudes can change toward advancement. (Con't.)

It's a tough market for talent buyers, and that includes leaders who need to fill manager positions.

We've talked for years on how to approach these issues. Pay people at market or above market rates, as you can.

Take good care of them in all respects. A fellow named Alfie Cohen once said, "Pay them as much as you can, and then do everything in your power to make them forget about the money."

Finally, train them regularly. These two groups want to be trained and grown. If you don't do it, you will lose them.

There's more, but if you've got these things going for you, you'll be ahead of others who have the same problems but operate like it's 20 years ago.

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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