



Ed Viesturs

Peak Performer

One of the foremost high-altitude mountaineers in the world, Ed Viesturs is the first and only American to summit all fourteen 8,000-meter peaks on the planet---all without supplemental oxygen tanks. This feat, accomplished over 18 years, required 29 Himalayan expeditions in which he summited 20 times. He has reached the peak of Mt. Everest six times.

Ed is also a highly-qualified, firsthand observer of climate change. Along with renowned explorer Will Steger and Sir Richard Branson, Viesturs traveled 1,200 miles across Baffin Island as part of a worldwide effort called global warming 101.com. His latest adventure in 2008 takes Ed to the northern Canadian Arctic themed “Healthy Planet—Healthy People.” It will showcase the effects of climate change already occurring in the Arctic region.

Familiar to many from the 1996 IMAX Everest Expedition documentary, Ed has been awarded the historic Lowell Thomas Award by the Explorer’s Club for outstanding achievement in the field of mountaineering. In winning the award, Viesturs joined the rarified air of elite climbers including Sir Edmund Hillary. He was also honored with the American Alpine Club’s Sowles Award for his participation in two rescues on the dangerous mountain, K-2.

Ed has chronicled his amazing feats on the world’s rooftop in his autobiography, *No Shortcuts to the Top: Climbing the World’s 14 Highest Peaks*. *Outside Magazine* named Ed one of the greatest adventurers of the past 30 years.

Viesturs capped his goal of all fourteen, 8,000-meter peaks on May 12, 2005 with his ascent of Annapurna, one of the world’s most treacherous peaks. He climbs without the benefit of an oxygen tank, which can be burdensome and troublesome. Only a superior athlete can scale heights of 25,000 feet without artificial oxygen---a fact Viesturs has turned into an important metaphor for his audiences. “The key to the journey is in time and energy invested in the preparation,” he says.

Ed’s motto has always been that climbing has to be a round trip. All of his planning and focus during his climbs maintains this ethic and he is not shy about turning back from a climb if conditions are too severe. In spite of his conservative attitude, Viesturs has been one of the most successful Himalayan climbers in American history. His story is about risk management as well as being patient enough for conditions to allow an ascent. Ultimately, in his words, “The mountain decides whether you climb or not. The art of mountaineering is knowing when to go, when to stay and when to retreat.”

At the start of their 2005 season, the Seattle Seahawks football team brought Viesturs in to speak to them about teamwork. According to Viesturs, regardless of the industry, teamwork is the same: “It is an implicit trust in, and recognition that the person next to you is No. 1,” he explains. “If we’re climbing a mountain together and you slip and fall, I’m there to save your life---which is the ultimate definition of teamwork. Another lesson Viesturs espouses is the importance of perseverance, or going step by step and not getting discouraged when working toward your goal.

As a professional mountaineer and design consultant for several prominent outdoor equipment manufacturers such as Mountain Hardwear, Timberland and Grandoe Gloves, Ed also represents companies such as Rolex and Cisco Systems.

A resident of Washington, Ed and his wife, Paula, have three children.

PRESENTATIONS:

- ◆ Team Work
- ◆ Overcoming Major Obstacles
- ◆ Planning and Preparation