

Michelle Ray

Leadership & Accountability Catalyst: Acclaimed Speaker and Author of Lead Yourself First!

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Accountability
- Change Management / Organizational Change
- Customer Relations
- Employee Engagement
- Human Resources / Workforce Issues
- Leadership
- Motivation
- Overcoming Adversity
- Safety
- Women's Empowerment

About Michelle Ray

Born in Australia and now residing in Vancouver, Canada, leadership expert, Michelle Ray is an award-winning speaker and founder of the Lead Yourself First Institute. Michelle began her career in the media industry with one of Australia's leading broadcasting networks. She worked her way up the management ladder and was responsible for the sales revenues of 25 radio and television affiliate stations. She was subsequently hired by one of the world's largest cinema advertising contractors to lead the company's sales team and was also responsible for successfully generating record-breaking revenues during a severely depressed economic climate.

In addition to her corporate background, Michelle broadened her leadership experience during her tenure as a program director with Junior Achievement, an internationally renowned non-profit organization committed to educating future generations about business. She secured financial commitments and volunteer support from an array of corporations, facilitating enduring partnerships between youth, entrepreneurs and educators.

As an in-demand business conference speaker for the past twenty years, Michelle has delivered her powerful messages on leadership, accountability and engaged workplaces to the "C-Suites" of global corporations, academia, diverse associations, government groups, as well as front-line staff. Her client list includes notable brands such as Proctor and Gamble, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Shell, Xerox, PayPal, Qantas Airways, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Playboy Enterprises and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Having addressed thousands of audiences across five continents, Michelle's combination of wit, masterful humor, practical content and an engaging, interactive style resonates with a diverse clientele seeking to inspire, educate and captivate the imagination of their leaders and teams.

Michelle is the author of [Lead Yourself First! Indispensable Lessons in Business and in Life](#). She has appeared as a guest on numerous news and current affairs programs including CBC Radio, CTV, Global TV and was featured in esteemed publications such as Investor's Business Daily, The National Post, Huffington Post, BC Business and Inc Magazine. Michelle is a regular contributor for the [Globe and Mail's Leadership Lab Column](#).

Why Michelle Ray can add value to your conference

- Proven track record as a seasoned presenter at corporate and association meetings throughout North America as well as internationally since 1995
- Renowned business motivational speaker for numerous annual conferences and professional development day events
- Qualified as a "Certified Speaking Professional", the National Speakers Association's highest – earned designation held by less than 10% of members
- From thousands of entries received, Michelle Ray reached the Top Ten Finals of "North America's Next Greatest Speaker" Contest.
- Undertakes due diligence with in-depth research prior to every engagement
- Consistently engages audiences with humour, passion and a powerful message
- Delivers a return on investment with solid content; tailored for each client

Select Keynotes

- **Leadership: It Starts with Me**



Harness the Power of Personal Leadership We've often heard the adage "everyone can be a leader", but what does this mean? More importantly, how is this relevant to your organization and your people? The most practical answer is to think of leadership in terms of character, not position or title. A leader is someone at any level who has grasped the ability to take charge of their thoughts, and consequently their actions, in any situation. We are often tested to be the best version of ourselves, regardless of our job function. Our attitudes directly impact the workplace atmosphere and the quality of our business relationships. We should never underestimate our personal power and ability to control our reality. Learning Takeaways: - How to tap into your own innovative potential - How to demonstrate unwavering confidence in your interactions with clients, managers and co-workers - How to take the initiative and lead yourself first Delivering her message with insight, wit and humor, Michelle's energizing, informative and dynamic keynote presentation, will remind audiences of the power of personal leadership. They will learn strategies they can use long after the event ends to take the lead, embrace any challenge and create their own outcomes. The benefits of this presentation are: • Build a leadership blueprint to use in business and in life • Realize the incredible leverage of modeling a "do-what it takes" attitude • Realign your core personal values to those of your workplace • Decrease stress and negativity for greater productivity and positive outcomes • Tap into your innovative potential to bring out the best in yourself

- **No More Drama!**

Ditch the Dysfunction and Engage your Workplace The existence of people challenges has multiple consequences for your bottom line. Many individuals are working longer hours, spending more time with managers, co-workers, and computers than their own families. Stress levels have accelerated as organizations of every description feel the pressure of delivering results for their clients and shareholders in less time, with fewer resources. Teams are expected to be efficient, engaged and happy. The demands of today's workplace often take a toll on the most important resource of all...your people. Under these conditions, it is not uncommon for drama and chaos to reign. Is your business equipped to deal with personality clashes, emotional explosions, "my way or the highway" mindsets, and other theatrics that undermine productivity and success? Are you ready to manage the high cost of low morale? Delivered with passion and insight, this exciting, fun keynote offers practical solutions to the most common workplace problems...helping your audience to put a stop to the drama...once and for all. Sample of learning benefits for your audience: • Learn the difference between people who have problems and people who are problems • Practice objectivity and put the "small stuff" into perspective • Detach from the dysfunction and drama to be a better "you" • Take a stand in the face of "the blame game" and other theatrics • Evict the colleagues, managers and others who are living "rent-free" in your head

- **Retain the Best, Confront the Rest**

How to Shake Up Your Organization in the War for Talent The notion of holding one job for life does not hold any appeal for the new generation of talent. Those days are gone forever and unless organizations are willing to invest in them emotionally and financially, this savvy group will seize opportunity and leave you scrambling to replace them. They won't accept complacency in their leaders or teams, and neither should you. In order to retain them, organizations and leaders need to focus on creating an outstanding culture that fosters high engagement, high morale and a happier atmosphere. In addition to managing the increasing numbers of retiring baby boomers, building a culture that draws in new talent and fosters engagement for all team members, regardless of age or culture, is a key priority. Leaders need to ask themselves: "What is it that people want when they come to our organization? What is appealing about our industry that would attract them to our organization?" If you are able to answer these questions, then the process of attracting and retaining new talent becomes easier. As leaders, we also must recognize that our own leadership style impacts employee motivation and talent retention. Leaders at all levels can profoundly impact an individual's decision to stay or leave. Are you doing your best to communicate, connect and demonstrate genuine interest in your team members? In this content rich keynote presentation, you will discover the key components for building a dynamic environment where people can thrive and enjoy their work. You will recognize that the intangible (non-financial) motivators often have a major influence on a prospective, or current employee's perception of your organization. Are you ready? Sample of learning benefits for your audience: • Learn the four influencing factors that are critical to talent retention • Recognize the myths and truths behind a high performing workplace culture • Discover the "push" and "pull" factors regarding employees' decisions to stay or leave • Create a work environment that fosters talent retention through higher engagement levels • Educate managers and leaders in accountability being a two-way street • Understand the difference between tangible and intangible workplace motivators in the overall engagement equation

- **Who Moved my Future?**

Demystifying the Fear of Change "Why is this happening?" "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." "We've always done it that way": Three clichés that have become part of the dialogue when it comes to the topic of change. Learning how to manage self around situations and events that are outside of our control is not as complex as you may think, although the process often necessitates a shift in perspective, readiness to let go of the old and willingness to embrace the new. Easier said than done. During volatile economic conditions, it is no wonder many people feel stuck; taking the leap of faith when there is no safety net feels overwhelming. It is during these times that organizations tighten their collective belts and become even more risk-averse. Adapting to rapidly changing economic conditions is expected, yet many people feel even more afraid. So, where to start? The first step is to recognize that change is emotional. Organizations can achieve more success with change initiatives by acknowledging the human side before expecting acceptance of new ideas. When leaders understand what lies behind people's fears, they will be better equipped to obtain buy-in. During this dynamic, interactive and content-rich keynote, your attendees will learn the five reasons behind resistance to change, how to achieve greater levels of acceptance in order to move beyond the "status quo" and ultimately, how to implement and communicate new strategies and approaches for long-term results. Sample of learning benefits for your audience: • Experience Michelle's 7-step process to managing change • Develop a repertoire of communication skills to build rapport and achieve buy-in • Address the fear of change and the fear of failure • Adopt a "can-do" mindset and rise above the naysayers • Learn to respond vs react to change and uncertainty

Select Book Titles

- **2014:** Lead Yourself First!: Indispensable Lessons in Business and in Life

Select Articles

- [What Makes Us Leave A Workplace? What Makes Us Stay](#)

This article is an excerpt from Michelle Ray's Book: Lead Yourself First! Indispensable Lessons In Business and In Life. Michelle reminds readers why disengagement impacts morale, productivity and the bottom line. She shares her personal experience leading up to her own disengagement and ultimate resignation.

- [Take Charge of Yourself And The Ability To Rise Above](#)

The ability to take charge of yourself and rise above any challenge necessitates commitment, energy and belief. In order to achieve both, it is important to consider several prerequisites as well as key characteristics of personal leadership. Michelle outlines key accountability strategies to rise above the challenge of change.

Select Testimonials

We contracted Michelle to open on both days of our conference in 2017 and she did not disappoint. She executed both presentations with ease, captivating and engaging the audience in her conversation-like style, using story telling, questioning, and activities to relate her points. She is collaborative, lively, humorous, and creative. She demonstrated a professional manner in all of our interactions, and as a conference organizer, I appreciated that she was prompt in her responses, was well organized, and punctual the day of our event. During our customization meeting, she came prepared with a list of questions about our industry, and ideas for how to ensure her message related the experience of our industry workplaces. I would highly recommend her as a presenter to anyone looking to deliver practical strategies for professional growth." - Safety and Injury Management Advisor, BC Construction Safety Alliance "Bridging The Gap".

— Candice Thomas, BC Construction Safety Alliance

Michelle Ray was an absolute terrific hit at our Annual Trans Canada Advertising Agency convention. The convention was titled "Bend Don't Break" and Michelle was our opening keynote speaker. She demonstrated outstanding insight to her target audience but also was able to get them totally engaged with her communication style. She was well versed on the message she was asked to speak on and inspired the attendees with new approaches and new thought leadership examples & applications for their businesses. Over the years I personally have listened to many motivational speakers, but I would place Michelle at the top of the heap. It was especially great that she took the time to understand our industries cultures and our issues.

— Frank Palmer, Chairman/CEO DDB Canada

"Michelle, it was a true privilege. The insights were invaluable. Thank you for helping us grow an already remarkable leadership team!"

— Matt Dunfee President, Global Sales and Customer Operations, Dell EMC

Executive Women in Texas Government "Thank YOU for your invigorating speech on 'leading yourself first'! I've heard wonderful feedback regarding your keynote address and your overall message. I'm sure you could tell you connected with many of the attendees based on the folks that collected around your exhibit booth immediately following your address in the morning general session."

— Tanya Skaarup Vice President and Conference Chair EWTG