



Finding a common mythology

Connecting business and ecological systems is at the heart of The Green Interview

It will come as no surprise to readers in this region that renowned author and speaker Silver Donald Cameron has a soft spot for environmental issues. He often writes about sustainability and the environment in his weekly column for the *Chronicle Herald*, and his many books follow themes of connection to our communities and nature.

Cameron has just released a new book called *A Million Futures: The Remarkable Legacy of the Millennium Scholarship Foundation* to glowing reviews. Much of the rest of his time these days is spent on another project close to his heart: The Green Interview, which you can follow at www.thegreeninterview.com.

The Green Interview is an online series of conversations with some of the world's leading environmental thinkers. The format—Cameron as the interviewer—is standard, but the site also includes a wealth of information on each of the interviewees, including other resources they might have.

The site is subscription based, and subscribers have the option of also participating in online discussions. "The site is designed to be a node of ideas and hope" says Cameron. "It's easy for us to despair over environmental issues and the monumental tasks ahead of us, but striving to change that and do something is a good thing."

What I find interesting about this site is that in just the first nine of 19 interviews posted, there is a wealth of knowledge on environmental issues in one place. I can see employers using this as a training tool for their teams. Want to really know what Jeff Rubin thinks about the price of oil? Tune into the interview. Business's impulse might be to tune out troublemakers like Paul Watson, but if you operate a company in Newfoundland and Labrador that is connected to the offshore, it might be in your best interests to be familiar with



"The site [for *The Green Interview*] is designed to be a node of ideas and hope. It's easy for us to despair over environmental issues and the monumental tasks ahead of us, but striving to change that and do something is a good thing"

— Silver Donald Cameron

what Watson thinks and why.

We tend to get our information in sound bites these days. The Green Interview invites us to spend a little more time, give a little more thought, to these important issues. Bill Rees, the originator of the "ecological footprint" and host of The Green Interview, says, "Today, for the first time in the history of our species, we've reached the point where my selfish interests are identical to our collective interests. I cannot be sustain-

able on my own. No country can be sustainable on its own." What we need, he adds, is "a common cultural mythology across the planet."

The concept of a common story and the connectivity of all systems, business and ecological, are at the heart of The Green Interview. We can't be green alone. For example, we can't use transit in cities where there is none. We can't switch to green energy systems in communities that don't promote a green

grid. Using this site as a resource, businesses can stay in touch with the thinking of some of the world's most progressive environmental leaders.

Interviewees include James Lovelock, the originator of the Gaia Theory, which holds that the Earth behaves like a single living organism; environmental writer Farley Mowat; Vandana Shiva, physicist, philosopher, food activist, and eco-feminist; and Ron Coleman, Nova Scotia-based developer of the Genuine Progress Index.

All of the interviewees agree that business has a vital role to play in the greening of our society. Never mind that environmentalists can't be expected to do all of the heavy lifting. Business is the only social factor big enough to make significant change. Gradually, business seems to be understanding that prosperity is more than profit. What good is wealth if you don't have clean air to breathe?

Some of the upcoming thinkers to be featured on The Green Interview will include wildlife illustrator Robert Bateman; Ron Wright, author of *A Short History of Progress*; Andrew Heintzman, who was in Nova Scotia for the Power of Green conference to share information about available capital in the green economy; and Bill Rees. The hope is that the site will inspire imagination and innovation.

For Cameron, the role of social entrepreneur isn't new. What is new, however, is how much busier this corner has become. To be successful, businesses must see the relationship between economy and ecology. The kind of information presented in The Green Interview is a valuable resource. For eco-entrepreneurs, building a subscription-based business model also shows that the uptake in all things green is still growing, and that knowledge is an essential commodity as we rewrite our common cultural mythology. 🌍

Lara Ryan is a business consultant specializing in CSR. She can be reached at lara@lararyanconsulting.ca.

How can I develop my leadership team?



Ask Gerry.

902 424 1112 · GeraldWalsh.com



Gerald Walsh Associates Inc.
enriched human resources

Standing out in a GLK is a simple matter of sitting in one.

The 2011 GLK. Starting from \$43,500.



Mercedes-Benz

© 2010 Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc.

TriStar Fine Cars
368 Rothesay Ave, Saint John
(506) 634-1940 • tristar.mercedes-benz.ca