**Mark Pearson Speech - The Exciting Journey We Will Take Together - AXA Brand Launch Event - January 23, 2014 - 2:30-2:40 p.m.**

1. **Welcoming remarks**

* Fellow AXA employees, I thank you very much for coming here to participate in this milestone in the history of our company
* It is my distinct pleasure to see you all here. I would like to point out that this event is also being shared live via satellite feed with AXA employees around the United States
* As a result, today we are a very united company—as we should be

1. **Today’s business environment requires a new approach for AXA; shift from B2B/product focus to B2C/customer-centricity**

* As you know, for the fifth consecutive year, AXA has been ranked the number one life insurance brand in the world
* But if we are to expand our market base and assume our rightful share of the world’s largest insurance market, we must alter our business strategy to reflect the changing state of our business, the changing state of our economy, and the changing needs of our customers
* In today’s climate, insurance and retirement are more important than ever for consumers; and with a worldwide organization backing us, we possess the resources and expertise they need
* **A) Shift from B2B/product focus to B2C/customer-centricity**
* Historically, we have defined ourselves by the products we create and our relationships with sales and distribution. But now we are redirecting our orientation from B2B/product focus to B2C/customer-centricity. We are shifting from being product-focused to being customer-focused
* Henceforward, we are focusing wholly on the end user—our customers—and on meeting their needs. This is our pathway for building a stronger brand, and a stronger company

1. **The value, power and necessity of a strong brand; brand supports our business opportunity; AXA’s long-term investment in brand**

* **A) The value, power and necessity of a strong brand**
* I have personal experience regarding what the power of a strong brand can accomplish
* After working for AXA in Hong Kong and Japan, I came to know AXA from a global vantage point. I have seen first-hand the power that the AXA brand confers on our business
* A company with a strong brand enjoys a powerful competitive advantage in the marketplace. A strong brand triggers recognition and evokes a reputation
* What exactly is a brand? It is not something that triggers instant recognition in a crowded marketplace
* A brand results from the sum total of experiences that our customers have in their daily interactions with us. That is what defines us in the minds of our customers, advisors, and employees
* **B) Brand supports our business opportunity**
* Our brand promise provides a decision tipping point when our stakeholders are compelled to make important personal and business decisions—when they’re pondering whether to buy from us, sell for us, or work for us
* In Asia, I saw that people knew who AXA was. They respected us. They knew how we could help them
* I heard it personally from people in the street and from fellow financial professionals
* “AXA really came through for me.” “My AXA advisor gave me wise advice.” “They responded right away.”
* This powerful asset is called customer loyalty and word-of-mouth reputation
* By revitalizing our brand, we will create new business opportunity
* **C)** **AXA’s long-term investment in brand**
* Now, we here at AXA U.S. will reap the benefits of AXA’s international brand
* Because it is my distinct pleasure to announce that AXA is making a major, long-term investment to strengthen our brand in the U.S. market
* It is a very strong show of confidence in us that AXA has decided to make this major investment in transforming our brand. It is also a clear sign that AXA recognizes the tremendous potential of our business
* Since AXA is the number one life insurance brand in the world, we have a sterling opportunity to penetrate the largest insurance market in the world—the United States
* As a result of this major investment, as AXA employees, we all share an important responsibility to realize AXA’s potential in this prize market

1. **You (AXA employees) are vital to the success of this initiative**

* You—AXA employees—are vital to the success of this groundbreaking brand initiative
* It is you who represent our company to consumers, prospects, and our B2B customers. And we cannot transform our brand without your help, buy-in, and wholehearted support
* Because you are AXA
* This is a very exciting time to be at AXA. And I am counting on you to deliver your hard work and support so that our brand campaign can exceed our expectations in terms of success
* We have a golden opportunity to reach the largest insurance market in the world, and now, for the first time, we have the resources to enable us to take ownership of our rightful share of that market

1. **What lies ahead for all of us**

* Now I would like to address the topic of what you can expect—and what I expect from you—on this exciting journey we are taking together
* Next week, we are launching a national marketing campaign designed to create brand awareness and promise. We will make our U.S. target market aware of us, who we are, and what we can do for them.
* Our campaign will include TV, print, and digital ads. It will our U.S. target market to our company and explain how we help our customers achieve financial success and benefit from retirement options
* By demonstrating the new AXA and following through on our promise, we will inspire strong and lasting brand loyalty
* For you, this company-wide brand launch event marks the starting point of your comprehensive immersion in our new brand. We will provide ongoing training so that with your help, customers can see us the way we envision ourselves—the number one life insurance brand in the world and their trusted advisor
* We are creating major resources to support us in our new mission as advocates of the AXA brand. These include the “What’s Next?” platform and the brand community on ONE that we will be launching soon, which will give you ongoing news of milestones in our brand campaign
* I encourage all of you to participate enthusiastically in our brand community and to pay close attention to upcoming announcements, including news of available training and bulletins concerning our successes
* Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for being here today for sharing with me this momentous occasion in the history of our company—the genesis of a new AXA
* I welcome you to the new AXA brand