EVENT ORGANISER RESOURCES

Keynote descriptions

Jenny Williams | Keynote speaker on leading through uncertainty

KEYNOTE 1

The Leadership Skill We Were Taught to Hide

Why doubt is essential for leading through uncertainty

The leaders who sound most certain are not always the ones making the best decisions.

In a world of incomplete information, rapid change and increasing complexity, certainty is becoming harder to find. Yet leaders are still rewarded for projecting it.

That creates a problem. When doubt is treated as weakness, it gets hidden. Difficult questions go unasked. Assumptions go untested. Dissent disappears. And organisations can move confidently in the wrong direction.

But the answer is not more hesitation. Left unmanaged, doubt can become rumination, indecision and paralysis.

The real leadership skill is knowing how to use doubt well.

In this keynote, Jenny challenges audiences to rethink their relationship with doubt. Drawing on the ideas in Brilliant Doubt, real organisational stories and practical tools, she shows leaders how to recognise the doubts that contain useful information, test what they think they know, involve other perspectives and act decisively when certainty is unavailable.

The best leaders do not eliminate doubt. They learn how to use it.

AUDIENCES WILL LEAVE

- Challenged to rethink what good leadership looks like
- Clearer about which doubts deserve attention
- Braver about acting before certainty arrives

PERFECT FOR

- Leadership conferences
- Organisations navigating change
- Executive and high-potential leadership audiences
- HR, L&D and people leadership conferences

KEYNOTE 2

When There Is No Playbook

How to lead when the answer isn't obvious

Some leadership challenges come with a clear answer.

Others do not.

They are complex, fast-moving and full of competing priorities. The information is incomplete. The path keeps changing. And what worked before may no longer be enough.

The danger is that leaders respond by reaching too quickly for certainty: familiar answers, more control, more pace.

This keynote explores what leadership requires when there is no proven route through.

Drawing on real organisational stories and practical tools, Jenny shows audiences how to stay curious for longer, test assumptions, involve others, experiment intelligently and create movement before the full answer is known.

AUDIENCES WILL LEAVE

- Challenged to notice where certainty may be closing thinking down
- Clearer about what leadership requires when the answer isn't obvious
- Bolder about experimenting, learning and moving before certainty arrives

PERFECT FOR

- Transformation and change programmes
- Senior leadership conferences
- Public sector and system leadership audiences
- Leadership teams facing complexity, disruption or competing priorities

KEYNOTE 3

What If Your Self-Doubt Isn't About You?

Rethinking imposter syndrome, confidence and leadership

We have become very good at personalising doubt.

When a leader feels uncertain, the diagnosis is often immediate: confidence problem. Imposter syndrome. Something inside the individual that needs fixing.

But what if that diagnosis is sometimes wrong?

Self-doubt can be personal. But doubt can also be situational, arising because the challenge is genuinely complex, or systemic, signalling something about the culture, structures or expectations around us.

When we automatically turn every doubt inward, we risk trying to fix the person while missing the information the doubt is carrying.

This keynote challenges the idea that confidence is always the answer. Jenny helps audiences locate where their doubt is really coming from, understand what it may be signalling and decide when to listen to it, challenge it or act despite it.

AUDIENCES WILL LEAVE

- Challenged to stop assuming every doubt is a personal flaw
- Clearer about whether their doubt is self, situational or systemic
- Freer to act without waiting to feel completely confident

PERFECT FOR

- Women's leadership events and International Women's Day
- Emerging and high-potential leaders
- Leadership development conferences
- Organisations exploring confidence, imposter feelings and inclusive leadership