



A Revolution in Responsible Business

 Benedictine University

Shifting the Global Conversation, Sparking a Revolution



Three years ago, Sandra Gill, the Dean of Benedictine's College of Business, and I hatched the idea of starting the Center for Values-Driven Leadership. We saw a gap in the research and curriculum: though we could all name dozens of companies who were doing business the right way, we couldn't quantify *what* made those companies successful.

As a result, business schools were left without the powerful case studies they need to raise up the next generation of responsible leaders. And senior executives were without the tools they need to model the path toward responsible success. Essentially, this gap left proven executives and eager students without a clear path forward.

We launched the Center for Values-Driven Leadership to help forge that path – to clarify the connection between business leadership and, social, ethical, and environmental responsibility. We agreed we'd do this with profitability in mind – operating under

the belief that (as great companies have demonstrated) you don't have to sacrifice profit to behave responsibly. In fact, responsible behavior often serves as a powerful conduit to increased profit and growth.

Earlier this year we launched our doctoral program with 22 exceptional senior-level executive students (more on page three). We're proud of this accomplishment but we know it's not enough. The world is demanding more. Now we're launching a Revolution in Responsible Business.

We know this is an audacious goal. But we also know great people are attracted to great ideas, and together we can attain this goal.

The following pages outline where we've come from, where we're headed, and how we plan to get there. Revolutions need leaders – in our case, men and women like you who lead companies, big and small, that are committed to engaging responsibly with their stakeholders while driving shareholder value. Together we can shift the global conversation and spark a revolution. I hope you'll join us.



Jim Ludema, Ph.D., is the Co-founder & Director of the Center for Values-Driven Leadership (CVDL).

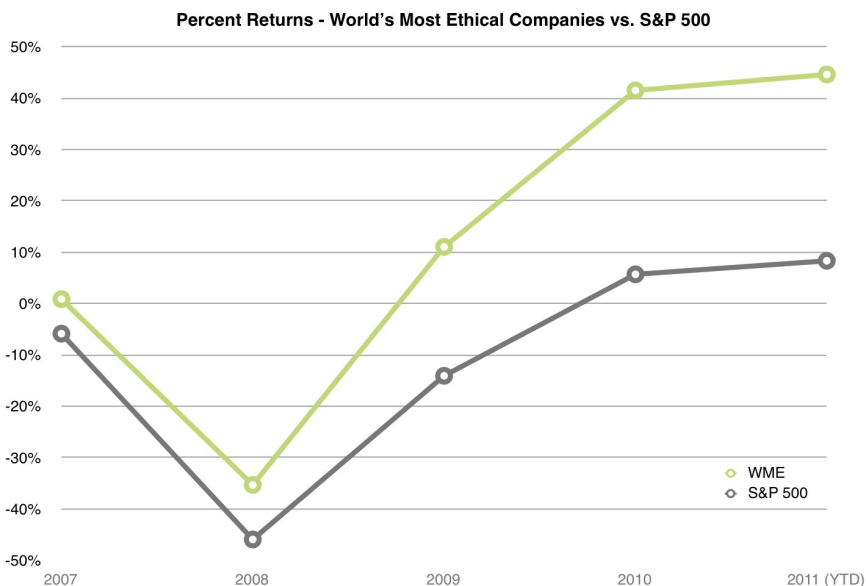
Building a Business that Outperforms its Peers

Since 2007, Ethisphere, a globally-recognized think tank, has published a list of the World's Most Ethical Companies. In every year since the list was first published, the publically traded companies on the Most Ethical list have outperformed – by significant amounts – the S&P 500.

How do the ethical companies do this? That's one of the research questions the Center for Values-Driven Leadership is asking as part of the *Revolution in Responsible Business*.

Business is the most powerful institution on the planet. It is the place in which most adults spend the majority of their waking hours and creative energy. The interactions that occur in the workplace – and the leadership decisions that result – hold greater capacity to shape the lives of individuals, of businesses, of our nation and our world, than any other single institution. Change business, and we change the world.

The worlds most ethical companies are already incorporating revolutionary thinking in their daily and long-range business practices. Ethisphere proves these companies outperform their peers: now our role is to learn *how*, and to start a global conversation that changes boardrooms and classrooms. It's a *Revolution in Responsible Business*.



What does responsible business look like?

We're working to answer that question at the Center for Values-Driven Leadership. **The exceptional companies we interact with demonstrate a fierce commitment to their core business without sacrificing social, ethical, or environmental responsibility.** This is what many of the companies on the Ethisphere list have in common; our doctoral program is shaped around these concepts and our research initiative explores how exceptional companies navigate this territory.



Interface: Pioneers in Sustainable, Responsible Business

When Ray Anderson formed Interface in 1973, he was a business man interested in making his carpet tile company profitable. He did—Interface is now the world's leader in modular carpet. But starting in 1994, Anderson's route to success was up what he called Mount Sustainability. **Long before shareholders and consumers demanded a sustainability plan, Anderson taught his staff how to find "a better way to a bigger profit."** Now Interface has a goal of creating zero negative impact by 2020. The company is a model for others – and an example of revolutionary thinking in responsible leadership.

Origins of a Revolution

In the three short years since our founding, the CVDL has accomplished the following objectives:

- **Launching a Doctoral Program:** Our Ph.D./D.B.A. program launched in 2011 with 22 students, all established executives. The program invites the world's top thought leaders to probe deeply into the ideas of responsible business. Our next cohort enrolls in Spring 2013.
- **Conducting Initial Research:** The CVDL's initial research explored employee engagement and a company's commitment to their values. Leadership words and actions were the most important factor, and will be explored further in our next research initiatives.
- **Creating a Place for Conversation:** The CVDL is committed to connecting the worlds of academia and business practice. To do this we bring businesses' best minds together with top researchers through Senior Executive Roundtables and other events.
- **Providing Insight for the Day-to-Day:** Our web portal, blog, and video series give executives daily access to quick, informative articles that shape their day.

You can learn more about these initiatives at our web portal, www.cvdl.org.



CVDL students and Roundtable guests discuss the provocative ideas of leadership futurist Bob Johansen at our June 2012 Senior Executive Roundtable.

How Do You Launch a Revolution?

We're starting by:

Researching a Road Map: Business research has often focused on problems rather than attempting to understand what makes ethical, responsible companies great. Our *Champions of Responsible Business* research initiative will benchmark exceptional companies to understand *how and why* they consistently outperform their peers.

Changing the Boardroom *and* the Classroom: B-school curricula of the past often taught aggressive strategies that were detrimental to sustainable growth. Our *Champions of Responsible Business* research initiative will result in a set of tools and curricula that academics and practitioners alike can integrate into their training and practice.

Shaping the Global Conversation: Top business leaders need a place to share their successes and challenges and find guidance from others. We'll continue and expand our venues for the likeminded and skeptics, including our web portal, video series, Senior Executive Roundtables, CEO Forums, and our social media networks.

Follow the Revolution—Watch these links for regular updates:

[Leadership Blog](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Linked In](#) | [Online Portal](#)



Join the Revolution in Responsible Business

Launching a *Revolution in Responsible Business* requires raising up an army of committed executives, ready to share their stories of courageous, socially-, ethically-, and environmentally-responsible leadership. We're looking for leaders committed to doing business the right way. Here are three ways you can join the revolution:

Lend Your Voice to the Conversation

- Join us at our Roundtables
- Follow us through social media
- Be featured in our video series

Connect Us to the Right People

- Introduce us to the executives whose examples have inspired you and equipped you for leadership.

Support the Revolution

- Further the ongoing work of the CVDL by meeting our annual operational needs
- Help the revolution gain momentum by funding our research or practice initiatives

More information about these opportunities are available through the Center for Values-Driven Leadership and at www.cvdl.org.



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