The Starfish And The Spider: The Unstoppable Power Of Leaderless Organizations

By Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom

The Starfish And The Spider argues that organizations fall into two categories: traditional “spiders”, which have a rigid hierarchy and top-down leadership, and revolutionary “starfish”, which rely on the power of peer relationships.

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The reason why starfish don’t die is because they have a decentralized neural structure permitting regeneration. The powerful strategy of decentralization is explained and applied to human...

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If you cut off a spider’s leg, it’s crippled; if you cut off its head, it dies. But if you cut off a starfish’s leg it grows a new one, and the animal can live on for years. What’s the hidden power behind the success of Wikipedia, Craigslist, and Skype?

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The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations compared centralized and decentralized organizations: A centralized organization is much like a spider; cut off its head and the spider dies. A decentralized organization, on the other hand, is like a starfish.

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