LEAVING MICROSOFT TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Group Members

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Agenda

- Introduction
- Inspiration
- Room to Read
- Help the Cause
- Conclusion
- Discussion

Introduction


- About the Author
  - Former Microsoft executive
  - Founded Room to Read in 2000
  - Allocates education resources in developing countries
Inspiration: A Vacation From A Fast-Paced Job

- Executive in Microsoft’s China division
- Direct contact with top executives
- Job requirements were strenuous and demanding of time and energy
- Vacation to hike the Himalayas on a suggestion from a presenter

Inspiration: Dire Learning Conditions

- Met a Nepalese man who offered to show him a local school
- Conditions were deplorable
  - Library was a cabinet of books left by tourists
  - Benches with no desks
  - Twice as many students as the room should hold
- Students still eager to learn
**Inspiration To Help**

- Promised to return to Nepal with books
- Decided to make more of an impact than that
- Debated leaving his high-paying job
- Made up his mind upon returning to Nepal with book donation
- Made the decision to start helping full-time to improve children’s education worldwide

**Room To Read: Mission**

- To partner with communities in developing nations to provide educational opportunities
- Establish libraries, construct schools, and provide education to girls
- To intervene in the lives of children to empower the community
- To improve socioeconomic conditions for future generation
- Seek to break the cycle of poverty through education, one child at a time
**Room To Read: History**

- Founded by John Wood following a visit to Nepal
- John quit senior executive position at Microsoft
- In 2000, Room To Read began building schools in Nepal
- Organization expanded to other countries:
  - Vietnam
  - Cambodia
  - India
  - Sri Lanka

**Room To Read: Programs**

- Reading Room
  - Providing libraries with donated books
- School Room
  - Build safe, child-friendly schools
- Local Language Publishing
  - Obtain new books from local writers
- Girl’s Education
  - Allow girl’s to complete secondary education
Help the Cause

- Room to Read Wine and Cheese Fundraiser
  - Wednesday, November 4, 2009
  - Aqua Midtown
  - 6:45 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  - Tickets: $30 at door

- Georgia Tech’s IMPACT Speaker Series
  - Emily Leys: Global Program Officer
  - Wednesday, November 4, 2009
  - LeCraw Auditorium, College of Management
  - 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
  - FREE!

Conclusion

- Room To Read a tremendous success
- One million book donations
- One hundred and twenty libraries funded by Room To Read
- Plans to expand to more countries
- Business model built on sold principles
Discussion

- Effectiveness of the Room to Read business model: Co-investment from benefactors vs. free resources
  - Do you think the co-investment model is necessary?

- Are corporate skills necessary to establish a successful non-profit organization?

- Scholarship
  - Why do you think girls are the only recipients?
  - Does this seem fair?

Discussion

- Is “Go big, or go home!” a proper philosophy for a non-profit organization?

- “His book is the manual for the honest pickpocket.”

- In your opinion, what should be the next step for Room to Read?
  - Expanding to more countries?
  - Expanding current operations?
Comments/Questions?