

## John Dobson's Profile



### **John Dobson, MBA**

Chairman - Formula Growth Ltd.

John was born in Montreal in 1928, the son of a banker who rose through the ranks to become President of the Royal Bank. While John is of Nova Scotia parentage (his father from Sydney and his mother from Truro), he grew up in Montreal and graduated from McGill University with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1949. He received his Masters of Business of Administration from Harvard in 1952.

John began his formal work career, after graduation, with Dominion Engineering, and then the Montreal investment firm, of C.J. Hodgson. This prepared him to venture on his own in 1960 when he founded The Formula Growth Fund, one of Canada's earliest mutual funds and the most successful long-term mutual funds in Canadian history.

John applies his extensive management skills and business acumen in a variety of voluntary positions including: a member of the Fraser Institute Board of Trustees, a member of the International Advisory Board of the McGill School of Management as well as the Audit and Finance Committee of McGill University. He is an Advisor to the National Citizen's Coalition.

John began teaching the business case method in the late 1950's in a program sponsored by the Montreal Board of Trade along with a number of Harvard Alumni and other Montreal executives. This program eventually found a home at McGill in what is known as the Executive Development Institute.

While studying for his MBA, John attended the small business class at Harvard University. It was from that early exposure and his teaching experience that he developed the vision of university involvement in entrepreneurial studies and community entrepreneurial outreach as an effective stimulant to economic development and employment generation. He believed that the Harvard model, which now has 22 professors of entrepreneurship, should be more prevalent in Canada.

In 1986, John established The John Dobson Foundation to "help educate the public with respect to the free enterprise system and entrepreneurial activities in Canada." This foundation has supported many and varied community entrepreneurial efforts including

The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, The Youth Employment Services Foundation of Montreal (which supports in excess 2100 marginalized youth annually), and Junior Achievement. He was the original sponsor of the Association of Collegiate Entrepreneurs, a national student body which advocates entrepreneurial education. He is also a supporter of five major Canadian economic "Think Tanks."

The first and flagship activity of the Foundation was the creation of the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurial Studies at McGill University in 1989. The Foundation has created the McGill Entrepreneurial Skill Development Program and today there are 13 sections of entrepreneurial studies in programs in Business, MBA, Engineering, and Science.

The John Dobson Foundation currently supports entrepreneurial development at sixteen Canadian universities. In addition to the enhancement of entrepreneurial education at specific institutions, John's involvement has resulted in the establishment of regional and national networks of educators and small business interveners creating unprecedented synergy and cooperation.

He was awarded an honorary Doctorate from McGill in 1996, another from Concordia in 2002. He was awarded McGill's Management Achievement Award in 1992, and in 1997 John was named to the Order of Canada. In 2003, he received a Doctor of Civil Laws from Acadia University.