



## Bill Conaty

### **Former SVP of GE & Chairman of the National Academy of Human Resources**

Revered in the world of HR, Bill Conaty knows how to make a business work for both employees and employers. He believes the workplaces should be a meritocracy, and that staff motivation and training are vital to successful business.

## Bill's biography

Bill Conaty is an accomplished speaker who is passionate about HR. He aims to help businesses of all sizes learn to work well with their employees, to recognise talent and motivate all staff members. One of the most respected names in HR history, Conaty has pioneered many [innovations](#) in modern Human Resources. His ability to assist employers and employees to achieve their goals has made him a favourite among [businesses](#) and unions alike.

### **Bill Conaty's Background / History**

William J. Conaty grew up in Binghamton in the south of New York State. He attended Bryant College in Providence, Rhode Island, leaving with a bachelors degree in Business Administration in 1967. After he had completed his degree, he joined General Electrics Corporate Manufacturing Management Program before joining the company's Transportation Division in 1971, working in Pennsylvania.

### **Career**

Bill's progression through the ranks at GE was impressive. He became Plant Manager of the company's Grove City Diesel Engine Plant in 1978, only to move on to work in the Aerospace Human Resources Operation in Valley Forge a year later. He had a talent for working with people and went on to be Manager of Plant Relations before moving to GE Aircraft Engines in 1987 as a Human Resources (HR) Manager.

His ability to get along with employees, unions and managers set him apart and he eventually became the Vice-President of Human Resources for GE Aircraft Engines in Ohio, before being promoted to Senior Vice President of Corporate Human Resources. This position meant that he was responsible for

the HR management of approximately 310,000 employees globally.

During his time at GE, he pioneered several HR management techniques which made his name and learned that retaining and assisting talented staff was the best way to business success.

In 1996, Bill was made a Fellow of the National Academy of Human Resources. He later became a Chairman of the organisation. In 2007 he became a Distinguished Fellow of the National Academy of Human Resources, their highest accolade. He was a Chairman for HR Policy Association for six years between 2001 and 2007. Bill retired from GE in 2007.

After leaving GE, Bill went on to set up his own business, the consulting company, Conaty Consulting LLP. Due to his reputation within HR, his business has attracted many notable clients, including Dell, P&G, Boeing, Goodyear, LG Electronics and Maersk.

Bill is a Trustee of the University he attended (Bryant University in Providence) and was a trustee of Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut for over ten years. He received an honorary doctorate for his work in 2010.

There is now a William J. Conaty Chair in Human Resources at Cornell University, where Bill is a member of the Centre for Advanced HR Studies Advisory Board.

### **Current / Past Roles & Positions**

- A Distinguished Fellow of the National Academy of Human Resources
- Spent his 40 year career with GE (General Electric)

## **Bill's talks**

- **Lessons of Leadership**

After 40 years of developing top management teams at GE, Bill Conaty has valuable leadership lessons to share with organizations of all sizes. Conaty worked closely with GE's former CEO Jack Welch, and helped develop many of the strategies that made the company so successful. His perspective includes both the human resources side of the company, as well as experience gained running one of GE's major companies.

- **Talent Masters: How to Develop and Nurture Top Talent**

In the fast-changing global marketplace, the ability to create a steady, self-renewing stream of leaders is the only way for an organization to gain a lasting, competitive edge. Bill Conaty, a GE veteran who helped shape the modern face of human resources, presents strategies to attract and nurture top talent, and develop business leaders. Through personal anecdotes from his time at GE and case studies from global leaders like P&G, Conaty explains a process to convert subjective judgment about a person's talent into an objective set of observations that can predict success. He looks beyond the buzzwords to examine the core of leadership potential, and explains how to assess the characteristics and capabilities of rising stars or new hires.

