



LAZOS LATINOS

*The Leadership Shift: The Strategic Positioning of Latino Business Leaders*

Cristina Benitez

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I learned about leadership early. It was inevitable. My father, Rafael, was a naval officer and our family was brought up on “doing a good job,” respect, the importance of character, and ethical behavior. Rafael retired from the US Navy as a Rear Admiral and went on to be assistant Dean of the Law School at the University of Miami.

Leadership was woven into our lives and, I as the oldest of three, naturally assumed the leadership role. Leadership is important to me. It is a subject I’ve written about in a book, *Latinization and the Latino Leader*, with my co-author, Marlene Gonzalez. I teach a course on it at DePaul University. But, why is this important? I’ve witnessed the growth of the Latino population since the 80’s and worked with major corporations marketing and selling to this valuable consumer. It only seemed a matter of time when these same corporations would be looking to hire professionals has part of a complete Latino effort.

*The Leadership Shift: The Strategic Positioning of Latino Business Leaders* time has come. “The one thing that distinguishes Latinos is their innate ability to work hard, be dependable, show loyalty and have integrity,” states Dr. Perez. These are the very Latino Innate qualities she identifies that create the leadership shift. It is time for Latino leaders to emerge and we see this happening in politics, education, science, the arts and more. What Dr. Perez does in this well---written book, is provide concrete reasons why this shift is happening.

With a focus on scholarly research she creates a well---substantiated argument for the rise of the Latino leader. Beginning with Latino’s historical framework, and moving into an analysis of emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, values and core beliefs, Dr. Perez creates a blueprint for an aspiring Latino leader. As a business coach her thoughtful analysis of strategic foresight creates scenarios that encourage the rise of the servant leader. Latinos possess natural qualities of collectivism, family oriented values and caring about the welfare of their community.

Moving further into the shift, our globalized world is today’s community. Latinos are comfortable in this world because of their own intercultural experiences. Each of their countries of origin is rich in diversity – indigenous, Spanish, mestizo. This ease with people from different viewpoints provides employers an extra layer of cultural intelligence (CQ) that will only benefit the future of business.

Yet another layer of the shift is the growth of Latino business and rise of the Latino upscale and middle class. A study by the Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies (AHHAA) in 2012 projects this segment to grow to 35 million by 2050. These higher incomes fuel education levels resulting in increased graduation and attainment of graduate degrees.

Dr. Perez closes her book using a spiritual lens that guides her life. Using biblical references and examples, she paints scenarios with carefully constructed guides for the Latino leader and the general reader.

This is a book to read, and use as a guide to develop and promote Latino leaders. It is template for companies looking to hire them. It has a place on the bookshelf or kindle that will inspire and promote *The Leadership Shift: The Strategic Positioning of Latino Business Leaders*.

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*Latinization – How Latino Culture Is Transforming the US*, Author

*Latinization and Latino Leadership*, Co-authors, Cristina Benitez & Marlene Gonzalez