

Good to Know

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Eco-Revolutionary

Virginia architect William McDonough has outfitted Ford, IBM and Nike with earth-friendly offices, but what he's really building is a movement for global change.

GREEN BUILDING In 1977, as a Yale grad student, McDonough designed and built Ireland's first solar-heated house, then created the first green offices in the United States for the Environmental Defense Fund. Since then, the founder of William McDonough + Partners in Charlottesville, Virginia, has received the National Design Award and two presidential honors for sustainable building.

WASTE NOT After he and industrial designer Michael Braungart designed a production system for a Swiss textile factory that creates effluent as pure as drinking water, McDonough channeled his ambitions toward zero waste. He thinks in terms of "upcycling"—reincarnating materials indefinitely in a continuous loop of use and reuse—instead of recycling, which takes a raw material only one step farther.

DESIGN MANIFESTO If you design products with completely biodegradable or completely reusable components, you can bypass landfills altogether, taking the "grave" out of the cradle-to-grave lifecycle of everything from laptops to athletic shoes, McDonough explains in *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* (North Point, 2002), written with Braungart. The book itself is printed on a coated synthetic paper that could one day be stripped of ink and reincarnated as a bestselling novel.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION McDonough has developed master plans for six cradle-to-cradle cities and one village in China. In addition, he's enthusiastic about concepts such as downtown parking lots covered in solar panels. "I'm very interested in solar-powering the world as quickly as we can," he says.

STAMP OF APPROVAL To encourage manufacturers to embrace cradle-to-cradle design, McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry recently introduced Cradle to Cradle Certification (C2CCertified.com). Certified products must meet strict standards for healthy materials, reusability, low- and renewable-energy use, clean manufacturing, and social responsibility.

—Melody Warnick



Photo by Marty Moore

"We should celebrate the world's abundance
instead of bemoaning its limits.
Being green is not about guilt."

—William McDonough