What Future CEOs Need To Know

Neil Selby, Director of Executive Education for CKGSB (Europe), examines how future business leadership and education is changing

There is nothing the business world likes better than a David who takes on an industry Goliath. By ripping up the rulebook, the company carves out a new market position and, at the expense of the leader, wins market share. Classic examples include Virgin taking on BA, Avis challenging Hertz and Pepsi waging war against Coca Cola.

However, this so-called disruptive innovation is not as simple as David-versus-Goliath. The process is often gradual, occurring because a more relevant and stimulating consumer proposition is suddenly available. Consumers then explore new realities and realise they have been underserved.

The business education market is now undergoing huge disruptive change. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are providing fundamental business education, forcing higher-end providers to increase their offered value way beyond the established formulae.

Business schools therefore that provide generic modules on financial accounting and reporting, organisational leadership, corporate strategy, marketing management, operations management, macro and micro economics, managerial finance, statistics and managerial decision-making, as well as electives such as game theory, negotiation and geopolitics are no longer providing enough to secure customer satisfaction in a shifting world. MOOCs can now do this just as effectively – for less. Elite business schools need to go above and beyond, by developing their students as future global CEOs and providing them with cross-cultural perspectives and examples to be prepared for an increasingly multi-cultural East/West world.

In this context, CKGSB has reinvented the generic business school proposition by comparing and contrasting Western and Eastern leadership strategies, as well as exploring the relationship between state and business and covering alternative perspectives on the humanities, such as Chinese history, philosophy and culture, the I Ching, Confucius, Sun Tzu, Daoism, Tang Dynasty poetry and Chinese art. CKGSB offers alternative perspectives on both facing the future and on global vision from all over the world. CKGSB examines China’s role in the global economy, in exponential technologies, in global governance, as well as the globalisation of Chinese companies and how China is taking active steps to lead the world in environmental and energy technologies.

As for CEOs setting their sights on “the Middle Kingdom,” CKGSB offers strategies for competing in China as well as integrating the country into their global strategy. CKGSB helps CEOs uncover how to handle those challenging HR, branding, supply chain and digital media issues ‘with Chinese characteristics’ as well as helping to negotiate successfully in the Asian context.

As China becomes more important to business success, CEOs will need to explore opportunities, resolve issues and view the world from both Eastern and Western perspectives.

CEOs of the future need to possess the ability to see the world from the perspective of both East and West.