

Ubiquity Interview: WILLIAM DUNK ON COLLABORATION

Management consultant and futurist William P. Dunk is the founder of William Dunk Partners, Inc., strategic and tactical advisors to chief executives.

UBIQUITY: Tell us a little about yourself and about William Dunk Partners.

DUNK: I had been a graduate student in economic and urban history, and when I had to go to work for a living I took a job with a firm called "Corporate Annual Reports." I seem to have a knack for business so I eventually headed up the company. We'd interview the principal executives of America's largest companies and would write and design their annuals for them. That was my B-school education by accident and it was a wonderful experience. We often worked with several corporations in a single industry, such as banks, mining companies, a half-dozen chemical companies, a whole bevy of consumer product companies, and so on. After you interview the principal executives of several companies in the same industry year after year, you pretty much begin to know where they're hurting and where they're feeling good and how they think about things. It gives you a CEO-point-of-view. That's as good a business education as one can get anywhere. One-on-ones with executives under fire.

UBIQUITY: When did you start your present company -- and how has it changed since then?

DUNK: I started it in 1982, having moved from the four charming brownstones on 31st Street in New York City that housed Corporate Annual Reports to the 40th floor of a skyscraper near Grand Central. Suddenly I went from 75 people and a virtual beehive to just me, a bunch of boxes, and a telephone. In fact, when my first associate joined the company, he immediately added a fancy telephone system. Since I'd been used to dealing with some of America's and the world's largest cap companies, I decided to change the focus to very small companies for a change of pace. I had intimate connections with a lot of people in Silicon Valley, including some of the boutique investment banking houses, and so it became rather easy for me to pick up high-tech clients and help them in the investor relations area.

My clients now are about 98-percent chief executives, and the clientele ranges from the largest companies in the world to companies that have no revenues. There's no particular industry concentration: I have Chinese companies that are in light industry, and I have pharmaceutical companies,

