



turning managers into leaders

Merge's Monthly Mega Minute – March 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

Stop waiting for someone else to act, do it yourself

The Mexican state of Veracruz is bordered on the east by endless stretches of dark sand beaches that gently flatten into the Gulf of Mexico. To get from the main coastal highway to the beach, you usually have to travel through one or more sleepy villages on your way to the ocean. One such small village (pop. 500) is Chilahuite. Like most small coastal communities, the single road that runs through town is also where everything happens – children play, friends meet, daily trade is conducted, beverages are sipped and gossip exchanged sitting on plastic chairs on the side of the road. But as Mexico has commercialized and grown, city folk from the large urban centres are increasingly visiting the beaches, and traffic in these small little villages has multiplied. Not only has the number of vehicles increased exponentially, but most newcomers ignore the posted speed limits of 30 kms/hr (about 18 miles/hr), creating dangerous situations for the townspeople who are used to a much slower and sedate pace. In Chilahuite, the complaining has been endless. For at least two years (if not more), I have heard people grumble about how “someone should do something”, each hoping that the municipality would either install *los topes* (Spanish for speed bumps), or increase patrols to enforce the speed limit. Unfortunately, despite the complaining, no visible action has been taken. It took a fatal accident earlier this year for the villagers to finally take matters into their own hands. Because asphalt and concrete are expensive in Mexico, the townspeople devised another solution. They obtained heavy rope (made from natural fibres) and laid it across the main road at frequent intervals – instant *topes*. As they were able to raise enough money, they covered the ropes with a thin layer of asphalt to create a more permanent solution. “I don’t know why we waited this long,” commented one of the old-timers. “We should have just taken action ourselves a lot earlier instead of waiting for someone else to do something.”

Are you grumbling about how so-and-so should do this-and-that? Are you waiting for someone else to get things done? Perhaps it’s time to become the doer instead of the observer, to step up and act. Stop waiting for someone else to do it, take action and do it for yourself!

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