



PORTRAITS OF EXCELLENCE: WORK

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EXCELLENCE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS CAN TAKE MANY FORMS, FROM BOLD NEW IDEAS TO AN ABILITY TO CONNECT DISPARATE COMMUNITIES. **MEET SEVEN MEN AND WOMEN LEADING THE WAY.**



: THE PRAGMATIST

TENSIE WHELEN

DIRECTOR, NYU STERN CENTER
FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Tensie Whelan spent 15 years as president of the Rainforest Alliance, a global sustainable development nonprofit, where she worked with some 5,000 corporate partners, including Hershey's and Caribou Coffee, to improve how they interact with the environment. "We really mainstreamed sustainability," Whelan says. The Alliance helped Chiquita, for example, reduce pesticide use, boosting productivity 12 percent per year while reducing costs by 7 percent.

This year Whelan joined the faculty at the NYU Stern School of Business and founded its Center for Sustainable Business to influence the way future generations of executives think about business and the environment. The Center helps companies implement sustainability measures by creating strategic goals and setting up internal accounting metrics to assess the financial impact of those decisions. Such steps are critical today: The SEC is considering requiring companies to disclose climate risk, and Moody's has started including climate risk in its ratings. Whelan's board shows just how she bridges academia and business. Already, it includes the president of Nespresso North America, CEOs of Domtar and Unilever North America and the chief productivity officer of Citibank. Says Whelan, "We need to focus on demonstrating the business case, financially, for integrating sustainability into corporate strategy."

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