



Wrap-Up and Final Remarks

General Session: Speaker

Wednesday, June 6th 2012 3:30pm – 3:40pm

McNulty Gathering Room, Doerr-Hosier Center, The Aspen Institute

Speaker:

Philippe Bourguignon, Vice Chairman, Revolution Places & CEO, Exclusive Resorts, U.S. (France)

Transcription:

Taylor Gannon, Assistant Marketing Coordinator, Global Spa & Wellness Summit

PHILIPPE BOURGUIGNON: Three hundred twenty-five attendees from forty countries, wow. The board and I worked very hard to assemble the agenda. I think innovation, we've been talking about it for the last two and a half days, is very much in our time and without innovation, I'm kind of linking to what Deborah [Szekely] said, without innovation it's going to be hard to get out of the situation we are in; even though, I am a great optimist. I would like to thank the Aspen Institute who has been a great partner and help us also challenge us with new ideas.

Now very briefly, I did this in my room this morning at 5:00am, I made a few slides just to summarize what we have been doing. We've been told a little bit about the world, we have been told it's a little complicated, we've been told how a brain works, and how to use our brain creatively, and what process to apply. We also know all sorts of trends and we can now forecast our business next year. So that's the brief summary.

We've also been told that spa is not only this [picture of woman on a massage table], but more. I come from a culture where massage or spa is for the lazy wife who doesn't have a lot to do and for sick people. That's what I knew about spas before I got involved with the spa business. I'm very new with the spa business. I learned this, at Miraval, and it changed me. I keep saying that Miraval is the first company that I don't have to fix, but Miraval will fix me. Two people helped me tremendously, one is Andy Weil who, one day after a meeting, said "You don't breathe." "What do you mean, 'I don't breathe.' I've been breathing for sixty years." He said, "No. You breathe but I'll teach you *how* to breathe." And he did. And he changed so many

things. Michael Tompkins, who is here, day after day also told me so many things about wellness and today, I am a much better person. I love that place by the way.

The problem is the following, I brought people here to talk and I had a little meeting with them before they left. **Whether it's Jose Maria Figueres, whether it's Peter Rummell, or whether it's Elizabeth Stephenson, they all told me, "We had no idea what this industry was. No idea. We discovered an entirely new world. We discovered a vibrant community. And you know what? You need to educate the people in what you are doing."** It's very interesting to see people who are important in very different areas: politics, consultants, real estate developers, who just don't know a little bit about our business. So, I think our mission is not only to market our product, which obviously is why we are here, but as Deborah [Szkeley] said, "we have a cause." We should educate people about this cause.

That was my little personal moment. The last thing I would like to say, and that's the conclusion of my conclusion, is that, about a year ago, I met the current General Surgeon, Regina Benjamin, and I found – obviously – a very competent and talented person, a very interesting person. I found an interview of her with two questions and that is going to be my conclusion.

[New York Times interviewing Regina Benjamin](#)

When you were emanated as Surgeon General, critics tried to discourage you on the basis of your weight, saying you were perpetrating rather than battling it.

My thought is that people should be healthy and be fit at whatever size they are.

What sort of exercise do you recommend for people who don't love it?

I want exercise to be fun. Don't want it to be work. I don't want it to be such a routine that you get bored with it. We used to jump rope a lot, and double dutch, and go to the disco to have fun and enjoy ourselves. We did not go to the disco because somebody said, Go dance for thirty minutes.

PHILIPPE BOURGUIGNON: Maybe we need to dance more as a nation. And I will add, because we always need to finish with music, maybe we need to dance more as a planet.