Since the evolution of man, it is an instinct in our nature to follow the tract pointed out by a few leaders; we are gregarious animals in a moral as well as physical sense, and we are addicted to routine, because it is always easier to follow the opinion of others than to reason and judge for ourselves. As such the subject of leadership has been in existence since man started to follow. During the writing of our book on “Sun Tzu and the Project Battleground” (2005) both David and I realized how much of thinking and work on leading and leadership existed in China 2500 years ago. If you Google on leadership you will get literally millions of hits within ten seconds.

We do not want in this chapter to cover in detail about leadership, but what we want to do is to identify the role of leadership and governance in today’s and tomorrow’s businesses in “making things happen”, as we believe that the actions of business leaders today will change the destiny of their organization tomorrow. Tomorrow’s business will look very different internally from those with us today. This will be the consequence of new corporate values that will underpin the importance of the workforce to company success. In their turn, the values will be based on a new culture that eschews closed communities at work and recognizes the benefits of sharing information, localizing decision making, training constantly, communicating fully and opening up the company to make it more transparent and accountable to its stakeholders.

The brave new world of tomorrow’s organization

Looking to this brave new world of tomorrow’s organization, the question one must ask is “What will be the role of leaders capable of taking us to the new world?” To answer this question I need to paint a picture of what tomorrow’s businesses will look like. Over the three decades my personal observation on the trends in businesses is that they are becoming
more “open book”, internally and externally accountable, egalitarian, and employee-centered.

These trends will continue to occur in companies and as Tom Peter (1994) said: “Welcome to the new economy where most of the world’s work will be done in semi-permanent networks of small project oriented teams.”

The organizations are becoming more flatter where whole layers which once provided stages in career progress and promotion are stripped out, task enrichment, multi-skillling, job rotation/job sharing, and giving the responsibility to employees for their own development as means of maintaining motivation, morale, and loyalty are changes we are seeing now and will continue to see in the future.

As power and authority are disseminated, employees will need to feel that senior management has sufficient confidence in them – and, importantly, in themselves – to give them the freedom, or empowerment, to work with minimal managerial supervision. Management by exception will characterize this hands-off approach, and as managers step back from day-to-day operational detail – leaving this to team leaders while they fulfill their strategic management responsibilities – performance monitoring, appraising, and disciplining procedures will become peer owned and operated, frequently becoming two-way, in which “interviewer” and “interviewee” participate in 360-degree review simultaneously.

Looking at these trends and observations, it is clear that a leader’s role will become one that increasingly encapsulates the responsibility of “entrusting empowerment and enablement to teams”.

**Perspectives on leadership and their role in tomorrow’s organization**

I find that management and leadership are often confused, and while to many this may seem like a play on words, in my mind the two are clearly different. Management is about providing direction and administrative control while leadership is about empowerment. Others will certainly argue with me over this, but I don’t think the debate is that important. What is clear is that the future business environment will require a new breed of leadership to be successful.

When you consider in the background of the changes from caves to computers, the current younger generation certainly has the edge on most of us with gray hair. They see the computer and its connectivity as being the new business environment. I certainly would not challenge its impact, but I would, as I hope is already apparent, promote the idea that this is just