

FINDING INNER STRENGTH

Unstoppable Resilience: Liezel van der Westhuizen's Story of Grit and Corporate Success

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

By Liezel van der Westhuizen

Keynote: 45 – 60 minute session

"You're just a blonde TV presenter; stick to your day job."

That's what Liezel van der Westhuizen was told when she set her sights on conquering the Ironman Triathlon—a grueling event that combines a 3.8km sea swim, a 180km cycle, and a 42.2km marathon, all within 17 hours. Rather than letting doubt and criticism stand in her way, Liezel harnessed it to fuel her determination. She crossed that finish line and silenced the skeptics.

Her journey didn't end there. As she geared up for the Dusi Canoe Marathon, which spans approximately 120 kilometers (about 75 miles) along the Dusi River from Pietermaritzburg to Durban, she faced another obstacle the following year. *"Haven't you learned your lesson?"* they questioned her. Her reply was straightforward: "I'm just learning, but I'm not stopping." This attitude propelled her through remarkable achievements, such as guiding a blind athlete across the Himalayas at 16,500 feet on a tandem bicycle during an inclusive biking expedition from Manali in India to Khardungla, the world's highest motorable road. The journey from Manali at 6,500 feet to Khardungla at 18,350 feet showcased the strength of human connection and courage. Additionally, she bravely tackled the chilly 11°C waters of the Robben Island Freedom Swim, an extreme 7.5-kilometer (4.7-mile) open water race from Robben Island to Big Bay, Bloubergstrand in Cape Town, South Africa.

Liezel's message is more than just about athletic endurance. In this keynote, she shares how the same resilience, focus, and mental toughness she built in extreme sports translate directly into the workplace. Her experiences serve as powerful lessons for teams and leaders in how to develop grit, adaptability, and a winning mindset.

Why should this keynote matter for your corporate environment?

- ♦ **Building Resilience:** Liezel demonstrates how to embrace obstacles as opportunities for growth, teaching teams how to bounce back from setbacks with renewed energy and focus.
- ♦ **Fostering a Growth Mindset:** Whether learning to canoe or tackling a new business challenge, Liezel's story shows how persistence and adaptability lead to success. She inspires employees to break free from self-imposed limits and push beyond their comfort zones.
- ♦ **Strengthening Leadership:** Liezel emphasizes the importance of mental fitness in leadership, showing executives how to build endurance to lead effectively in high-pressure environments.
- ♦ **Enhancing Teamwork:** Her unique experience of guiding a blind athlete across the Himalayas offers powerful insights into trust, collaboration, and achieving a common goal under challenging conditions.

This keynote isn't just a motivational story—it's a toolkit for navigating today's fast-paced, ever-changing corporate world. Liezel equips your team with strategies to enhance mental toughness, foster innovation, and drive performance, making it a must-have experience for organizations looking to inspire and empower their workforce.

About Liezel van der Westhuizen

Liezel van der Westhuizen is a Certified Mental Fitness Coach and Mindvalley certified Executive coach, renowned keynote speaker, emcee, and fitness and wellness presenter on KFM94.5, CapeTalk, and Radio 702. With a deep understanding of grit and resilience, Liezel draws from her experiences as an endurance athlete, having completed multiple Ironman Triathlons, tackled the Dusi Canoe Marathon, cycled across the Himalayas on a tandem bike with a blind athlete, and braved 11°C waters to swim from Blouberg to Robben Island.

Liezel leverages her personal journey to inspire and empower employees and leaders worldwide, encouraging them to push beyond their limits. Her unique combination of mental fitness expertise and athletic accomplishments provides a powerful foundation for motivating others to cultivate resilience and achieve peak performance.

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