Gregory Wasson

Former President and CEO of Walgreens

Leading a Global Business and Transforming an Iconic Brand Walgreens is the largest drugstore chain in the US and the world's first global health and well-being company. Greg Wasson led the organization through a six-year period of increased shareholder returns and more free cash flow than in the previous 98 years combined. What does it take to run a successful, international business? How do you change strategy or recognize when strategy needs to change? How do you motivate employees and manage a shift in culture that reaches all the way to front line employees? During a moderated fireside chat, Wasson shares insights and stories and answers audience questions about how he transformed Walgreens. From developing brand mantras, cultural beliefs, and store designs to deciding on the right partners for international acquisitions and expansion, Wasson shares what he learned leading Walgreens and studying the most unique and innovative retail concepts in the world.

Honing the Craft of Leadership Former President and CEO of Walgreens, Greg Wasson, offers audiences insights into the traits that make leaders successful. He shares stories of his remarkable journey at Walgreens while delivering practical and straightforward advice on how to hone audience's inert leadership capabilities. One key trait is embracing being thrown out of your comfort zone. He tells a story of how he almost said no to managing a new market for Walgreens – a rise that would have required him to move from Boston to Las Vegas. Ultimately, he seized the opportunity, and the Las Vegas market became the top new-market opening in Walgreen history, blowing away sales projections and catapulting Wasson's profile within the company. Wasson believes being open to new challenges is a key trait of successful leaders. He also gives audiences advice for building buy-in within large organizations, explaining how he successfully implemented a new corporate strategy by progressively expanding the circle of involvement until it included the entire company. He advises audiences to stay in touch with their people, especially on the front line, noting that they and their 12 most senior people can't solve everything by themselves. Finally, he suggests, "Don't get ahead of yourself. First and foremost be the best at your job you possibly can."

The Current State of Healthcare Greg Wasson took over Walgreens while our country's healthcare system was in the midst of large-scale reforms. At the helm of a major healthcare player when the industry was changing dramatically, he offers audiences a unique, insider's viewpoint into the state of healthcare today. He believes that pharmacists are under utilized in the United States and that taking medication properly is one of the best ways to improve people's overall health. He shares insights into how to improve the system and how industry players can seize upon opportunities in the new market.