

# Connie Linder

MBA 1993, Founder, Green Pages Directory

## Never underestimate the power of good



Connie Linder, an entrepreneur, former stock broker and founder of the recently launched online Green Pages Directory ([www.greenpagesdirectory.net](http://www.greenpagesdirectory.net)), believes in the inherent good of people and has learned that rather than fighting against things we don't agree with, we should invest our energy in moving towards positive solutions. With those beliefs in hand and a strong educational background, including a BA and MBA from UBC, Connie has devoted the past eight years to endeavours which are good for the world and in promoting ethical and sustainable methods of advancing the economy.

### Why do you think working "green" or taking a sustainable approach to business is so important?

Working in alignment with nature is the only way business will sustain itself; there will be a huge paradigm shift that we can already see beginning. Sustainability is about using our resources wisely and taking responsibility; when there is a critical mass of intention that exists to align with nature it can be pretty powerful.

### Sometimes it's hard to think of making grand corporate efforts to sustain our world.

#### What are some things individuals can do?

Things evolve gradually; there is still a disconnect between the "change the world" mantra and what happens in our daily lives. Living with positive intent is important for guiding decisions regardless of our financial situation. For example, when I was building my business as a single mom, I was shopping for canned tomatoes—organic were \$3.99 and regular were 99 cents. With my limited funds, I could not purchase all organic but wanted to support my values so bought one can of organic and four of the regular tomatoes. Now I can buy all organic, but it took time to get there. This is what I refer to as an incremental change. En masse, this represents 20 per cent of the marketplace.

As people transition to making ethical decisions with intent to live a certain way, the prices of what are traditionally called alternative products come down and the world slowly moves to becoming more sustainable. Two things happen as a result; companies begin to change due to evolving customer sentiment and those products become more accessible.



### What can people learn from companies that are finding innovative ways to be environmentally responsible while remaining economically viable?

The traditional approach to business has been that you can either "do good" OR you can make money. What those traditional companies need to realize is that you can actually make more money in the long run by being responsible to the environment and respectful of people; not doing so is not only a moral issue but also a business risk.

### How does GreenPages fit into this?

At GreenPages we are committed to supporting the proliferation of a sustainable economy. It is a sophisticated directory and search tool to link information seekers with companies offering products and services that are more ecologically and socially progressive. We live our values in how we do our business and the type of information we are making more accessible.

*As a single mom building a business, Connie Linder began an incremental shift to align her grocery shopping with her values. At four times the cost of regular tomatoes, the organic ones were a splurge.*

### What are you most hopeful about with regard to sustainability?

I think current world situations will force us to be better people and work together. There will be so much change in the next five to ten years and, as we move beyond the digital age and enter a new world paradigm, there will be incredible opportunities for people to embrace; there will be an imperative to aim for a higher standard of personal responsibility and accountability. ■