

The Goose Story



This fall, when you see geese heading North or South for the season...flying in V formation...you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way:

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

LESSON: PEOPLE WHO SHARE A COMMON DIRECTION AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY CAN GET WHERE THEY ARE GOING MORE QUICKLY AND EASILY BECAUSE THEY ARE TRAVELLING ON THE THRUST OF ONE ANOTHER.

When a goose falls out of formation it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone...and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

LESSON: IF WE HAVE AS MUCH SENSE AS A GOOSE, WE WILL STAY IN FORMATION WITH THOSE WHO ARE HEADED WHERE WE WANT TO GO.

When the head goose gets tired it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies point position.

LESSON: IT PAYS TO TAKE TURNS DOING THE HARD TASKS, AND SHARING LEADERSHIP—WITH PEOPLE, AS WITH GEESE, INTERDEPENDENT WITH EACH OTHER.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

LESSON: WE NEED TO ENCOURAGE OUR LEADERSHIP. AT THE SAME TIME, LET US BE CAREFUL WHAT WE SAY WHEN WE HONK FROM BEHIND.

Finally...and this is important...when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by gunshots and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies; and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

LESSON: IF WE HAVE THE SENSE OF A GOOSE WE WILL STAND BY EACH OTHER LIKE THAT.

- Milton Olson