**Draft letter**

Subject: The education of a reluctant Businessman

Dear …………,

Patagonia is without any doubt one of the most challenging Brands that exists. Patagonia is a Brand many Brands can learn from. In the book let my people go surfing the founder and owner of the company shared his business strategy. He arguments that creating an image for a Brand is not sufficient anymore. A Brand must create image and impact. Creating impact is the driving force behind Brands these days. Brands with a purpose that do what they promise. A Brand that exists because of you, the community and a Brand that protects the planet. Creating impact is what Brands make memorable, believable and thus popular. There are lessons to be learned from the book let my people go surfing.

Over decades Patagonia developed clear business philosophies. Philosophies for each major activity in the company. Other Brands can learn from these philosophies. Here we go:

* Product Design Philosophy. Every design at Patagonia begins with a functional need. The best products are multifunctional. Buy less, buy better; make fewer styles, design better. The overall durability of a product is only as good as its weakest element.The ultimate goal is a product whose parts wear out only after a long life. There will always be a need to repair, but good design is as little design as possible. Function comes first at Patagonia.
* Production Philosophy. The challenge for Patagoniais was to re-create on an industrial scale with a devotion to quality. The ability to keep in mind all the criteria and learn by doing. It is a faster process to involve the Designer with the Producer, where a concurrent approach brings all participants together. The drive for quality in production must go beyond the products themselves. Durability and low environmental impact make that list.
* Distribution Philosophy. Patagonia sells their products at a wholesale level, through their own retail stores, mail order, and e-commerce worldwide. This diversity of distribution is a tremendous advantage. Patagonia requires on-time product delivery and must deliver its products on time. ‘On time’ meaning, when the customer wants to receive it. It is also far more profitable to turn inventory more quickly.
* Marketing Philosophy. Our branding efforts are simple; *“To tell people who we are”.* Patagonia’s image arises directly from their values. The only way to sustain an image and living up to it. Our image is a direct reflection who we are and what we believe. Patagonia’s image is a human voice; the joy of people who love the world, being passionate about their beliefs. To influence the future, use text to argue ideas as well as sell products. Branding is telling people who we are while promotion is selling people on our products. Our promotional efforts begin with the product, and the best way to get press is to have something to say.
* Financial Philosophy. Patagonia’s mission statement says nothing about making a profit, and our family considers our bottom line the amount of good that the business has accomplished. Making a profit is not the goal at Patagonia, but striving to balance the funding with the desire to continue in business. Faced with a serious business decision, the answer almost always is to increase quality. We make a decision to do the right thing for the planet while being good for the business.
* Human Resource Philosophy. Working satisfies the creative urge to do something both *useful* and *pleasurable*. Work also satisfied the need to make money. The interest of the customer was equal to that of the employee. Our first principle of hiring is for Patagonia employees to be true Patagonia customers. Patagonia employees have diverse beliefs, and while not everyone wants to change the world, we want the company to feel like home to employees who live rich and rounded lives. Our idea is our people go surfing when there are waves, and this has led to our flextime policy, decades ago.
* Management Philosophy. We don’t hire the kind of people you can order around. We want the kind of employees who will question the wisdom of a bad decision. How you get these highly individualistic people to align and work for a common cause is the art of management at Patagonia. In a company as complex as ours, no one person has all the answers and each has a part of the solution. A familial company like ours runs on trust. Be *adaptive* and r*esilient*; constantly embracing new ideas and methods of operation.
* Environmental Philosophy. What the founder, Yvon Chouinard, says: *“I’m a total pessimist about the fate of the natural world. I’ve seen nothing but a constant deterioration of all the processes that are essential. Evil is a stronger influence than good, and by evil I mean something morally bad and destructive. The cure for depression, I ‘ve found, is action. Action is the basis for the environmental philosophy at Patagonia”.* The protection and preservation of the natural environment is the reason we are in business. Patgagonia’s basic philosophy is to lead an examined life, cleaning up our own act, do our penance, support civil democracy, do good and influence other companies.

We all know the present world economy; endlessly consuming and discarding, destroying our planet. We are the guilty ones. We are the consumers who use up and destroy. We constantly buy things we want, but don’t need. And it seems, we never have enough. Our current landscape is filled with complacency. We’re running Patagonia as if it’s going to be here a hundred years from now. Patagonia will never be completely socially responsible, and it will never make a totally sustainable non-damaging product, but it is committed to trying if there is an answer in restraint, quality, and simplicity. We have to get away from thinking that all growth is good. There’s a big difference between growing fatter and growing stronger. We need to consume less on this finite planet. Finally, the more you know, the less you need.

Here is the link that will take you to the book *let my people go surfing* on the Global Reading Club website.

<https://globalreadingclub.com/books/let-my-people-go-surfing>

Enjoy reading and listening.

(Your name)

P.S. Attached is the Newsletter, covering the book let my people go surfing