



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – June 2005

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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

A leadership lesson from crabs

Dawn was just breaking over the wharf in small-town Nova Scotia as about a dozen fishermen readied their morning's catch for the journey to local shops and restaurants. "I think your crabs are escaping", I said to a fisherman as I pointed to one of several large wooden barrels in front of him. The crabs inside clambered one on top of the other, reaching for the top, and it seemed to me that at least a few of them would get away. He smiled, his eyes crinkling between his wind-beaten brows and cheeks. "No," he said, "They won't get away. The crabs won't let that happen. As soon as one of them gets near the top, another will pull it down. " "Silly, isn't it?" he continued. "If they helped one another, most of them could escape. Luckily though," he laughed out loud, "they're not very smart. They think that they'll do better by pulling each other down."

It occurred to me at that moment that human beings can sometimes be like crabs. You probably know people in your professional and personal lives who attempt to achieve their goals and dreams by pulling other people down. While they may be successful in the short-term, invariably their history of failed relationships catches up to them. One of the many characteristics of successful leaders is this: they know that their ultimate triumph comes from building other people up, not pulling them down. They know that crab-like behavior does not result in long-term success.

Are you exhibiting crab-like behavior? If so, you may be your own worst enemy. Don't get in the way of your own leadership success!