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Gabriel Filippi

Mountaineer - Leadership, Change and Resilience Expert

"Stepping out of my comfort zone gave me the nicest rewards in life".- Gabriel Filippi



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Language Spoken

English French

Travel's From

Montreal, Quebec

Speaker Biography:

Gabriel Filippi was imprisoned in an icy cave, at an altitude of over 18,000 feet, tent and sleeping bag left behind at the last camp site with only two days of rations left. The ascent had been stopped short for four days by an unexpected storm. In the darkness a beacon of hope broke through the mental combat of survival. Reaching a summit now takes on a new meaning. Coming back weakened and yet stronger, Gabriel realized that any summit can be reached, but only by the most determined mindsets.

Mountaineering is a living philosophy that changes and develops at the whim of each climb. Every trial has its own lessons to teach. The summit becomes the justification to push yourself harder. Gabriel Filippi became an expert on perseverance, managing risk, anticipating change, staying focused, and setting the right priorities. The challenges climbers confront on a mountain are the same ones that businesses face everyday; situations where giving up is not an option.

Every organization has to manage its growth, prepare for the next step, reach forward and grasp it. New challenges become the driver of success. Leaving your comfort zone is the only way to gain the most precious rewards. After 50 years of dealing with his aquaphobia, Gabriel Filippi faced the unimaginable, he signed up for an Ironman triathlon without even knowing how to swim and completed it successfully. This experience led to an understanding that every success, great or small, carries valuable lessons.

Filippi believes that the success of larger projects depends on the cooperation of the participants. It's imperative to capitalize on the strengths of everyone to guide a heart transplant patient to the top of Mont Blanc. The summit was the point of convergence of each participant's contrasting expertise. Relying on innovation to adapt to a situation in constant flux. In business, you obey the law of the jungle. On a mountain expedition, you live it. Gabriel Filippi became the first Quebecker to climb both faces of Everest. He believes that in order to accomplish your goals, you have to think outside of the box.

Growing also means managing failure. Every ordeal is another opportunity to grapple with adversity, to learn to play *with* it rather than *against* it. When you lose a friend on the mountain, you either get back up and continue or lie down and die with him. Finding the strength not to give up and to make the right choices. Extreme situations magnify the impact of every action. When survival is on the line, every decision comes into sharp focus.

Gabriel Filippi's presentation demonstrates that the key elements to success are passion, adapting to change, teamwork, hard work and preparation. These elements allow one to complete a specific project or climb the world's highest peaks. To keep your blue sky in focus, you need the right tools and know to use of them at the right moment. Gabriel Filippi gladly shares his secrets to success during his presentations with targeted examples that are relevant for your business or organization. He draws on his management experience and adapts these skills to his high-altitude adventures.

Gabriel Filippi addresses the business world through the mountain aided by breathtaking video clips and pictures. You will see that the challenges in mountaineering are the same you face everyday. His on-stage energy can move mountains! You will be inspired to summit your own mountain whether on the professional or personal front. Join the many businesses that have asked Gabriel Filippi to motivate, inspire or empower their employees.

Career Highlights:

- Everest summited (May 30th, 2005).

- November 25, 2005, the Government of Canada recognized his Everest ascent.
- June 09, 2006, the Government of Québec recognized his Everest ascent.
- Climbed 6 of the Seven Summits Crown (highest summit on each of the seven continents): Mt Everest (Asia), Mt McKinley (North America), Mt Aconcagua (South America), Mt Kilimanjaro (Africa), Mt Elbrus (Europe) and Carstensz Pyramid (Oceania).
- World Premiere: In 2003, as the expedition leader of the LifeLine Expedition, he took a heart transplant patient to the top of Mont Blanc (France). Upon his return, he travelled across Canada, motivating employees of pharmaceutical corporations. To this day, his inspirational story is said to motivate the medical community toward teamwork and overcoming obstacles. Furthermore, his involvement in this cause has created hope for patients awaiting a heart transplant. A documentary has been produced and broadcasted on public television.
- International Eco-Challenge Race (August 2005): This extreme endurance event is an international competition where athletes are challenged both physically and emotionally to the maximum of their capabilities. For three days, a team of four mountain bikers (on road, unbeaten paths, technical trails), swim, canoe, climb, rappel, trek, navigate with maps and compass, jump cliffs, run and more.
- Writing - Filippi's story has been published in a book entitled 'La montagne à portée de voix' (XYZ Publisher) and he's the co-author of *The Escapist: Cheating Death on the World's Highest Mountains*
- Raising Awareness - Through conferences and media interviews, he created public awareness for cystic fibrosis, spinal muscular atrophy and organ donation, to name a few.
- Philanthropy - Actively involved in humanitarian projects across the world such as the BabuChiri Foundation, Ad Astra Foundation and the Feed the Children program.
- Keen Eye - Member of the jury at the Montreal International Adventure Film Festival 2005 and has also to his credited numerous breathtaking pictures.

Topic Presentations

Together to the Top!

There is only one way to climb Everest safely. Gabriel is intimately acquainted with this 8850-m peak: he is the sole Quebecer to have climbed both its faces. This feat was the outcome of a series of fortunate meetings, valuable advice, life-changing moments, hard-earned lessons and above all unshakable determination. Thanks to Gabriel's gift as an orator, you can experience each of the key moments that carried him to the top.

This lecture is woven around the achievement of a dream. Through the characters that take part in this quest, you will see the exact scope of every choice and learn how every decision can affect a situation as it unfolds. What should you do to get to your intended destination?

You can trust Gabriel to be your guide. This presentation covers these topics:

- Finding the value of people
- Self-responsibility in facing failure and bouncing back
- Accepting and embracing change
- Follow the rules or die
- Breaking the rules (innovating)
- Learning is surviving

Trapped by Time: When Life is Hanging by a Thread

When a job is life-threatening: talking about health and safety on the job is often taboo. But Gabriel is well aware that on the mountain, the line between life and death is especially close. Why he survived while friends died? What about in the workplace? One thing is certain: the traps that lead to injury or even death are similar in every situation.

This presentation is all about health and safety at the workplace.

- Recognizing the danger
- Being pro-active
- Learning from the past
- Managing our environment
- Training and safety= winning team
- Risk management

Diving into Fear: Swimming Toward Success

What is your greatest fear?

Gabriel's deepest, most petrifying fear was water. So he took a drastic measure to overcome 50 years of aquaphobia: the Ironman triathlon (2.4-mile swim, 118 -mile bike, 26.2-mile run). From Day 1 of this journey until the day of the competition, only his coach (and him!) believed he could do it. This lecture will show you how to confront and overcome fear and turn it into strength. At the end of the presentation, the audience will be person is glued to the images and listening to the unbelievable outcome.

This story reveals how to achieve unhoped-for success.

- Commitment
- Building a passion
- Overcome the unthinkable
- The fear of the fears
- Discipline
- Importance of communication (trainee - trainer)

Adapt to New Heights

Set off alone, with 60kg of equipment. End up alone, without a tent or a sleeping bag to ward off the elements. It was in pursuing a personal challenge - to climb to the summit of North America without assistance - that Gabriel was suddenly thrust into a perilous and totally unexpected situation. A few hours from the summit, a surprise blizzard trapped him in a shelter. He survived four days in a snow cave with only two days of provisions. Take yourself in hand, make effective decisions quickly, rely only on yourself, have a Plan B...these are the skills that danger forces us to develop.

You will learn about:

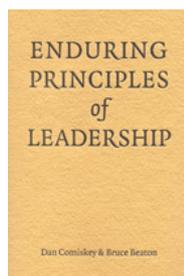
- Plan A & Plan B
- Working with less resources
- Quitting is not an option
- Adapt to change or die
- Problem solving / decision making

Recipe for Success

For Gabriel, success depends on a few critical things. Whether your quest is personal or professional, come and discover the five keys that lead to success.

- Leadership
- Discipline
- Teamwork
- Perseverance
- Action

Books



The Escapist

In *The Escapist*, Filippi proves an old axiom true: no climber returns from a summit the same person as when he began his ascent. Sometimes the alteration is physical, but more often it's buried within. *The Escapist* is an unflinching account of extreme feats and devastating loss that takes readers to the highest peaks on six continents and into the deepest valleys of the human soul. In a book marked by adventure and tragedy, Filippi dissects what it takes to get to the top of the world, and what that quest takes out of you. Haunted by survivor's guilt and post-traumatic stress disorder, Filippi explains how life on the brink of death can change someone. He chronicles how his experiences on mountains ranging from K2 to Everest to Nanga Parbat, a mountain in Pakistan also known as The Maneater, transformed him from a hubristic young man who pushed himself to the brink into the cautious adventurer who preserved seven lives when he halted an ascent up Everest just an hour from the summit. In this gripping, heartfelt and inspiring memoir, one of Canada's foremost mountaineers shares a life spent in and out of the death zone. *The Escapist* is a story about human perseverance and triumph in the pursuit of one man's dreams and helps to explain why some people will never give up on trying to climb to the top of the world.

Testimonials

What a pleasure listening to your presentation! Your performance dazzled the audience. The words you choose are echoing with ours. It is exactly what we are trying to instill to our managers. Any change requires perseverance and will. Your story is very inspiring. The pictures and videoclips are amazing. I felt like (and I was not the only one!) I was on top of the world with you. Thanks for this great performance.

Bruno Gingras, Vice-President Customer Services, Hydro-Québec Distribution

Mr. Filippi is an articulated speaker with a good sense of humor. His conference was very motivating and uplifting. He inspired employees to challenge themselves and to refuse to accept the status quo. I have no hesitation in recommending him as a speaker.

Jean-Luc Blais, Director Public Affairs, Merck Frosst

The board of directors and the management team greatly appreciated the conference. They liked the notion of 'never give up' when facing obstacles... they all saluted your courage and humility.

Richard Sévigny, Bombardier

Immunotec Research Ltd. recently had the privilege of having Gabriel Filippi address a gathering of over 500 of our independent distributors at a meeting held in conjunction with the Grand Opening of our new corporate headquarters. Gabriel's presentation was one of many over the course of three days. However, it was considered THE highlight of the event.

We look forward to working with Gabriel Filippi in the future and would recommend him as a speaker at any event, large or small, where the audience would benefit from hearing his compelling message of achievement. Gabriel brought the drama of this fearsome mountain into the conference room and linked its challenges with the challenges we all face in our daily lives. Beyond Everest, Gabriel will inspire an audience to focus on their goals ... and surpass them!

Kathryn Stephens, Marketing Director, Immunotec Research

At our January symposium, Gabriel was able to captivate the attention of the educators present and to touch their lives. As he told the stories of his outstanding endeavors, he successfully demonstrated the importance of collaboration, of perseverance, of appreciation of others, of conquering fears and challenges with positive attitude in reaching one's goal. His inspiring message gave hope for the pursuit of dreams in a real life situation, one step at a time. Gabriel is dynamic, humble, and humanistic, has a great sense of humor and has a valuable and meaningful life message. Our participants described his presentation as a true gift.

Philippe Serruya, Director Communication and Public Affairs Education, Quality and Accountability Office

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