

Sam Kavanagh

Avalanche Survivor – Professional Cyclist – 2012 Paralympic Bronze Medalist
Speaker Profile

At Deloitte, we pride ourselves on the strength and diversity of speakers we are able to bring to educate and inspire our professionals, clients and recruits. We have worked with Sam on multiple occasions and he continues to stand out as strong asset for us. Sam has a remarkable and inspirational personal story, and he can hone this story to be clearly relevant to each audience he engages with. I highly recommend Sam for most any corporate event.

Douglas L. Neff
Senior Manager
Strategy Brand and Innovation
Deloitte Services LP

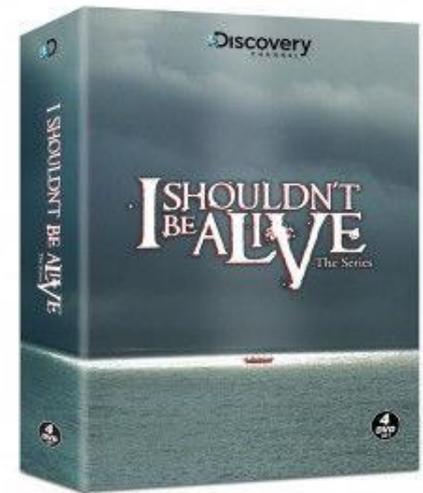
However, the climax of the session – as well as the day – emerged when avalanche survivor Sam Kavanagh narrated his story and the emotional self-discovery which taught him to continue on in the world. He sent waves of shock in the conference hall demonstrating his amputated leg with the message that life has to be experienced, tasted, touched and lived despite of all its woes.

After loud and prolonged acclaims for Kavanagh's non-conformist spirit, the session moved on to sculptor Jamshid Moradian.

Review of TEDx KISH (Iran) 2015



Featured speaker: Sam Kavanagh



An avid cyclist throughout his life, Sam dreamed of becoming a professional. He vividly remembers one particular conversation with his wife where together they contemplated him taking a shot as this lifelong passion. Despite her support, he decided against. He wasn't built like a pro rider, he didn't look the part. He didn't see himself that way.

Not long thereafter, Sam joined a few friends on a backcountry skiing expedition in the mountains of Montana. A skilled outdoorsman, this sort of trip was nothing new to Sam, until tragedy struck. A massive avalanche swallowed up Sam and his friends, taking the life of one and leaving Sam with a severe compound fracture of both bones in his lower left leg. Three friends escaped severe injury and scrambled to keep Sam alive, for over 48 hours, in sub-zero weather, out of radio range from any help.

Sam lost over half the total blood supply in his body, his kidneys shut down, infection set in and he went in shock. "I knew if I shut my eyes, that was it, I would die. We were cut off from help and I could barely move. It took everything I had, and more than I ever knew I had to give, just to hang on," said Sam. Eventually he and his friends were rescued, and Sam was airlifted to a regional hospital.

Despite nine surgeries in four months attempting to save his leg, too much damage had been done, and a new chapter in Sam's life began, as an amputee. It was a physically and emotionally exhausting transition for an active outdoorsman like Sam. In one of the most gripping parts of his presentations, Sam shares how it was his wife Sarah who refused to give up on him, and how she virtually forced him to get back on the bike despite his repeated refusal to do so. Eventually he did, and little by little the old Sam returned. Cycling then became part of his rehab and with the aid of a special prosthetic something remarkable happened. It made him feel whole again. Sam's passion for riding had waned, but now, literally with a new lease on life and the first-hand perspective that it could be gone tomorrow, he pursued that passion like never before. He returned to the same conversation he had had with his wife about taking a shot at turning pro but this time the answer was a resounding, "I'm gonna find out!"

Sam poured himself into cycling, and into everything he did from that point on with the passion of a man who had cheated death and one who had every intention of living every moment to its fullest from that point forward. The results came and Sam began to climb his way through the cycling ranks. Small victories got bigger and bigger, and eventually, at the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Cycling Team Trials Sam won the competition and rode a time that would have earned him his pro classification in the able bodied competition. Only one rider, who had two legs, had beaten him. He had done with one leg, what he had previously thought he could not do with two.

Sam went on to win the bronze medal at the biggest international competition of his life, the 2012 London Paralympic Games. He now travels the country as a professional motivational and inspirational speaker. His remarkable story was featured on The Discovery Channel's, "I Shouldn't Be Alive." Sam is a civil engineer who lives in Bozeman, Montana with his wife Sara and two young children, Amelia and Nolan. He remains an avid outdoorsman, and loves to be out mountain biking, skiing, hiking, camping, and exploring the beautiful landscape of Montana.

What Sam Speaks About

- Inspiration **'You Only Live Once'**

Tailored to each audience to whom he speaks, Sam shares his own personal story of survival and thriving, despite the loss of his leg.

- Motivation **'Unlocking Potential'**

With a dream living in the back of his mind, tragedy struck and eventually brought Sam clarity, focused purpose and later, remarkable accomplishments. In this presentation Sam shares concrete steps we can all take to awaken our potential and silence doubt, without having to go through the trauma he experienced.

- Mental Toughness **'The Strength Within Us All'**

From suffering through the near death experience of two days trapped on a mountain, the depression of losing a limb, the monotony of rehab, the self inflicted pain of elite cycling, the pressure of the Paralympics, and the development of the ability to perform best when it matters most, Sam knows a thing or two about mental toughness. In this presentation he share his strategies for dealing with personal demons and self doubt to tap into the strength he believes lies within each of us.

Watch Sam Speak:

- U.S./Deloitte: <http://youtu.be/7zXwebNMsys>
- International/TEDx Iran: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxoVe5osmJ8>

"Sam is an inspiring and engaging speaker. You feel an instant connection to his genuine nature and leave feeling in awe of his accomplishments and what he endured. He not only shared his experiences but truly motivated us to meet our challenges head on. For any business leader looking to engage and motivate their employees – I highly suggest bringing Sam in to speak to the team. Truly inspiring and motivating – an experience that will impact you in all areas of your life."

– Nadine Hanna
Marketing Manager
Premier Farnell

"There are very few people you hear speak who have a lifelong and profound impact on your life. Sam is one of those people that forever changed my life. His spirit to live, his drive to turn a terrible accident into something positive, and his ability to share his story in a way that moves people inspires everyone he encounters."

- Darin Pope
Vice President
Kibble and Prentice/USI



Speaking Fee: \$10,000

Travels from: Bozeman, MT

AV: PowerPoint, remote control, wireless microphone

**Bureau Friendly Speaker Profile
available upon request**

Website: www.NoLimitations.com

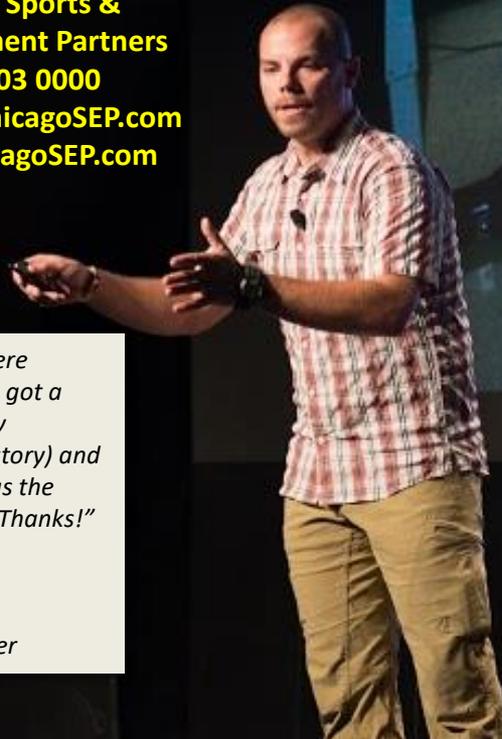
For more info/To Book Sam

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**LIFE IS
BEAUTIFUL**

"Sam was outstanding and we were thrilled with his presentation! He got a standing ovation which was really incredible (a first for the event history) and several board members said it was the best Gates Camp Breakfast ever. Thanks!"

*- Emily Lewis
Special Events Coordinator
Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver*



"Sam's story is one that will take you on a roller coaster of emotions. Through his distinct gift of public speaking, he will make you laugh and cry – but most of all, it will make you respect his courage, admire his perseverance and appreciate his passion for life. He has a unique ability to relate to his audience and will leave a lasting impression on anyone who hears his uplifting story."

- Matt Benchich, The Hartford

"Sam's story is not only a riveting, sit-on-the-edge-of-your-seat narration, it is also a compelling, moving, heart wrenching recap of perseverance that inspires you to overcome personal obstacles and stop complaining about first world problems... he's one of the good guys"

*– Trish Berry
Global Strategy Program Director
Newark element14*

"I had the pleasure of hearing Sam speak at a US Olympic Team Foundation gathering. There wasn't a dry eye in the room when he finished as I sat re-evaluating my own short time on earth!"

*--John Gordon,
President
Gordon Document Products Inc.*