

### A CHAT WITH A SUCCESSFUL CONSULTANT (AND CGU ALUMNUS)

Alumnus Dr. Richard Strayer is giving back to his alma mater in meaningful ways. Not only has he served for many years on the SBOS Board of Advisors, but Dr. Strayer recently took the time to fly to Southern California and address a packed room of psychology students, eager to learn from a man who has built a successful consulting company, and continues to look for ways to do good through good business.



Dr. Richard Strayer

Strayer's down-to-earth talk painted a picture for students of what a day in the life of an organizational development consultant looks like. As CEO of the Strayer Consulting Group, Strayer has aided over 300 organizations looking for rapid growth, as well as both startup and mature companies managing significant change. Strayer and his co-founder (Dr. Linda Tirado) have also used their 25 years of experience to train and manage over 20 consultants at regional affiliate offices in Seattle, Portland, San Jose, Southern California and Toronto using the "Strayer methodology." The Strayer Model for teams engages participants in developing vision strategy, understanding styles, defining operating norms, clarifying roles, decision-making and conflict resolution. "The basic things I learned at Claremont are, honesty, still the skills I use on a daily basis today," he said.

"This is the fourth recession I've been through as a professional," Strayer told one student, when asked about business prospects in an unsteady market. "Making it through always means developing the capacity to deal with the next wave of expansion, and developing that capacity while things are still going well." With this philosophy, Strayer was able to catch the wave of technology start-ups in the late 80s, with cell phone companies and the explosion of personal computing, and to get into bio-technology when the third recession came. "People always need surgical devices, so they're essentially recession-proof," he says. "This was an important safeguard in 2001 when the tech bubble burst, and a lot of venture companies were hurting."

Recently, Dr. Strayer has become fascinated with the idea of using entrepreneurial enterprises to help desperate economies. It's not simply a question of inspiring donors to buy livestock for remote African villages—it's about creating an economy within those villages to make them economic engines unto themselves. "You help set up a local businessman in a rural African community with a water purifying business," Strayer says. "And that creates a need for someone to create the filters, someone to distribute them, and possibly someone to distribute the water itself. Suddenly you've created a number of jobs that supply a crucial human need while stimulating the flow of product in an area."