



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – January 2004

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Merge Gupta-Sunderji helps turn managers into leaders. Through engaging keynotes and facilitated workshops, she gives people specific and practical tools to achieve leadership and communication success. Contact her at www.mergespeaks.com or 403-605-4756

Learn from the Aztecs

I spent much of the month of December visiting and studying several ancient archaeological sites in Mexico and Central America. Not only was I awestruck by the vastness and sophistication of these ancient civilizations, but perhaps even more by how much we can learn from the people who lived so many centuries ago.

Take the ancient city of Teotihuacan for example. Located near present-day Mexico City, original settlement began in 200 B.C. At its peak in 600 A.D., it was home to approximately 200,000 people, making it one of the ancient world's largest cities, with an urban core covering some twenty square kilometers. However, about 650 A.D., for reasons unknown, the city was abandoned. By the time the Aztecs arrived on the scene in 13th century, the area was already a little more than an ancient ruin. The Aztecs wished to build a holy place (or Place of the Gods which is where the name Teotihuacan comes from) on the site. But rather than destroying what was already there and starting from scratch, the Aztecs took the existing structures and used them as foundations upon which to build even greater temples and palaces. The Aztecs knew that they could achieve more by building upon what was already there, rather than starting from the beginning.

As you head into the new year, many of you will be looking ahead and thinking about what you want to accomplish in the future, while perhaps also reflecting on the trials and tribulations of the past year. Learn from the Aztecs. Don't throw it all away and start from the beginning. Take what is already there, whether it is perfect or not, and build upon it. Your past experiences, whether positive or negative, are a solid foundation upon which to build. Use this as a base upon which to build even greater things!