

## AT THE HELM

**Daniel P. Amos**  
CEO, Aflac, Columbus, Ga.

**Generation of family ownership:** Second.

**Company revenue for 2006:** About \$15 billion, depending on the Japanese yen.

**Number of employees:** 8,000, along with 150,000 independent agents.

**Years with the company:** 33.

**First job at this company:** Salesperson. I worked on commission for ten years.

**At what age?** 22, right after college.

**Most memorable thing I learned from my father:** If you treat your employees right, they'll take care of the company.

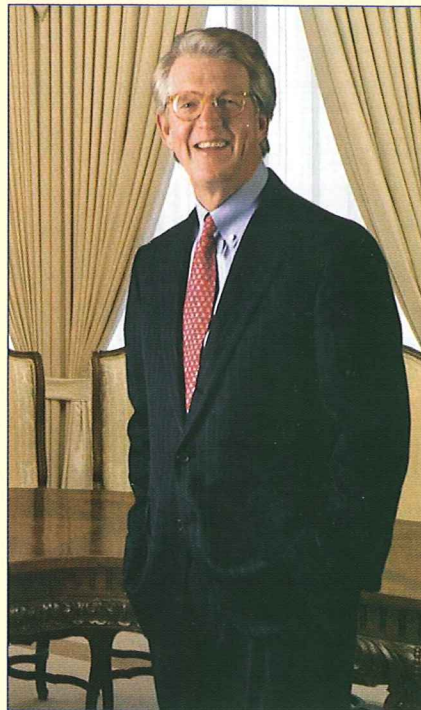
**Most memorable thing I learned from my mother:** Keep God first and family second, followed by the business.

**Best thing about this job:** It's objective-oriented, not subjective. I like that. I set numbers for one-, three-, and five-year plans and attempt to reach them. I know what we want to achieve. If I were a general counsel, the best thing that would happen would be to never have a lawsuit. If I were in claims, it would be that we pay all our claims on time. Instead, I have revenues, earnings, assets and return on equity, and they're very straightforward.

**One of our greatest successes:** Entering the Japanese market.

**Best advice I ever got:** The three principles of risk management and insurance that I learned in college.

1. Don't risk a lot for a little.
2. Don't risk more than you can afford to lose.
3. Consider the odds.



**Quote from our company's mission statement:** To combine innovative strategic marketing with quality products and services at competitive prices to provide the best insurance value for consumers.

**Two of my greatest accomplishments:** Broadening the product line and introducing the Aflac duck.

**Worst thing about working in a family business:** When we have family events, business is still always discussed no matter how hard we try to avoid it.

**Best thing about working in a family business:** Your family is supportive. Sometimes in corporations people are busy trying to move up the ladder. A family wants everyone to do well, so they pull for each other. They have a vested interest because they're large shareholders. Not all families are this way, but ours is.

**My mentor:** Besides my dad, I'd have to say my uncle John, who was bigger than life. He was the one who suggested we enter Japan. When he died

16 years ago, I became CEO. Uncle John loved a challenge. As soon as he came up with one idea, he went on to the next. He hated the day-to-day operations. There was something about his approach that was exciting, and he taught me to think big.

I remember looking at some revenue numbers that he set. At the time they were unheard of. We were at \$26 million in revenue, and he predicted that 14 years down the road we'd make \$800 million. We did it. He actually put the numbers on paper and made it public. I was young at the time and didn't fully appreciate how much pressure he had put on himself and the company by setting those high goals.

**Philanthropic causes our family supports:** Two of our main organizations are the Aflac Cancer Center in Atlanta and the John B. Amos Cancer Center in Columbus, Ga. We also support our church and other Christian organizations, and I'm on the board of two homeless shelters, the Valley Rescue Mission and the House of Mercy. I think that if you do well, you have a responsibility to give back.

**Book(s) I think every family business leader should read:** The Bible, because it teaches you how to handle conflict, and all families have conflict. Don't forget Cain and Abel, who fought with each other. The most recent book I read about business and enjoyed was *Disney War*, by James B. Stewart.

**I realized I had emerged from my parents' shadow when...** I became CEO and everyone looked to me to achieve the corporate objectives. Until you're CEO you don't really feel the pressure of the shareholders. The day you become CEO, you're the man. Or the woman.

**Words I live by:** Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you.

— As told to Patricia Olsen