



Geoff McDonald

Former Global VP of HR at Unilever, business transformation advisor and a passionate advocate for making mental health & wellbeing a strategic priority.

KEY TOPICS

- Organisational Purpose Drives Business Performance
- Why Purpose is Critical to Mental Wellbeing
- Mental Health - a Competitive Advantage, a Strategic Priority

BIOGRAPHY

About Geoff McDonald

Geoff McDonald is best known as a global advocate, campaigner and consultant who is passionate about addressing the stigma of mental ill health in workplaces and about helping organisations embed purpose as a key driver of business performance. Prior to this, he was the Global VP of Human Resources for Unilever. His experience spans leadership & talent development, organisation change, capability development (with particular reference to marketing), and business transformation with purpose at its core. During his 25-year career with Unilever (a global corporation with a turnover of £50 billion and 170,000 employees in 90 countries around the world), his experience has been truly global, working across Africa, the Middle East & Turkey, Australasia & Asia, and Europe & the Americas. Early in his Unilever career he was responsible for graduate recruitment and development, talent, acquisitions and development across emerging markets. Under his leadership he developed Unilever's global talent and leadership centre of expertise. In 2008 Geoff was diagnosed with anxiety-fuelled depression, and it was during his recovery that he discovered a new personal purpose. In 2014 he left his role with Unilever to devote his time, energy and expertise to ending the stigma of depression and anxiety in the workplace. He tells his powerful story to audiences around the globe, knowing firsthand that talking about mental health saves lives. Geoff has had the opportunity to sit around the table with politicians, business leaders and influencers, including the Prime Minister of the UK, members of the Royal Family and Pope Francis. He has spoken at corporate events across Australia, Europe, Japan, North America, Turkey and Eastern Europe. He has also participated in a number of BBC programmes and written articles for the Huffington Post and the Financial Times as well as human resource journals. As a strong believer that the global movement for positive mental health in the workplace needs more voices, Geoff is the co-founder of Minds@Work, whose purpose is to inspire and empower individuals to break the stigma of mental ill health in their own organisations.

Sample Keynote Topics

Organisation purpose as a driver of business performance

Key messages are:

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- The Unilever story and how purpose drove business performance
- What does it take to rediscover an organisation's purpose
- What does it take to embed and live the organisation's 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 well-being in a workplace

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

"I can say categorically that the discussions that I have had with you in the first half of the year helped inform the way that I have looked at embedding the management of Mental Health across HSBC. Your guidance, whilst not formal, gave us confidence to look for more initiatives to move the agenda forward."

— Peter Robotham - HSBC

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Thank you for your leadership of the recently concluded Mind over Mountains event (the first such Barclays initiative in Asia), I have heard a lot of positive feedback. Thank you for your leadership of the recently concluded Mind over Mountains event (the first such Barclays initiative in Asia), I have heard a lot of positive feedback. Thank you too for your inspirational, insightful and enthusiastic participation, and for spending time with our Hong Kong colleagues."

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— Jaideep Khanna - Head of Barclays, Asia Pacific

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We've made significant progress out of your talk with a new SKY website now set up. We're also getting lots of other areas who have heard what we've been doing asking for help in their area, we've had two in the last week so we're getting real traction across the business.

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— Darren Long - Director of Sky Production Services