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2008 WINNER: “BEST IN STATE” CEO LETTER

10th Annual Utah Work/Life Awards: Utah's Best Places to Work

When I was asked to express my particular philosophies in business as a CEO, I experienced a rush of feelings and information. First of all, I don't know if anyone has all of the answers. Like in coaching, different coaches often use different styles to get the same results. What sustains my passion in leading a business is balancing the bottom line and the commitment of putting people first.

When I dream, I dream big! However, I have learned from experience that without consistent execution of the fundamentals, dreams are distant and hollow at best. It is the fundamentals that make dreams tangible.

On a personal level, I am in awe when I look in the depths of what mothers do to affect the world we live in. Many philosophers agree that mothers, through the way they love and nurture their families, are the tone-setters of humanity and the love that goes around the world. As odd as it may sound, I think that when a CEO acknowledges the influence that he or she can have on the world, we are in effect the mothers of the business community. We can make change and a profound difference.

Many people today view the world as some intangible thing 'out there' that is too big and impossible to touch. But, in fact, the world is and has always been here and now, and yes, you and I can change the world everyday. Big or small, with your hands and mine, every act counts. The days of two percent of something, to some rainforest, somewhere, and everyone gets goose bumps are over.

Our employees, since the inception of our company four years ago, are each given an extended lunch each month, paid, to go do community service involving something completely outside of themselves. In fact, I personally take our employee of the month to lunch once a month and off to a community service project for the remainder of the day. It is really amazing to see what happens when we step outside of self consumption to experience how happy we can be, and truly see how beautiful the world is.

As you may or may not know, ForeverGreen is an international, publicly-traded company that is profitable and debt free. We are a network marketing company. Network marketing is arguably the fastest-growing industry in the world, and nearly 50,000 people are joining it each day. When there are global politics, talks of recession and unemployment, our industry shines. Knowing that this industry is growing so fast, globally, I saw an opportunity to truly change the perception of the industry of one of "takers" to an indiscriminate global community of "givers." There is not a better industry in the world to promote cultural and social acceptance and community change. With nearly 60,000 Members in ForeverGreen in more than 10 countries to-date, I submit to you that we are tangibly living this dream.

Aside from normal number crunching, statistics, departmental analyses, and so on, there are some unique philosophies that resonate with me as I have instilled them into ForeverGreen. At ForeverGreen we believe that your way of being supersedes anything you know or say. Yes, it is important that we educate ourselves and learn all we can, but can we take information and communicate it in such a way that it is not only heard, but it is felt?

Before launching ForeverGreen, I enrolled a fine artist and painter (Jon McNaughton) to paint four pictures of the same landscape for me, with each painting representing one of the four seasons. I asked him to put a small evergreen tree in the far right-hand corner and to make sure that through each season, the evergreen tree continued stay green and vibrant. The evergreen embraces every second of every season of its life; always green, always growing. Culturally, inside and out of ForeverGreen, this is the big question: how many of us are embracing every second of every season of our lives in a way that today's ceiling is tomorrow's ground floor? In essence, ForeverGreen *is* a way of being... open, accepting, and simply desiring to be better today than yesterday,

Another strong principle I practice, that I would even call a trade secret, is that alignment supersedes mechanism. I have been on executive teams in other companies where there was divide; a difference of opinion on company direction, products, branding, and so on. Our work style is one that is very objective, and very open to feedback. But, in the end, we are all looking to be in alignment. It doesn't matter if we are selling toothpicks, umbrellas or chocolate, in red, blue or green packaging, the truth is the second we all align, and stay in alignment, chances are we will be wildly successful. In the context of ForeverGreen, you are either in alignment, or you are in the way.

Finally, the big elephant in most corporations: politics. I do not hold our employees small. I project on to them their next, their greatness! When an employee feels somehow alienated, we encourage them to look in the mirror and ask themselves how they created that for themselves, and then re-create something different with their coworkers. This minimizes the enabling of employees, politics, and pity parties. Our company is about having different responsibilities, not different dictators. From the receptionist to the CEO, we are all equal, we just have different responsibilities. No job is too big or too small for any of us. Our culture and workspace is next to unbelievable! We truly love and care for each other. We hear all the time from guests and corporate visitors that you can just "feel it in the air." And, good or bad, I believe that energy never lies.

What I am really trying to say here, is there is a direct correlation between the people at the top of the company and who they attract and hire, to the products they choose to market, to the words they use in their literature, and ultimately, to the customers they attract. In the business world, this works in both good and evil. We are keenly aware and conscious of what it takes to not only create a culture, but more importantly, maintain and enhance one.

Our corporate outreach in community service spans from enhancing school lunch programs and building homes in third-world countries to increasing environmental awareness, feeding hungry children and educating the obese. In fact, as one of our major corporate stands, we went on a stretch and created an award-winning film called *Happy Valley*, a real-life true story that teaches personal development in the context of drug addiction in Utah. As a single father who raised his daughter for most of her life when her mother fell into addiction, *Happy Valley* is a very passionate stand for me. But, no matter what our corporate stands are, for us, there is no turning back.

I was raised by a single mom in government housing on government food and am living proof that opportunity is equal. No doubt about it, I am in this for the people more than I am for the money. To me, money is neutral. It makes good people better, and sometimes, bad people worse. It is part of your overall health, on a financial level. We all know what it feels like to be financially sick. When my days on this earth are done, whether I am financially rich or poor, I know that I will have a smile on my face. I make an effort to live each day as though it were my last.

We at ForeverGreen, when it comes down to it, are a natural health company. We have staked our future on timeless principles of health and humanity. We avoid all the hype, balloons, bright colors and pyrotechnics. Our mission is to connect every human being to their true vision and purpose by choosing health as the catalyst. We are the sickest generation of Americans ever, living in this “fast-food-lunchable” era with foodless foods and lifeless drinks. Our children think they are health nuts if it says 10% real fruit juice on their candy, and when they think they are eating fruit, it is FRUIT loops, APPLE jacks and crunch BERRIES. Some experts even predict that we are the first generation to potentially outlive our children.

So why health? It is, in my opinion, the supreme law. Look around you today and notice how many of us are stepping over our health to create and sustain our dreams. If it is love, intimacy, family, spirituality or money we want, my experience tells me that it is impossible to create and sustain those things if we are stepping over our health to get there. Health is a habit, not an event. We make health pleasurable and measurable, not a “plug your nose, handful of supplements chased down by a frothy green drink on a Saturday morning” experience.

So, what’s in it for me? I get to help people see their true beauty. Somewhere along the way, many of us have forgotten to love ourselves. I see people everywhere who allow their experiences to form their identity. People who believe they are fat, lonely, poor, addicted and so on. The truth is we are none of these things. We might all, at times, experience some of these things, but they are not *who* we are. We are equally beautiful, unique, glorious and even Godlike, sometimes we just forget. Our experiences in life last as long as we choose. To me, all of them, the good ones, the challenging ones, and even the ones that are indifferent, are the same. It is just about embracing every second, of every season of our lives, or “being” ForeverGreen.

With love and acceptance,

Ron Williams
Founder, CEO and Chairman of the Board
ForeverGreen International
Health, Kindness and Opportunity

About Ron Williams

Ron Williams, born and raised in Southern California, learned his greatest lessons in life playing and competing in sports. These lessons continue to contribute to his passion for life, music, and especially humanity. Today, Williams is a successful author, lecturer and advocate for personal development and general health. He is committed to a philosophy of using his time, talent and resources to making a difference in the world, one person at a time. Williams has successfully led multi-million dollar corporations with his unique talent for creatively bringing intangible concepts to life. Nearly all of these results were created while Ron kept his priority of being a single full-time parent to his daughter Maron. He is currently CEO and Chairman of www.ronwilliams.org, which includes such ventures as the U of YOU, FLOWgreen, BrightGreen Records, GreenEyed Pictures and ForeverGreen International, which are all a driving force in supporting his non-profit foundation Happy Children. Recently, unsolicited, Williams accepted the offer to become the president of the MLMIA (Multi-Level Marketing International Association) where he shares his experience and philosophies industry wide.

As a singer, composer and producer of music, Williams is also an award-winning filmmaker. He has touched hundreds of thousands of people in more than 20 different countries around the world. His new wife Kandi and daughter Maron are his love and inspirational teachers. Williams was recently contracted by his home state of Utah, where he has resided for more than 20 years, to be a “good will ambassador,” bringing a message of health and happiness to its communities. Whether he is filming, speaking, singing or laughing, Williams has mastered his ability to creatively project life-changing information through his heart.

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