



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – August 2011

Welcome to **Merge's Monthly Mega-Minute** - a bite-sized, yet substantial and practical, nugget of information that you can use immediately to enhance your professional and personal success.

This issue of Merge's Monthly Mega-Minute may be **FREELY** distributed to friends, colleagues, and discussion groups, as long as the entire issue is included. You may use excerpts of it in your print, electronic, or other publications, as long as the following byline is also included:

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

What the ancient Hawai'ians can teach you about leadership

E nihi ka hele ... mai pulale i ka 'ike a ka maka
-- Hawaiian proverb

Translation:

Watch your step ... and don't let things you see lead you into trouble.

I first saw this truism on a sign at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, put there to caution visitors against wandering off the marked trails. Certainly, in an active geological site where seemingly solid rock formations can unexpectedly turn into fragile sulphur banks and then crumble into steam vents in just a few short moments, this is very sage advice. But this wise counsel is just as applicable in the workplace and to your role as a leader.

As a leader, you are faced with a myriad of responsibilities – day-to-day issues, fire-fighting crises, stacks of phone messages, and of course a never-ending stream of email – and while each is very important, they likely also pull you away from a long-term focus. Yet it is the long-term initiatives that will actually take your organization (or your department) onward and upward to the next level of success. So how do you focus that critical mental energy and time towards such issues? By doing exactly what this Hawai'ian proverb suggests. First, create a plan, preferably in writing. Second, watch your step. Move forward decisively and deliberately, but tread carefully nevertheless; there will be unexpected obstacles and setbacks and you have to be observant and prepared to counter them. Third, stay focused. Expect that there will be distractions along the way – unanticipated stakeholders, unforeseen options and the dreaded scope creep – but concentrate on your ultimate goal and stay the course.

**Telephone > (403) 605.4756 Fax > (403) 451.9759 Email > info@mergespeaks.com
www.mergespeaks.com**