Too many times the leaders we’re asked to watch are great, but they’re yesterday’s news. Who doesn’t think Winston Churchill or Steve Jobs or Abraham Lincoln was great? The five leaders presented below are different. They are young, they are doing tremendous things, and many people still have not heard of them. As a result, we want to introduce you to tomorrow’s A-Team of leaders. Why? Because they are among a small group of people who are actually changing the world.

Malala Yousafzai is one of those rare souls who drives us to examine our expectations of ourselves. If we witnessed terrible wrongs in our society, or even our office, would we find a way to speak up about it as boldly as she did at home in Pakistan? If gunmen came after us, would we keep talking?

Stories of people like Yousafzai usually come to us through history books. But here she is, appearing on TV from her new home in Britain, this unusual Mozart of peace-making, a teenager in a chador, speaking of peace with the resolve of Mahatma Gandhi and the defiance of Winston Churchill.

Born in a nation where girls are lucky to get into any classroom, she had the advantage of being raised by a poet father who owned a chain of schools. Her voice caught the ear of a BBC Web site operator who encouraged
IF “BINGE WATCHING” IS the latest national addiction, then the main pusher is Netflix, the Internet provider who learned that on-demand video service means right now. Netflix rewrote the rulebook, and the surprise power creating the new terms is Ted Sarandos, its chief content officer, who is now in charge of producing a lot of astonishing content. All of show business—especially rivals like HBO, Amazon.com and the networks—is studying Sarandos’s every move.

It isn’t like Sarandos was another M.B.A. waltzing into the office and falling into line. He’s a community-college dropout from Phoenix who learned the ropes in Quentin Tarantino style—by being a clerk at a video store. He worked his way up to running a company that sold videos to Blockbuster, the rental giant. In that capacity he caught the eye of Netflix CEO Reed Hastings.

Since Sarandos joined Netflix in 2000, it grew from a company that mailed out DVDs to a million customers to a colossus that streams a billion hours of content every month to 38 million customers in 40 nations. It has been estimated that its customer base will triple in the next six years.

Blockbuster is gone, of course, in small part due to Netflix. And cinema multiplex owners are nervous, as Sarandos goes about refashioning the old movie distribution models.

Although Sarandos bypassed business school on his way to success, it isn’t all seat-of-the-pants experimentation. Before committing $100 million to their first in-house production, “House of Cards,” Netflix could study the hard data gleaned from its customers’ habits. With this sort of granular intelligence, who needs the Nielsen overnights?

Netflix presently has nine original series in the works, and that’s only the start.

“One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.”
—MALALA YOUSAFZAI

her to write an anonymous blog about her experiences in a strife-torn country.

This was a dodgy assignment to have in Pakistan, where more than 50 journalists have been slain in the past 20 years, where the Taliban has destroyed dozens of girls’ schools and, indeed, where not even a respected past president like Benazir Bhutto could escape the assassin’s hands.

So the Taliban came for Yousafzai, and somehow she escaped with her life. Winning the Nobel Peace Prize was huge, of course, but her influence, already enormous, will spread much further through her biography, “I Am Malala,” an international best seller. Although banned in most Pakistani schools, the book is one to rouse a million other classrooms around the world.

Yousafzai talks about running for office someday. Believe it.
Jack Ma

The next time you’re waiting in a slow line at the store, ponder this: In the two minutes you stood there fuming, Alibaba.com might well have processed 2 million transactions.

Alibaba, the online Chinese marketplace that is now sweeping all before it, is the brainchild of Jack Ma, whose $30 billion worth makes him the richest man in China. With a service that connects consumers to dealers in sort of a combined Amazon/eBay fashion, he has found a way of providing the world’s biggest shopping mall to customers who may have little more than a need and a mobile phone. Even in Tibet, shoppers can order, as Ma claims, anything.

Ma found power not through any technical skills but rather his gift of gab. As a youth growing up 100 miles from Shanghai, he offered free guided tours to foreigners as a way of learning English. He became an English teacher. But when he first witnessed the Internet at age 33, he wanted to join the conversation. After founding the Chinese Yellow Pages, he created Alibaba, first as a business-to-business enterprise. He sweet-talked the likes of Goldman Sachs, Yahoo and Japan’s SoftBank into investing heavily and allowing him to expand. Wall Street still likes him, as his recent record-setting $25 billion IPO proved.

Having built an enterprise that seems to outstrip state-owned operations in usefulness, Ma now finds himself a person of great influence. Naturally, the state would love a share of that extraordinary collection of data he has acquired, but he has so far succeed at keeping his distance.

“Always try to stay in love with the government,” he says, “but don’t marry them.” Meanwhile, he now has the funds to be an extraordinarily welcome suitor as he goes courting around the world.

Jack Dorsey

When the apocalypse finally happens, angel Gabriel will probably not be announcing the day on a trumpet—surely the news will come via Twitter. Doesn’t everything happen this way now? Whether it’s the president or the pope, a revolutionary in the streets of Cairo or just another drunk-dialer outside the bar, someone’s just got to tweet the world.

Jack Dorsey could have retired on the fame he garnered for leading the Twitter team to a micro-blogging empire. Instead he started a new firm, Square, built around a tiny device that attaches to a smartphone and turns it into a credit-card reader. With two enormous hits on his record, and a vast fortune to go with them, he is being
Sangeeta Bhatia

Cancer has a way of arousing two sets of fears. Beyond the apprehensions over the disease itself, there is often a profound worry about the sometimes harrowing procedures used to detect and fight it. That is why the noninvasive diagnostics discovered by Sangeeta Bhatia have captured the imagination of the scientific world.

As a child growing up in Boston, she was a compulsive tinkerer and is still driven, she says, by a desire to fix things: “I’m always thinking about how to solve problems by repurposing tools.”

With an M.B.A. mother and an engineer father, young Bhatia was often asked, like so many children of Indian immigrants are, if she intended to be a doctor, an engineer or an entrepreneur. She went for the trifecta. Now equipped with a medical degree from Harvard and engineering degrees from M.I.T., she has gone to work on what she calls “the fascinating machine” of the human body.

The engineer in her borrowed microfabrication technology from the world of semiconductors. Her team of technicians at M.I.T. learned how to inject nanoparticle-sized sensors into patients and retrieve a wealth of information such as proteins signaling the presence of tumors or the body’s reaction to medicines.

In struggling nations where a colonoscopy, for instance, is improbable, relying on a paper-strip urine test for cancer will be a lifesaver.

Her insights are leading to brave new projects in tissue engineering class. One long-term goal is to build an implantable liver.

And that’s certainly not all to be expected from Bhatia’s laboratories. Her team of students and researchers has been given instructions to spend 20 percent of their time working on their own projects. Like Bhatia, everyone has their own toolbox and their own approach to the human machine.

Hailed as one of today’s great innovators. Everyone wants to hear his next idea. Disney just added him to their board. And when Dorsey—a self-professed wanderer and dreamer—talks about leaving his San Francisco mansion for New York, where he’d like to become, you know, the mayor, people actually listen respectfully.

His mind for systems was sharpened during a St. Louis childhood when he obsessively tracked trains and emergency rescue teams. He became a deviser of new systems, and it is this aspect of Dorsey’s résumé that has raised him above your run-of-the-mill tech whiz.

What will set his sights on next?

Let it be told: If Dorsey could figure out a sane way to get to the New York airport, they can hold off the Apocalypse for another day.

“Make every detail perfect, and limit the number of details to perfect.”

—Jack Dorsey