

A New Vision of Capitalism

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Capitalism has gotten a bad rap lately, and John Mackey thinks that's a bad thing.



Companies that put purpose and people over profits often end up profiting more in the long run, Whole Food Market CEO John Mackey tells the Tulane Business Forum on Friday (Oct. 16). (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

"Day in and day out, we're bombarded with the failure of capitalism," said Mackey, chair and CEO of Whole Foods Market at Friday's (Oct. 16) Tulane Business Forum. "I don't believe that. I don't believe capitalism is at fault for the troubles we're going through today."

Mackey, who was in New Orleans to deliver the luncheon keynote presentation at the 30th annual [forum](#) at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, argued for a new paradigm of business in the 21st century, one that puts purpose above profits.

"What the world needs is a new vision of the way business and capitalism could and should be, which I call conscious capitalism," he said.

According to Mackey, whose company operates more than 280 upscale grocery stores in the United States, Canada and the U.K, conscious capitalism boils down to three principles: that a business should have a higher and deeper purpose than maximizing profits, that all stakeholders are interdependent, and that the role of corporate leaders is to help build the purpose of the business and create value for all the stakeholders.

Mackey argued that companies that put purpose and people over profits often end up profiting more in the long run.

"Put your deeper business purpose first, whatever that may be for your organization," he said. "If you have a commitment above all else to satisfying your customers and if you care about the people that work for you and try to help them flourish in their jobs so they can personally grow, you'll find that they serve the customers, and the customers reflect back to you additional sales and therefore great profits."

The forum is sponsored by the Tulane Association of Business Alumni.

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