

## LEADERSHIPS THAT MATTER: LUIS ZÁRATE ROCHA.



The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum will be held in January 2017. The main theme of this particular event is “Responsive and Responsible Leadership”. This type of leadership is critical to solve the challenges that shape our current world situation.

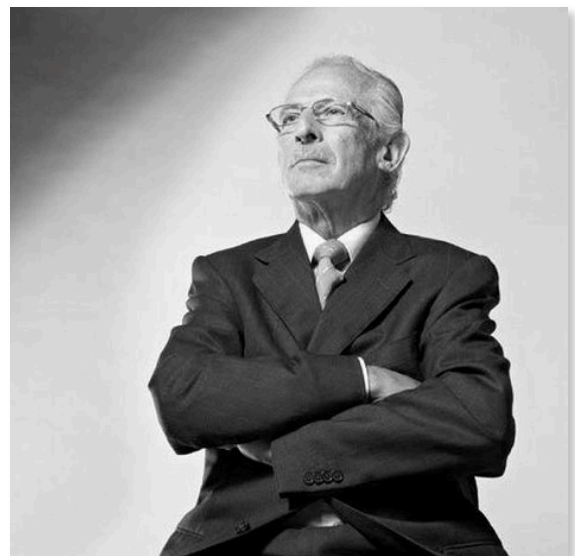
Who are the leaders who motivate us, whether for their capacities to head a given social movement, as company directors or because of their personal or professional life? What are those leaders’ most cherished values? What have they done and what do they promise?

Throughout my life, I have had the good fortune to come across certain people whose lives have inspired me to better myself and to undertake projects that make a difference. Luis Zárate Rocha was one of them. I was fortunate enough to know him and witness the legacy he left for his family, his friends, his country, the engineering profession, his country, the infrastructure and the organizations he headed.

I met Luis many years ago. Because we both enjoyed combining engineering and public relations, he was able to come up with a sustainable development agenda for Mexico’s infrastructure. He was a visionary who kept up with the times. He was a leader who shaped other new leaders.

He spearheaded ICA (the largest construction company in Mexico) with great determination. As President of the College of Civil Engineers and subsequently of the CMIC, the Mexican Chamber of the Construction Industries, he succeeded in galvanizing the world-class infrastructure while bolstering the engineering and construction sector.

When in the College of Civil Engineers Luis and I shared our interest in natural disaster prevention (now known as the Resilience Committee) and when he presided over the Mexican Chamber of the Construction Industries, he provided unconditional support to social responsibility and sustainability programs as well as response to emergencies caused by natural phenomena.





Luis was a great source of pride for the UNAM. He built bridges and generated alliances among the different builders in the construction sector. Furthermore, he promoted increasing interest in research and innovation in our sector. He was a regular member of the Alianza FIIDEM's Board of Directors (an organization aimed at reinforcing infrastructure research and training programs).

Luis demanded a great deal of himself. He was passionately involved in every undertaking. He had a tremendous love for life.

***Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself.  
When you become a leader,  
success is all about growing other.***

- Jack Welch

On the personal level, he had outstanding people skills. It was a delight to be around him. He had great smile and sense of humor. He was also an athlete. He and Mena always worked as a team.

We need more role models like Luis Zárata, whose lives inspire us during these extremely complex times. Young people are not interested in traditional mentors, but rather in innovators, bold risk-takers who reflect their own ideals and thirst for change. They are looking for someone to represent them and give them hope.

What kind of leaders are we? And what kind of leader deserves our vote of confidence?

