



## turning managers into leaders

### Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – January 2012

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.

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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](http://www.mergespeaks.com) or 403-605-4756*

### Customer satisfaction is relative

Two weeks ago, my husband and I were snorkeling off the coast of sunny Puerto Vallarta in Mexico. As we climbed back into the boat, my husband asked, "So how was it?" With a shrug, I said, "Not that great!" "Yeah, that's what I thought too," replied my husband. Someone overhearing might have thought our exchange a little odd; after all, we were in a prime snorkeling coral reef known to have great underwater vistas. But the underlying reason behind our seemingly strange conversation was that our experience was relative. You see, just five months ago, we spent two entire days snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. As you might expect (it's one of the seven natural wonders of the world), our Great Barrier encounter was breathtaking, stunning, exciting and magnificent. And it set the standard. Ever since then, without even realizing it, we evaluate every single snorkeling spree using the Great Barrier Reef as a yardstick. The tour companies in Puerto Vallarta might think that this kind of a comparison is unfair, but the reality is that everybody assesses their experiences using their past experiences as benchmarks. And that's a reality worth considering further.

As you begin a brand new year in your professional lives and businesses, it's worth taking some time to reflect on how you are viewed by your clients and customers. Whether you like it or not, they are judging what you do and the products or services you offer against what they receive from others, many of whom are your competitors. Yes, it may be unfair – perhaps your competitors may have more resources and larger budgets at their disposal or maybe they have a competitive advantage that you cannot duplicate – but the irrefutable truth is that people compare! So spend some time thinking about what your competitors offer to your clients, and then strategically and deliberately consider what you are going to do to make your product or service stand out. How are you going to position yourself, differently, in the minds of your buyers? How are you going to create, for your stakeholders, a Great Barrier Reef experience?

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