

# Geoff McDonald

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*"You are indeed the biggest champion and understand what we are doing more than many others in the company. You live it and breathe it. To now make the knowledge available to many others, and hopefully create the momentum for biggest change is a very noble cause. Thanks for doing that. Purpose is indeed closely linked to wellness and not many people see this yet. Again you are a pioneer here. You will enjoy the challenges and opportunities and you are well prepared for it. We will see each other still but already thanks for all you have done for this great institution. We will benefit from it for years to come".*

**Paul Polman, CEO Unilever**  
**June 2014**  
**On leaving Unilever**

Geoff's background in teaching, HR, marketing, communications and sustainability is considerable. During his 25 years with Unilever (a global corporation with a turnover of £50 billion, 170,000 employees in 90 countries around the world), his experience has been truly global working across Africa, the Middle-East and Turkey, Australasia and Asia, Europe and the Americas.

His HR experience has spanned leadership and talent development, organization change, capability development with particular reference to marketing, and business transformation with purpose at its core. Early in his career he was responsible for graduate recruitment and development, talent, acquisitions and development across Unilever's emerging markets. Under his leadership he developed Unilever's global talent and leadership centre of expertise. More recently he devoted his time, energy and effort to leading ground-breaking work where the HR function has played a central role in transforming Unilever's business model with purpose at its core.

Geoff's work today is truly global and he is a very much sought-after speaker, strategic advisor and consultant. He inspires and provokes organizations globally to put purpose and wellbeing at the centre of everything they do. His experience in Unilever, under the pupilage of Paul Polman, allows him to provide very practical insights and to speak on how to go about truly embedding PURPOSE and address the taboo associated with wellbeing (particularly mental health) within a large global multi-national organization. With this experience comes some real learning on what may or may not work. He recently had the opportunity to engage with Pope Francis on how we create a more sustainable and inclusive economy through his work with the Global Foundation.

He has spoken at Cambridge, Oxford, Bologna and Warwick Universities as well as at corporate events across Australia, Japan, North America, Europe, South Africa, Turkey and Eastern Europe.

Geoff is devoting a significant amount of time to consulting to organizations, helping them define and embed Purpose as a driver of growth and profitability.

He is a Strategic Advisor to Boldt Partners and to RISE Global Corporate Purpose Advisory Firm in the area of Corporate Purpose and Organization Change. He also consults on how to address the stigma linked to depression and anxiety in the workplace, with a particular emphasis on raising awareness of these issues and providing some practical strategies as to how one might go about addressing this growing modern illness.

He is a very active campaigner for breaking the stigma associated with Mental Health in the Corporate world and has participated in a number of BBC programmes and campaigns regarding this subject, as well as writing and producing articles for the Huffington Post, the Financial Times and HR-related journals. He previously convened a meeting at No 10 Downing Street with David Cameron and CEOs from Footsie 100 Companies to address their role and agree actions to break stigma in the corporate world. He too provided some support to the Royal Foundation (Princes William, Harry and Kate) in their mental health campaign.

Geoff is a Co-Founder of the Charity 'Minds@Work', which has grown from 14 members to over 2000 in four years. Its purpose being to inspire and equip individuals to break the stigma of mental ill health in the organizations they work in. He was previously a Trustee of 'Family Links', a Charity promoting and educating parents and teachers to develop emotionally-healthy children and young adults. He was also a Trustee of the global campaign 'It's a Penalty' combating the exploitation of young children around the world. He is currently an Advisor to 'United For Global Mental Health' and has been appointed to the Advisory Board of City Mental Health Alliance. Geoff is a Patron of the International Stress Management Association and a Member of the Prince's Trust Youth Opportunity Taskforce with the purpose of creating change that will unlock the potential in the UK's youth. He was also recently appointed as an Advisor to a number of small Tech Start-Ups looking at how technology can pro-actively enhance the mental health and wellbeing of individuals.

Geoff is married with two girls and loves the outdoors. He is a passionate cyclist and swimmer and has completed a number of ultra-cycling and swimming events.

Topics that Geoff speaks and advises on include:

### ***Organization Purpose As Driver Of Business Performance***

Key Messages are:

- \* The Unilever story and how Purpose drove business performance
- \* What does it take to rediscover an organization's Purpose?
- \* What does it take to embed and live 'organization purpose'?
- \* What does that change/transformation programme look like and entail?

### ***Mental Health And Wellbeing - A Competitive Advantage***

Key Messages are:

- \* The power of being able to speak up and ask for support if suffering from mental ill health
- \* How to break the stigma of mental ill health in a workplace
- \* How to maintain good mental health as an individual
- \* How to realise a competitive advantage through mental health and wellbeing in a workplace
- \* How to elevate the health of employees to being a strategic priority at Board/Executive level