

Leadership Development: No Crabs for Me!

By Christina Parker



This weekend, our family had the pleasure of spending a couple of days on the beach with our friends the Hendersons. They are a very fun loving Christian family with two little girls that are the same age as our boys. The kids had a great time playing on the beach together. My favorite time on the beach is sunset. The colors are so vivid with unbelievable shades of color, blended perfectly with an artistic touch that is nothing short of magical. While walking with the kids on the beach one night we noticed that it looked like the sand was moving. As we peered closer, it was actually ghost crabs scurrying across the sand. They were busily working to excavate their homes in the sand and defend their territory from other crabs. We ran into the house to get flashlights and we went on an official crab hunt.

We enjoyed our crab hunts and the time spent with the Hendersons. There are a few relationships that you have in life that you work hard at preserving. They not only are enjoyable, but they fill you up as well. If you are lucky, you find others that you are so connected with that actually challenge and push you to grow and not be content with simply being "better." They push you to be the "best." The best in: your personal growth, in your spiritual relationships, in your family dynamics, and in your professional growth. They help to propel you to achieve your dreams and climb to extraordinary heights. The Hendersons are one of the relationships in our life that help us strive to be the best.

From birth to adulthood we learn to become good citizens and well-adjusted adults in the world of work and life. Many people make this transformation relatively successfully and lead somewhat normal, happy lives. Some people make it to adulthood grumbling and blaming the world for all the "bad things" it brings their way. Others can't make the adjustment at all and wind up as less than productive members of society.

What I'll call the "normal" group - the one that achieves a somewhat happy existence - learns to live by a set of rules, norms, and expectations that often limit their growth, potential, and true greatness. They are typically content with mediocrity and if they can move from being "good" to being "better"

they are satisfied. They most always surround themselves with others like them or potentially a little under their “perceived” performance level with the psychological interpretation that if you surround yourself with those that you perceive to be “under you”, the higher you stand (and the better you feel about yourself.)

A few members of this "normal" group discover something special about themselves; they make a choice to excel, and then take action to create the life of their dreams. They are willing to take informed risks and even though the unknown is scary, they will explore it to find the opportunity that quietly awaits there. They choose to find what their strengths are and they capitalize on those. They strive to be the best. They are not content with simply striving for “better.”

You see, the normal group wants its members to be just normal. By the way, work groups and some families act in the same manner. They discourage their members from getting ahead (of the other normal group members).

The Normal Group is what I will call “Crabby.”

If you've ever been crabbing, you've seen the "normal" group in action!

You catch crabs by inserting dead bait fish into a wire crab trap. You then lower it to the bottom of the bay. Crabs attach themselves to the meat and begin eating. You raise the meat and catch the crabs in a net. Then you throw the crabs into a bucket to keep them from running around the boat and pinching people.

Watch the crabs and you will see that as soon as one crab tries to escape the bucket by climbing out, the other crabs will pull it back down into the bucket. There's no escape from the bucket. Life is often like that. A person wants to get ahead and knows that there is more to work and life than what they are presently experiencing.

It is time for you to get out of the bucket!

It takes personal leadership to become aware that escaping the normal is possible. It takes personal leadership to choose and commit to creating the best life that you can. It takes personal leadership to take the actions necessary to propel yourself and create the new future you imagine and want. Part of escaping the normal is also choosing to surround yourself with others like the Hendersons that will push you to be the best. The other part is investing in others to help them grow and get out of the bucket as well. By helping others stand tall and strong, it actually enhances your success.

You can do it. . . All things are possible. Don't let the other crabs in your life prevent you from developing your unique potential and discovering your greatness.



About the author:

As Senior Vice President of a national company, Founder and CEO of a leading professional development organization, and an owner of a thriving franchise business, Christina Parker firmly believes that the key to success in business and in life is in the conscious development of, and investment in others. You can find out more about Christina at www.christinaparker.org

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