



## Dakota Meyer

### INFLUENCER

Leaders prepare for disruption in theory and then freeze when it arrives. The gap between stated values and the decision made in the moment is where organisations lose trust, lose people, and lose ground. What is missing is a working model of accountability under real pressure, taught by someone who has lived the consequences.

Dakota Meyer is a Medal of Honor recipient and New York Times bestselling author who helps organisations build accountability, resilience, and decision-making discipline under pressure.

### Dakota Meyer's 2026 Biography

#### AVAILABLE FOR

- Speaking

### Why organisations work with Dakota Meyer

- A rare first-person authority on decision-making under life-or-death pressure, drawn from a six-hour firefight that saved 36 lives and earned the nations highest military honour.
- A working framework for accountability and personal responsibility, built over more than a decade of speaking to corporate, military, and first-responder audiences and codified in two bestselling books.
- Named, sustained commitment to veteran workforce integration through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundations Hiring Our Heroes program and Toyota, with measurable output including the Personal Branding Resume Engine.
- Active operational credibility: re-enlisted into the Marine Corps Reserve in 2025 and completed the Basic Reconnaissance Course in 2026, one of the few public speakers still performing at that standard.
- A voice that holds mixed rooms: senior corporate leadership, frontline operators, veterans, and first responders hear the same message and leave with the same frame.

#### DAKOTA'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Corporate Culture
- Motivation and Inspiration
- Peak Performance
- Storytelling & Business Communication

#### LANGUAGES: English

### Biography highlights

- Medal of Honor recipient, awarded by President Barack Obama at the White House on September 15, 2011.
- First living U.S. Marine to receive the Medal of Honor since 1973.
- New York Times bestselling co-author of Into the Fire with Bing West (Random House, 2012) and The Way Forward with Robert O'Neill (Dey Street Books, 2022).
- Host of the weekly podcast You're Human w/ Dakota Meyer, a call-in show on accountability, mental health, and resilience.
- Brand ambassador since 2012 for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundations Hiring Our Heroes program, partnered with Toyota on veteran employment.

- Re-enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve in April 2025 and completed the Basic Reconnaissance Course in April 2026.

## **Biography**

On September 8, 2009, a patrol moving into the village of Ganjgal in Kunar Province was ambushed by more than fifty fighters. Corporal Dakota Meyer drove into the kill zone five times over six hours to pull out the wounded and the dead. That action, and the decisions inside it, saved 36 American and Afghan lives and earned him the Medal of Honor.

What makes the work useful to organisations is not the story. It is what Meyer has done with it since. He has spent more than a decade turning the lessons of that fight into a clear argument about accountability: that leadership is the habit of owning the next decision when the plan has failed, and that culture is built in the seconds before anyone is watching.

The argument is evidenced across two New York Times bestsellers, *Into the Fire* with Bing West and *The Way Forward* with fellow Navy veteran Robert O'Neill, and through his weekly podcast *You're Human w/ Dakota Meyer*. Since 2012 he has served as a brand ambassador for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundations Hiring Our Heroes program, partnering with Toyota on the Personal Branding Resume Engine and a sustained national effort on veteran workforce integration.

He re-enlisted into the Marine Corps Reserve in April 2025, fifteen years after discharge, and in April 2026 became the only active Medal of Honor recipient to complete the Basic Reconnaissance Course. Few speakers on leadership under pressure are still doing the work themselves at that standard.

## **Key speaking topics**

- Leadership under pressure
- Accountability and personal responsibility
- Resilience and recovery from setback
- Decision-making in high-consequence environments
- Military-to-civilian transition and veteran workforce integration
- Purpose-driven culture
- Team trust and performance under stress

## **Ideal for**

- Senior leadership teams and executive offsites confronting a period of pressure or change
- CHROs and workforce leaders building veteran hiring, reintegration, or inclusion programmes
- All-staff conferences where culture, accountability, and resilience are the organising theme
- First-responder, defence, and safety-critical organisations building decision discipline under load

## **Audience outcomes**

- A usable definition of accountability, separated from blame, that a leader can apply to the next meeting.
- A sharper read on how teams actually perform when the plan fails, and what the leader is responsible for in that moment.
- A direct account of the cost of avoidance, from someone who has paid

it, that reframes how audiences talk about hard decisions.

- Practical language for connecting personal responsibility to organisational culture without sliding into slogan.

## **About Dakota Meyer**

Sergeant Dakota L. Meyer is a United States Marine Corps veteran and recipient of the military's highest honor, the Medal of Honor. He is the New York Times best-selling author of the book, *Into the Fire: A Firsthand Account of the Most Extraordinary Battle in the Afghan War*. Meyer earned his medal for his actions during the Battle of Ganjigal, which was part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. He is the first living Marine to have received the medal since 1973 and one of the youngest. Humble and propelled by respect for his fallen comrades, Meyer insists that he is not a hero and that any Marine would do the same thing. He addresses inspiration, motivation, courage, leadership/peopleship, believing in yourself, doing what is right, and what happened that day in Afghanistan. Meyer is a successful entrepreneur who also currently serves as a firefighter, EMT, father, and athlete. If he isn't helping in his community, he is either with his family or training for his latest endeavor, an ironman. Meyer is passionate about sharing his lessons he has learned through his journey with others and helping them become the best version of themselves.

## **The Attack.**

In September 2009, three US Marines, a US Navy corpsman, and Afghan soldiers went missing in Afghanistan after being ambushed by 50 insurgents. Defying orders, Meyer went into the "killing zone" to help. Through five successive missions over the course of six hours, he helped save the lives of many American and Afghan troops. Meyer also found the bodies of the four missing men, and, with the help of friendly Afghan soldiers, moved the bodies to a safer area where they could be extracted. Meyer suffered shrapnel wounds to his arm and, in a testament to his heroism, did not expect to survive the battle. "I wasn't really thinking I could die, it was just a matter of when," he said. "I never thought I was going to come out...[but] that's what Marines do." He was 21 at the time.

## **The Award.**

During a ceremony on September 15, 2011, President Barack Obama awarded Meyer with the Medal of Honor. Obama called Meyer incredibly down-to-earth, noting that when he tried to tell him that he would be receiving the award, Meyer originally didn't take the call because he was working a new job in construction. Obama jokingly recounted that Meyer said, "If I don't work, I don't get paid." The president called him back during his lunch break and thanked him for taking the call. The two later talked over beers the day before the award ceremony and, according to President Obama, "Dakota is the kind of guy who gets the job done." Meyer was also inducted into the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon and honored with a parade.

## **Civilian Life.**

With his return to civilian life, Meyer has become an advocate for American veterans. He partnered with the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation to raise \$1 million and issued the "Dakota Meyer Scholarship Challenge to America" to match his efforts. He worked with Toyota and

the US Chamber of Commerce to launch the Personal Branding initiative of the Hiring Our Heroes Program to help military veterans and transitioning service members better market themselves to employers. Meyer also wrote a book, *Into the Fire: A Firsthand Account of the Most Extraordinary Battle in the Afghan War*, which details his journey from a young man raised on a cattle farm in Kentucky to a true American hero. It tells the full story of the chaotic Ganjigal battle for the first time in a compelling and very human way, revealing it as a microcosm of our recent wars. He is also the creator of the podcast Front Toward Enemy with Dakota Meyer and co-author, alongside Robert O'Neill, of *The Way Forward: Master Life's Toughest Battles and Create Your Lasting Legacy* - an in-depth, fearless, and ultimately redemptive account of what it takes to survive and thrive on battlefields from Afghanistan and Iraq to our daily lives, and how the perils of war help us hold onto our humanity.

Meyer's days are now dedicated to entrepreneurship, having recently launched his hydration company, Dash Hydrate. Alongside his business pursuits, he serves as a firefighter and EMT, a role that has earned him The Medal of Valor for his exceptional bravery. His commitment to both saving lives in emergencies and promoting hydration reflects a deep dedication to the well-being of others, making him a truly inspiring individual in his community.

## Dakota Meyer's 2026 talks & topics

### The Way Forward

A keynote on confronting adversity and defining purpose in its aftermath, drawn from the book co-written with Robert O'Neill.

#### Key takeaways:

- How leaders reset after a decision that did not go the way they planned.
- A working model for moving from loss to contribution without skipping the honest part.
- Why purpose is a daily operating choice, not a statement on a wall.

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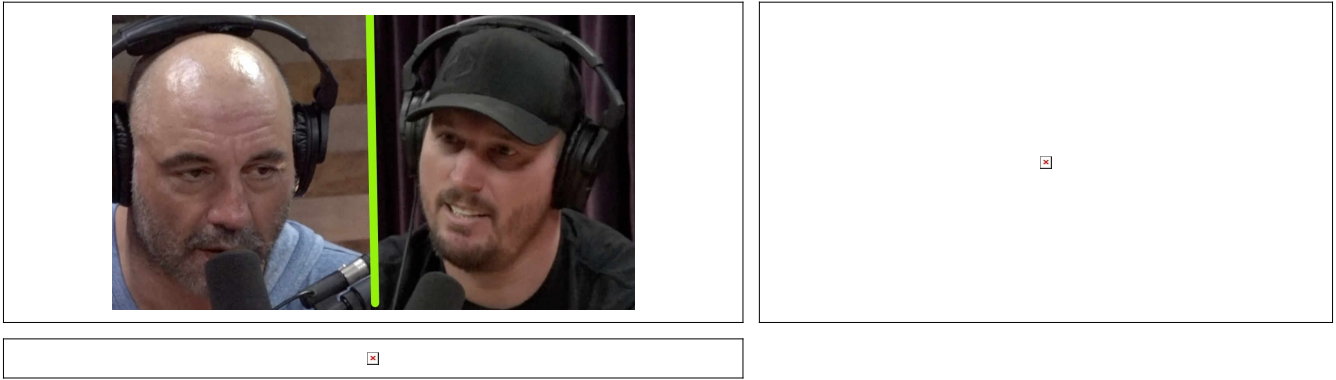
### Accountability and Achievement

A leadership talk using combat-tested examples to show how accountability compounds into team performance.

#### Key takeaways:

- The difference between accountability and blame, and why teams can tell instantly.
- How senior leaders signal what is actually rewarded in their culture.
- What accountability looks like in the first ninety seconds of a crisis.

## Dakota Meyer's Videos



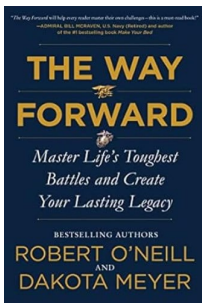
## What Dakota Meyer's clients say

Dakota was inspirational and being inspired in these types of events help stimulate the creative part of ourselves. Well done.

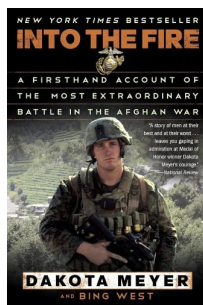
*Stramaglio Consulting*

OUTSTANDING message from an American Hero. What we do every day is nothing compared to his journey and I will certainly be applying his thinking and strategy into my every day life.

## DAKOTA'S LATEST BOOKS



**The Way Forward: Master Life's Toughest Battles and Create Your Lasting Legacy**



**Into the Fire: A Firsthand Account of the Most Extraordinary Battle in the Afghan War**

## Dakota Meyer's 2026 speaking fees

Specific fees fall within the ranges shown. These are presented as a guide only and are subject to change without notice.

|                                 | <b>EUR</b>       | <b>GBP</b>        | <b>USD</b>        |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Home Country</b>             | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| <b>Asia Pacific</b>             | Please enquire   | Please enquire    | Please enquire    |
| <b>Europe</b>                   | Please enquire   | Please enquire    | Please enquire    |
| <b>Middle East &amp; Africa</b> | Please enquire   | Please enquire    | Please enquire    |
| <b>South America</b>            | Please enquire   | Please enquire    | Please enquire    |
| <b>United Kingdom</b>           | Please enquire   | Please enquire    | Please enquire    |
| <b>US East Coast</b>            | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| <b>US West Coast</b>            | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| <b>Virtual</b>                  | Under €12000     | Under £10,000     | Under \$15000     |