



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – February 2011

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Merge Gupta-Sunderji turns 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

Don't shoot yourself in the foot!

I have recently been observing a young couple who have run into financial trouble and are struggling to keep their business afloat. As time goes on, their creditors are getting more anxious, their existing customers are getting more annoyed, and their family members (who have also invested in the project) are getting more nervous. All this, not surprisingly, is a bad situation and no doubt very stressful for the two of them. Unfortunately, this bad state of affairs has caused them to lose their strategic focus and vision. As their stress levels increase, they are lashing out at their customers and their creditors, the very people who can help them make it through this period of hardship. Their customers have the power to relax contractual requirements and their creditors have the ability to delay repayment and extend further credit; unfortunately this couple is so caught up in the emotions of the moment that they have lost their capacity to think purposefully. The husband has been known to throw a temper tantrum (or two or three) when talking to customers, the wife has on several occasions fired off spontaneous emotionally-laden responses to email queries. There have been many instances when a small amount of effort on their part would have built up immense goodwill with their customers; but because they are angry they have ignored these opportunities. Instead of focusing their energies on developing goodwill with the very people who can help them overcome their challenges, they have resorted to the negative emotions of irritation, anger and resentment. Now don't get me wrong, I understand how stressful this whole situation must be for them. But their inability to pull themselves away from the emotional component and focus on the big picture is only going to come back to haunt them.

You've no doubt heard the phrase "Don't shoot yourself in the foot." The gist of this pearl of wisdom is simply: avoid doing that which is only going to hurt you. Too bad that these two haven't learned this important lesson yet! Alas, I fear that they may learn it too late!

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