



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – July 2010

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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

What does it take to get things done?

On May 27, I fractured my foot as I (mis)stepped off the stage after delivering a keynote at a conference in Penticton, Canada. Unfortunately, I did not realize I'd fractured it (I thought it was just a nasty sprain) until May 30. Between when the break happened and when it was diagnosed, I had traveled 9,390 miles and 23 hours across the Atlantic, over Europe and Asia, and was now in New Delhi, India. Definitely not the ideal time to discover that I needed medical attention! For the next two weeks, I was scheduled to be in four different cities in India, and my timetable involved a fair amount of walking, both on stage as well as on uneven terrain. A broken foot was definitely going to put a crimp (or should I say gimp) in my plans. This was my first visit to India in almost thirty years, so it was with some trepidation (even though he came highly-recommended) that I went to see an orthopedic surgeon. I need not have worried.

Dr. Seth took the time to ask several questions and gather relevant information; he took ownership of the (in this case, my) problem; and then he acted decisively to produce a solution. He examined my foot, sent me for x-rays, and listened while I told him about my business and leisure plans over the next two weeks. His thoughtful questions and genuine interest in my concerns made me feel like he understood my apprehensions about my various commitments in India. I could tell that he was exploring alternatives to support my foot and help the fractures heal, while still letting me manage my obligations in the upcoming days. The final solution: a lightweight fiberglass walking cast with a waterproof liner. Within moments of receiving my concurrence, my foot was being cast. Less than one hour later, I walked out of his office, pleasantly amazed and utterly impressed with his focus on getting things done.

So what can a leader learn from Dr. Seth about getting things done? Three things – take the time to gather relevant information, take ownership of the problem, and then act decisively to produce a solution. Not that difficult, is it?