



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – March 2007

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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

Building sandcastles that endure

As I write this month's Mega Minute, I am sitting on a tropical beach under a thatched canopy, watching the relentless ebb and flow of the ocean as the waves crash on the shore. I am looking out to the very edge of the water where a tall sandcastle, built just a few hours ago by a group of children, is beginning to crumble and fall to the might of the sea. In just another few hours, there will remain no trace that a sandcastle ever stood here; as the high tide comes in, all evidence of the children's hard effort and dedicated exertion will have been washed away.

As I stare out over towards the horizon, my practical mind kicks into gear. "Why didn't they just build the sandcastle another twenty feet inland?" I wonder to myself. "It would have been above the high-tide mark, and then it would have lasted much longer." As I voice these thoughts aloud to my husband sitting next to me, he jumps in with the possibilities. "Perhaps the kids didn't know where the high tide mark was," he offers. "Or maybe they just didn't care because they won't be here tomorrow to see whether the sandcastle survived or not."

Immediately, my mind jumps from building sandcastles to the parallels in leadership – specifically, the importance of knowledge and the consequence of caring. As leaders, it's important to equip yourself with knowledge, not only about your people and their circumstances, but also about the skills and behaviours that you can develop within yourself to create leadership excellence. As leaders, it's vital that you care, both about your people, and the impact of your words and actions on others. Just like improved knowledge and greater caring could have built a more enduring sandcastle, your investment in knowledge and your commitment to caring will build not only strong employees and teams capable of resisting outside forces, but also positive workplaces that endure.

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