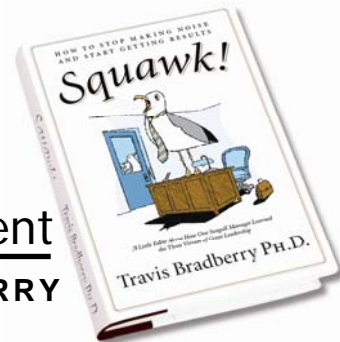


The Cost of Seagull Management

BY DR. TRAVIS BRADBERRY



People may join companies, but they will leave bosses. No one influences an employee's morale and productivity more than his or her supervisor. It's that simple. Yet, as common as this knowledge may seem, it clearly hasn't been enough to change the way that managers and organizations treat people.

In the course of my work with organizations large and small, I've witnessed a peculiar commonality among the most successful enterprises. These companies step confidently beyond the success strategies of conventional business wisdom—brand strength, strategic leadership, technological innovation, customer service, and the like—to leverage the single greatest resource inside every company: its people.

Few organizations recognize the degree to which managers are the vessels of a company's culture, and even fewer work diligently to ensure that their vessels hold the knowledge and skills that motivate employees to perform, feel satisfied, and love their jobs.

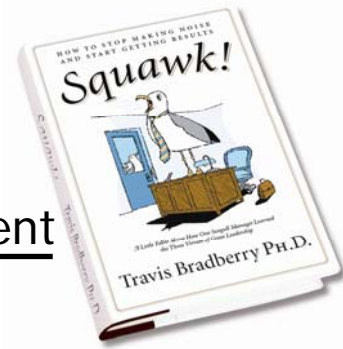
The TalentSmart[®] Study

Through my involvement in the TalentSmart Study—an effort to go inside the world's leading organizations and differentiate the habits that produce success from those that are inconsequential

or harmful—I've obtained a bird's-eye view of the practices that are essential to a manager's job performance *and* the satisfaction of his or her staff.

To date, the TalentSmart Study has analyzed more than 150,000 managers in every industry, at every level of management, and in a wide variety of job functions, and we've found that superior managers—those who lead their teams to the greatest levels of performance and job satisfaction—often share three critical habits. These habits, or *virtues of superior managers*, are the polar opposites of the three distinguishing characteristics of a seagull manager: swooping, squawking, and dumping.

Whereas the seagull manager creates the need to swoop in and set his team straight, the superior manager gets everyone headed in the right direction from the very beginning by ensuring that expectations are full fledged. Whereas the rare visit from the seagull manager results in a lot of squawking, the superior manager maintains a steady flow of clear communication. And whereas the seagull manager manages his team's performance by dumping on everybody, the superior manager ensures that positive and negative feedback are delivered in small, digestible doses.



We've all been there—sitting in the shadow of a seagull manager who decided it was time to roll up his or her sleeves, swoop in, and squawk up a storm. Instead of taking the time to get the facts straight and work alongside the team to realize a viable solution, the seagull manager deposits steaming piles of formulaic advice and then abruptly takes off, leaving everyone else behind to clean up the mess. Seagull managers interact with their employees only when there's a fire to put out. Even then, they move in and out so hastily—and put so little thought into their approach—that they make bad situations worse by frustrating and alienating those who need them the most.

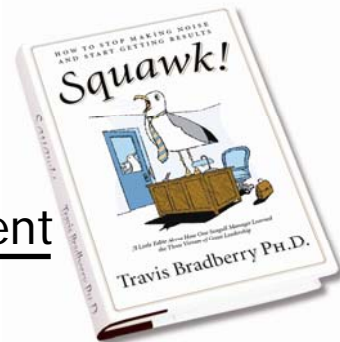
A Massive Impact

The seagull manager is an increasingly common phenomenon hovering in today's workplace. As companies flatten in response to the competitive changes created by new technology, industry regulation, and expanding global trade, they gut their management layers. The remaining managers are left with more autonomy, greater responsibility, and more people to manage. That means they have less time and less accountability for focusing on the primary purpose of their job—managing people. While there have probably always been seagull managers hovering inside the workplace, the recent flattening of organizations is breeding them like wildfire.

It's easy to spot a seagull manager when you're on the receiving end of their airborne dumps, but the manager doing the squawking is often unaware of the negative impact of this behavior. And they aren't the only ones. In the vast majority of organizations, senior leadership is unschooled in the profoundly negative impact the seagull managers hovering about their organization are having on its bottom line. The very individuals with the authority to alter the course of an organization's culture lack the facts that would impel them to do so.

Here are some of the hard truths we have to face every day in the world of work:

- Employees whose manager often uses seagull-type behaviors are 30 percent more likely to develop coronary heart than employees of a manager who rarely uses these behaviors.
- Thirty-two percent of employees spend at least twenty hours per month complaining about their boss.
- More than two thirds of North Americans are actively considering leaving their current job, with their employers suffering annual losses in excess of \$360 billion from this employee dissatisfaction.



Some facts remind us that it's not easy being the one in charge:

- Twenty-one percent of people would be willing to take their boss's job.
- Thirty-five percent of employees have a tough time communicating with their boss.
- Sixty-four percent of managers admit that they need to work on their management skills. When asked where they are supposed to focus, managers overwhelmingly say, "Bringing in the numbers"; yet, they are most often fired for poor people skills.
- After more than twenty years satirizing management culture through his wildly successful *Dilbert* comic strip, Scott Adams agreed to roll up his sleeves and manage a restaurant he had co-owned for years from a safe distance. His foray into the rough-and-tumble world of management was a humbling one, and he was honest about his shortcomings in the real world, "I'm quite sure I've succumbed to....flying in every so often and dumping on everything." There's a seagull manager born every minute!

"If you want to understand seagull management and how to turn it around, read *Squawk!*"

—KEN BLANCHARD, COAUTHOR OF *THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER®*

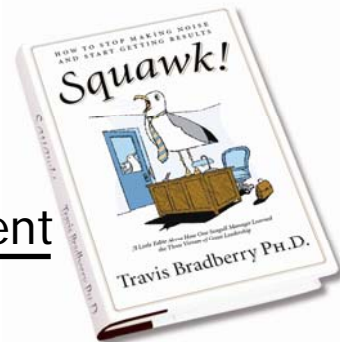
VISIT THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT SQUAWK! AND LEARN HOW TO GET A SIGNED COPY!

Are You A Seagull Manager?

If this exploration has achieved its purpose, you've asked yourself that question at some point along the way. But the real question is not *are you* a seagull manager but *when are you* a seagull manager. It would be wonderfully simple—albeit frightening—if we could each be categorized as the “right” or “wrong” kind of manager. We can't just target “problem” managers, when the reality is that we're all the problem. That's right. Every single one of us is a seagull manager sometimes, in some situations, and with some people. The real challenge lies in understanding where your seagull tendencies get the better of you, so that you can fly higher and eradicate the negative influences of seagull behavior.

About *Squawk!*

Squawk! How to Stop Making Noise and Start Getting Results is the new book by Dr. Travis Bradberry, the award winning coauthor of the best selling *Emotional Intelligence Quick Book*. Through the lively and entertaining story of Charlie—a seagull who doesn't understand how his management style is ruining his flock's performance—*Squawk!* illuminates the *Three Virtues of Superior Managers*, a cohesive method that ensures we stop depositing messes on the heads of those around us.



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Hurry, the first 100 people to order from this newsletter will receive their books signed by the author!

"Squawk! is simple, yet powerful, and very entertaining. It provides a valuable illustration of how to get more from your team, and I was able to get through it in just one flight."

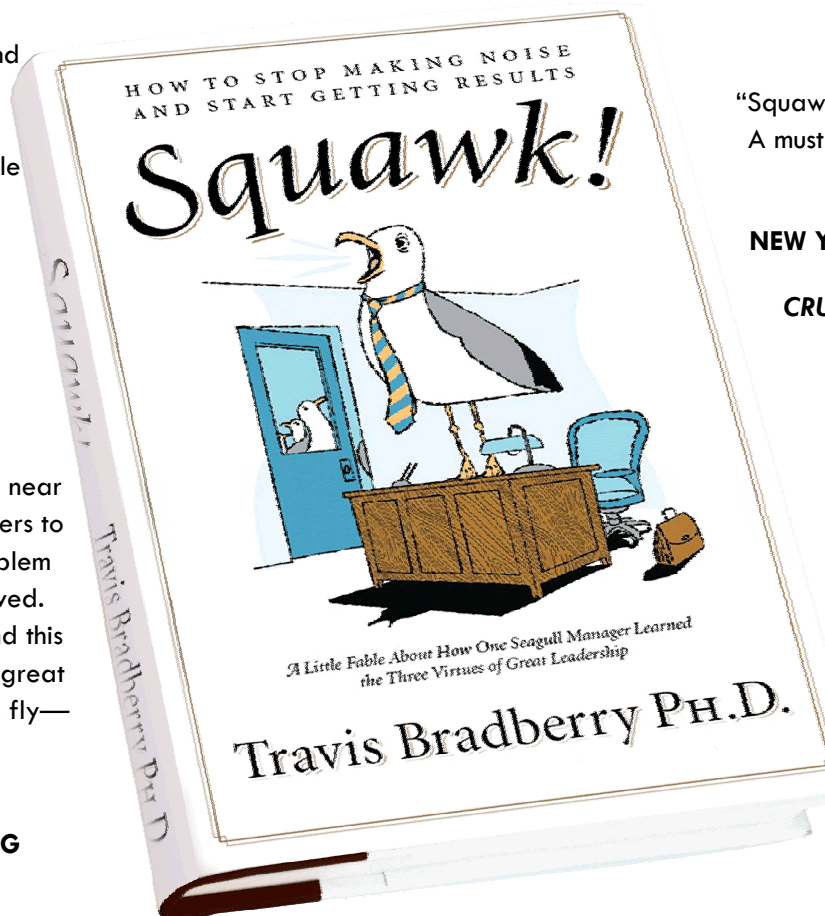
**—DENNIS SADLOWSKI
PRESIDENT AND CEO, SIEMENS
ENERGY AND AUTOMATION**

"Squawk! has a central theme I find near and dear—the tendency of managers to move so fast from problem to problem that they forget people are involved. People need time and attention, and this book is an important reminder that great management doesn't happen on the fly—you have to 'be there' for it."

**—STEPHEN LUNDIN
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING
COAUTHOR OF FISH!®**

"I started reading *Squawk!* thinking it would help me work with a seagull manager of my own, but soon came to recognize my own flight paths in Charlie's. There are several powerful leadership messages woven into this entertaining and memorable parable - teaching me when I was least prepared (and most ready) for it. I have a list of ten colleagues who will be getting a most-unexpected gift."

**—KENNETH FORSTER
GROUP DIRECTOR, GLOBAL CUSTOMER STRATEGY
THE COCA-COLA COMPANY**



"Squawk! is as profound as it is fun! A must read for every manager."

**—RON MCMILLAN
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING
COAUTHOR OF
CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS**

"The key learnings in *Squawk!* help teams enhance their effectiveness and create a real long term competitive advantage for any company."

**—BOB CANCALOSI
CHIEF LEARNING OFFICER
GE HEALTHCARE**

"*Squawk!* does a tremendous job of confronting you with a critical understanding—everything that you say and do each day as a leader has a tremendous impact on those around you. All too often we ignore this fact and live off our past, instead of working to create a brighter future. Dr. Bradberry provides a wonderful solution with an easy to understand and utilize three step model that allows you to engage your team and generate improved results. Read it and you'll see a positive change in your future!"

**—ROBERT SAVAGE
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
TACO BELL, YUM BRANDS**

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