FOR EVENT ORGANISERS

PROPOSAL TEXT

MARK POLLOCK

Mark Pollock Proposal Text

Ready-to-use text for client proposals, including Mark's title, hook, description, about, keynotes and masterclasses. Use the sections together or drop in the elements you need.

Title

Mark Pollock: TED and keynote speaker. Helping leaders to develop a clear, repeatable way to respond when unexpected challenges strike. Catalysed over $150 million in neurotech projects. First blind person to race to the South Pole. Author and doctoral researcher in elite performance. Alumnus of the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders.

Hook

Unbroken by blindness at 22 and paralysis at 34, Mark Pollock uses his Unbreakable Framework to help leaders and their teams develop a clear, repeatable way to respond when unexpected challenges strike. Without waiting for certainty that isn't coming, they leave knowing exactly how to deal in facts, differentiate between what they can and can't control, and do what it takes to get the job done.

Description

"Sometimes we choose our challenges. Sometimes the challenge chooses us. What we decide to do about them, that's what counts." - Mark Pollock

When a leadership team is navigating uncertainty they didn't plan for, when a sales force needs to hold its nerve in a difficult market, or when an organisation is grappling with disruption it didn't see coming - the question is never really about the challenge itself. It is always about what leaders and their teams decide to do next.

Built on his Unbreakable Framework, Mark Pollock addresses that question through three decisions. Do they step into the arena as competitors or sit back as spectators? Do they deal in

facts as realists or rely on hope as optimists? Do they work together as collaborators or go it alone as soloists?

Unbroken by blindness in 1998, Mark became an adventure athlete competing in ultra-endurance races across deserts, mountains and the polar ice caps, including being the first blind person to race to the South Pole. He also won silver and bronze medals for rowing at the Commonwealth Games and built an international speaking business.

Then he broke his back in 2010. Lying in a spinal unit, he had to decide whether he actually believed what he had been teaching. He did. Applying his Unbreakable Framework to his mission to cure paralysis in our lifetime, he has catalysed over $150 million in neurotech projects.

Over the last 25 years, Mark has spoken for hundreds of organisations, including Accenture, Bloomberg, Google, Mercedes F1, Red Bull, Goldman Sachs, Unilever, Microsoft, Pfizer and UPS, as well as at TED, Davos, the World Economic Forum, Talks@Google, EG and Wired.

Audiences who hear Mark speak leave with more than a shot of inspiration. Without waiting for certainty that isn't coming, they leave knowing exactly how to deal in facts, differentiate between what they can and can't control, and do what it takes to get the job done.

About

Unbroken by blindness at 22 and paralysis at 34, Mark Pollock uses his Unbreakable Framework to help leaders and their teams develop a clear, repeatable way to respond when unexpected challenges strike. Without waiting for certainty that isn't coming, they leave knowing exactly how to deal in facts, differentiate between what they can and can't control, and do what it takes to get the job done.

After losing his sight, Mark became an adventure athlete competing in ultra-endurance races across deserts, mountains and the polar ice caps, including being the first blind person to race to the South Pole. He also won silver and bronze medals for rowing at the Commonwealth Games and built an international speaking business.

Then in 2010, a fall from a second-storey window nearly killed him. Mark broke his back, and the damage to his spinal cord left him paralysed. Lying in a spinal unit, he had to decide whether he actually believed what he had spent a decade teaching. He did and started a new expedition, this time exploring the intersection where humans and technology collide to cure paralysis in our lifetime. Working at the cutting edge of robotics, neuro-modulation, AI and Brain Machine Interfaces, he has catalysed over $150 million in neurotech projects by applying his Unbreakable Framework.

Mark is a TED and keynote speaker, an alumnus of the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders and a doctoral researcher in elite performance at Dublin City University. He has served on the WEF's Global Futures Council on Human Enhancement, is a Wings for Life Ambassador and spent a decade on the Board of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation.

Holding a diploma in Global Leadership and Public Policy from Harvard University, Mark has been awarded honorary doctorates by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and Queen's

University Belfast, and is the author of Making It Happen and the subject of the acclaimed documentary Unbreakable - The Mark Pollock Story.

Keynotes

Built on his Unbreakable Framework, Mark's keynotes give leaders and their teams a working decision-making tool for the moment unexpected challenges strike, not simply a shot of inspiration. The framework rests on three decisions: do they step into the arena as competitors or sit back as spectators, deal in facts as realists or rely on hope as optimists, work together as collaborators or go it alone as soloists? Underpinned by Mark's doctoral research into elite performance, those three decisions are what separate the teams that break from the teams that don't.

Mark has tested the framework twice himself, first when he lost his sight at 22, then lying in a spinal unit after breaking his back at 34. Over the last 25 years he has delivered it to senior leadership teams, sales kick-offs, all-staff meetings and annual conferences worldwide, including Accenture, Bloomberg, Google, Mercedes F1, Red Bull, Goldman Sachs, Unilever, Microsoft and Pfizer, as well as at TED, Davos, the World Economic Forum, Talks@Google, EG and Wired.

Audiences don't just leave inspired. They leave with a clear, repeatable way to respond when unexpected challenges strike, and they know exactly how to build resilience, optimise performance and collaborate effectively to achieve more than they thought possible.

Expect Problems, Explore Possibilities

LEADERSHIP, PERFORMANCE, TEAMWORK

Unexpected challenges will strike. The leaders and teams that come out the other side are not the ones who saw it coming. They are the ones who had a clear, repeatable way to respond when it did.

That ability is at the heart of this keynote. Mark takes leaders and their teams through the Unbreakable Framework as a working decision-making tool, not simply as a shot of inspiration. Without waiting for certainty that isn't coming, they leave knowing exactly how to deal in facts, differentiate between what they can and can't control, and do what it takes to get the job done.

For leadership summits, senior team off-sites and strategy sessions where the stakes are high and the pressure is real, this keynote gives leaders and their teams the clarity and the framework to respond to whatever comes next. The challenges change, but the decisions that drive the breakthroughs don't.

When the Challenge Chooses You

RESILIENCE, DECISION-MAKING, MINDSET

Sometimes we choose our challenges. Sometimes the challenge chooses us. What we decide to do next is what counts.

That reframe is at the heart of this keynote. It releases audiences from the uncertainty of their situation - the market shift they didn't see coming, the restructure they didn't ask for, the target that hasn't moved despite everything changing around it - and redirects them towards the decisions that they can actually control.

For sales kick-offs, all-staff meetings and any group that needs to hold their nerve and keep going, this is the keynote that helps create the clarity required to turn challenges into opportunities.

Where Humans and Technology Collide

CHANGE, TECHNOLOGY, ADAPTATION

Technology changes what's possible. Yet it is at the intersection where humans and technology collide where we make the significant breakthroughs.

That insight sits at the heart of this keynote, and Mark brings it as lived proof, not as a theory. Unbroken by blindness at 22 and paralysis at 34, he has tested what it takes to respond to unexpected challenges at the extremes. He raced blind to the South Pole. He worked at the cutting edge of robotics, neuro-modulation, AI and Brain Machine Interfaces to cure paralysis in our lifetime, catalysing over $150 million in neurotech projects as a result. He is not a technology expert. He is a human being who understands what we can achieve when we decide to bring humans and technology together.

For technology conferences, AI summits and digital transformation events with attendees grappling with what it means to remain relevant as the pace of change accelerates, this keynote moves the conversation away from the technology itself and towards the human decisions that determine what we do with it. That's what determines the outcome.

Masterclasses

Built on his Unbreakable Framework, Mark's masterclasses take leaders and their teams deeper into the three decisions that determine how they respond when unexpected challenges strike. Do they step into the arena as competitors or sit back as spectators? Do they deal in facts as realists or rely on hope as optimists? Do they work together as collaborators or go it alone as soloists?

Each masterclass in Mark's Challenge is the Opportunity series goes deeper on one of these three decisions, giving participants a practical model they can apply immediately. Leadership teams can book one masterclass or all three, and the same series has been delivered on stage to conference audiences of 10 to 5,000 people.

Exploring Performance Potential

THE COMPETITOR'S MINDSET

In a world where challenges are inevitable, some people are held back as spectators. Others are propelled forward as competitors. Ultimately it comes down to making a decision.

Mark made that choice at 22, when he lost his sight. He didn't sit back. He raced across deserts, mountains and the polar ice caps, and became the first blind person to race to the South Pole. He won silver and bronze for rowing at the Commonwealth Games. None of it was an accident. It was intentional.

That's the mindset at the heart of this masterclass. Competitors pursue success and risk failure. They define themselves by their willingness to try. Mark works through the science of performance to show leadership teams why rest and recovery are high-performance non-negotiables, not an afterthought. Participants leave knowing exactly how to:

- Choose to be competitors, not spectators
- Develop clarity to drive performance
- Treat recovery as a high-performance non-negotiable

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

THE RESILIENCE CYCLE

The positive mental attitude industry demands optimism. But optimists rely on hope alone. When the best case scenario doesn't play out, they're left disappointed and demoralised.

Mark tested this at the extremes. In 2010, lying in a spinal unit after breaking his back, he had to decide whether he actually believed what he'd spent a decade teaching. He did. He confronted the fact that he had added paralysis to his existing blindness. He kept hope alive: that paralysis could be cured in his lifetime. That combination has since catalysed over $150 million in neurotech projects.

That's the tension at the heart of this masterclass: acceptance versus hope. Realists run both in parallel, confronting the facts of their situation, accepting what they can and can't control, and keeping hope alive for a better future. Participants leave knowing exactly how to:

- Choose to be realists, not optimists
- Confront the facts of their current reality
- Focus on what they can control as opposed to what they cannot

Collaborating to Solve Complex Problems

THE TRUST IMPERATIVE

It's easy, even for world-class performers, to work in isolation as soloists. But major breakthroughs happen when a disparate group of people galvanise around a common goal. In a stable environment, structure and hierarchy are enough. When challenges appear and the path is uncertain, that's not enough. We need flatter, more collaborative approaches.

Mark can't cure paralysis on his own. So, his mission to cure it involves catalysing collaborations between scientists, engineers, technologists and investors across robotics, neuro-modulation, AI and Brain Machine Interfaces. That work has catalysed over $150 million in neurotech projects.

That's the question at the heart of this masterclass: how do we create the conditions for people to become collaborators? Participants leave knowing exactly how to:

- Choose to be collaborators, not soloists
- Raise ambition, not lower it
- Create the conditions for collaboration