

Making the World a Better Place

An Interview with John Kasich, Founder, Kasich Company

EDITORS' NOTE Before founding Kasich Company, John Kasich served two terms as the Governor of Ohio. He served as a member of Congress from central Ohio for 18 years and, as the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, he led the effort to balance the federal budget for the first time since 1969 and helped enact historic welfare reform. After leaving Congress in 2000, Kasich worked as a managing director in the Investment Banking Division of Lehman Brothers, where he helped companies secure the resources they needed to succeed and create jobs. He was also a commentator for FOX News, a Presidential Fellow at his alma mater, The Ohio State University, and a candidate for the Republican nomination in the 2000 and 2016 Presidential campaigns. Kasich is the author of four New York Times best-sellers: *Courage is Contagious*; *Stand for Something*; *The Battle for America's Soul*; and *Every Other Monday*, which was published in



John Kasich

2010 and focuses on the importance of faith in making both everyday choices and life-changing decisions. His most recent books are *Two Paths: America Divided or United* and *It's Up to Us – Ten Little Ways We Can Bring About Big Change*. Today, he also serves as a senior commentator for CNN.

COMPANY BRIEF The Kasich Company, (kasichcompanyllc.com), co-founded by John Kasich and Beth Hansen, connects and convenes their unique international network of leaders to effectively address

its clients' pain points and opportunities. Kasich Company offers its clients the expertise of public-sector leaders with private-sector capabilities who work to develop results-oriented, common-sense, and unifying approaches to solving problems at the federal, state and local level.

What was your vision for creating Kasich Company and how do you define its mission?

We wanted to create a company that provides advisory services to those who find themselves in a connection between business, government, and people. We have a strong knowledge of government from our many years of service, and I have been involved in business on and off throughout my career, so we understand people and how they impact both government and business. It has been very satisfying since we are engaged in so many projects that are meaningful, such as pediatric mental health, adult mental health, environmental issues, and economic development. We have also been involved in healthcare, particularly in the area of rural health, which has been very fulfilling.

The Kasich Company is focused on furthering the areas we believe in and trying to make the world a better place. Ultimately, we need to believe that our involvement is going to lead to advances in society and our work with companies will make the world better. We understand that companies need to make money and be profitable in order to succeed, but at the same time we are focused on things like ESG (Environmental, Social



Governor John Kasich signs a bill he championed in 2017 to protect Lake Erie and improve the environment

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and Governance) with these companies. It is the same philosophy that I had as Governor, which was to take on things that I believe can advance our society. We know that companies can do well and do good at the same time.

My business partner, Beth Hansen, was my Chief of Staff when I served as Governor and ran my campaigns. She and I have worked together for a long time which has made it very easy as we build the Kasich Company. We have many people that we have known a long time who we can reach out to as resources and engage in our work.

What can be done to address the divisiveness that is present throughout the world to bring people together?

It starts with us. Everyone wants to know what someone else can do to make this a better, more connected world, and it is not about what somebody else can do. It is about what we as individuals can do. It is about the way we treat our family, the way we treat our neighbors, the way we treat our friends, the way we treat people that we disagree with. If we keep in mind that everyone is made in the image of

God, then everyone deserves respect, regardless of whether we agree or disagree with them. This may not sound exciting, but it is pivotal if we are going to build a more connected world.

There is no one in this world that is perfect – we all fail miserably all the time, but that does not mean that we can’t do better and treat people better. The current Surgeon General is focused on something that I find very interesting, which is that people are very lonely. My wife has an amazing gift in dealing with the elderly. She does not get paid for it and does not work in the field – she just comes upon it. I am so proud of how she makes time in her life to visit with the elderly and to treat them with kindness and care. That is what I call being significant.

You mention loneliness. How much does the isolation and loneliness that is present today at all ages concern you?

It is very concerning. The ability to get beyond surface relationships at the human level is invaluable. It means you can open your heart, share your successes and losses, your happiness and pain – that is what life is all about.

Do you miss being in public service?

I don’t because in many ways I feel that I am still in it. There is nothing more fulfilling than working with companies to help them solve problems and become more successful. For example, I love the work we are doing in pediatric mental health. In many respects, I am still involved in public service, but it is through business as opposed to holding elected office.

With all the challenges facing the world, are you optimistic about the future?

I am optimistic. We have our challenges, but we also see the world being pulled together, for example with NATO regarding Ukraine. We have seen poverty alleviated; we have seen health improve – not everywhere, but there has been steady progress. My concern is the rise of authoritarianism since I do believe that people having a voice and the basic principles of freedom of speech and religion is critical.

In terms of the United States, I think we are going through a phase right now – it is a serious phase, but what people need to believe and know is that it is up to us to come together to build community and strength in our society. ●

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Governor John Kasich joins members of Jesse Owens' family in 2018 to establish the Jesse Owens State Park & Wildlife Area