



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – August 2006

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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

Others can't read your mind. Really!

Trent arrived at the hotel's restaurant for dinner just before seven. As he was seated, he was pleased to note that the restaurant wasn't busy; he had to be in his room for a conference call later that evening at 8:30 PM, and it was clear that he would have no trouble doing so. Or so he thought! At 8:29, he was still trying to get the waitress' attention so that he could pay his bill. At 8:37, he was making a mad dash back up to his room. As he fumbled with his key card at the door, he could hear the phone ringing, and as he sprinted to his desk, it stopped! "That incompetent waitress," he fumed. "I can't believe she made me miss my telephone call. I sure am glad I didn't tip her!"

Despite Trent's obvious frustration, it really wasn't his waitress' fault that he missed his telephone call. You see, he hadn't told her what he expected, so he really had no right to be angry with her when she didn't meet his expectations. It would have been a different matter if Trent started the evening by saying to his waitress "I have to be in my room for a call at 8:30 this evening, so I'd like to be finished here at about 8:15. Do you think I'll be able to meet this deadline?" If his waitress had replied "No problem", then Trent would have a reason to be angry right now. But he didn't start the evening that way. Instead, he assumed that the waitress could read his mind, and that assumption led to failure.

It's the same with the people you work with. If you don't tell them what you expect of them, then you can't hold them responsible for not coming through. Whether you're dealing with employees, co-workers, or even your boss, it's up to you to clearly state your expectations; otherwise, don't be surprised (or angry) if others can't read your mind.