

Gagen  
MacDonald  
Presents

LET GO & LEAD

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION GUIDE



THE NEW LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVE



Perspectives from Visionary Designer  
BRUCE MAU

## Ideas for Application

In conjunction with the video clips from the conversation with Bruce at [letgoandlead.com](http://letgoandlead.com), you can use this guide to spark thinking on leaders' role in:

- Corporate sustainability and social responsibility
- Corporate reputation and positioning
- Corporate restructurings and organization design
- Vision articulation
- Employee engagement

## Instructions

This guide was developed to complement the Let Go & Lead™ interview with Bruce Mau and encourage learning on the individual, team, and organizational level.

- Use the Questions for Individual Reflection for yourself or as pre-work before your team comes together for the Group Exercise.
- The Group Exercise can be tailored to the needs of your organization and team, but is meant to encourage deep conversation around new ways of thinking about and acting on leadership.

## Questions for Individual Reflection

### On Authority

Do you agree with Bruce when he asserts that we use an “extraction model” rather than an “investment model” when dealing with organizations and people? How are these models be reflected in your organization? What are the sources of authority in modern organizations? Can these be shared? (Examples: position authority; expertise; social authority; referent authority; expert knowledge)

### On Leadership

What is the role of leadership? What is your responsibility as a leader in helping to design new, more sustainable systems and structures within your organization and community?

### On Authenticity

How important is organizational reputation? How does it impact performance and results? How can you influence reputation as an individual leader?

### On Responsibility

The world is growing more complex and crowded. What opportunities does that represent for you as a leader? For your organization? How do you define corporate social responsibility? Is it “good business” to be a responsible corporate citizen? Why and how?

## Group Exercise

1. As pre-work, ask your team to watch the Bruce Mau videos on [letgoandlead.com](http://letgoandlead.com) and answer the Questions for Reflection.
2. Open the discussion by asking, *After watching the Bruce Mau videos, what resonated most with you?* (5-10 minutes)
3. Bruce Mau talks about how the world is fundamentally shifting. Break into pairs and discuss (10 – 15 minutes):
  - What are the changes that you believe are most impacting our business?
  - What excites you about those changes?
  - What scares you?
4. Debrief with the larger group. (10 minutes)
5. Discuss as a large group: What responsibility do we have, as leaders in today's world, to shape and proactively respond to those changes?
6. Wrap up by tying back to Bruce's main point: Design has emerged as a powerful force for change. As we see the merging of the global economy and the global village, we must be aware of the opportunities for good and bad that will exist.
7. Now that we've discussed responsibilities, ask each member of your team to take a few moments to think about what actions they will take to commit to designing the future.
8. Ask for volunteers to share their commitment.
9. Summarize the discussion and share next steps.

## How to Take This Further

Now that you've explored the lessons from Bruce Mau's interview from the perspectives of your own personal leadership and your team, take some time to consider what the implications for your business...

- How is our organization taking a stance in shaping the world and in terms of how organizations and industries work together?
- How does the leadership at your company hold the organization accountable for corporate social responsibility?
- How does that need to change in order for your company to thrive in today's global environment?

# LET GO & LEAD

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## LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION GUIDE

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### About Let Go & Lead

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[letgoandlead.com](http://letgoandlead.com)

Let Go & Lead is an online project to explore leadership in the 21st Century. Maril MacDonald, CEO of Gagen MacDonald, has engaged thought leaders from different walks of life for conversations on what it means to “let go” and lead people to create meaningful, sustainable change. Video highlights from each conversation are posted for you to view and share your comments and perspective.

Most of all, Let Go & Lead is a community. It is a celebration of diversity and a genuine embrace of different points of view in an attempt to come to an unprecedented understanding of how the most powerful ideas come to life within the most complex environments and systems.

### About Gagen MacDonald

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[gagenmacdonald.com](http://gagenmacdonald.com)

Gagen MacDonald is a firm founded on a big idea: We want to make the world a better place, transforming one company at a time.

Since 51 of the world’s 100 largest economies are corporations (not countries, as one might expect), it’s a worthy pursuit. We help clients find ways to bring their employees’ passions, talents and sense of purpose to bear on the business strategy. Working collaboratively from the corporate office to the front line, we use an organization’s brand, culture, vision and history to motivate and align employees behind accomplishing meaningful and sustainable results.

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**Want to learn more about how Gagen MacDonald can help develop and align your leadership team to inspire exceptional performance?**



Our team has extensive and proven experience helping companies develop leaders, engage employees and build high-performance cultures that support the business strategy. Contact Meg Wheaton for more information on how Gagen MacDonald can help you.

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