



Gaicho Dialogues on Leadership and Management

By Alfredo Behrens

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Lessons on leadership, strategy and people management from militia-led insurrections in Latin America provide as seen through the eyes of two iconic literary characters.

Militia leaders, like business leaders, provide vision, seek high performance and secure logistics, just as any successful business organization, except that in militia-like organizations people are recruited more for their affinity than for dexterity. Affinities, like those that bind clans, nurture loyalty and foster higher pursuits differently from organizations composed of autonomous, self-gratifying individuals with calendar-based performance appraisals. When people more suited to militia-like organizations are managed in the predominant North American style, they respond with lifeless foot dragging, as Alfredo Behrens suggests prevails in subsidiaries of multinationals in developing countries. He calls them saladeros in a direct reference to beef-jerking companies where, in the process of salting beef, workers salted themselves out of life.

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Alfredo Behrens holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge. He writes and speaks on leadership and management in cross-cultural settings. He also lectures at top business schools and has addressed large management meetings in four continents.

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