



Evelyn Glennie

CELEBRITY · MUSICIAN · TED SPEAKER

Senior leaders are surrounded by signal but trained to listen for confirmation. Decisions get made on what is loudest in the room, not what is most important. The capacity to slow down, attend with the whole body, and read what a team or a market is actually communicating has become a rare and decisive leadership behaviour.

Dame Evelyn Glennie is a Scottish percussionist, composer and Companion of Honour who teaches senior leaders to treat listening as a strategic discipline rather than a soft skill.

Evelyn Glennie's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Dame Evelyn Glennie

- A first-hand demonstration of how attention works when sound is felt rather than heard, drawn from a 40-year career as the first full-time solo percussionist in musical history.
- A leadership argument grounded in lived practice: composure, recovery and attention as trainable behaviours, not personality traits.
- Author of "Listen World!" and Founder of The Evelyn Glennie Foundation, whose mission is to teach the world to listen across business, education, healthcare and the arts.
- Three GRAMMY recognitions, the Polar Music Prize (2015), the Leonie Sonning Music Prize (2023), Companion of Honour (2017) and DBE; credentials that earn the room before she opens it.
- Workshop and keynote formats road-tested with corporate teams on internal communication, customer responsiveness and team cohesion.

Biography highlights

- First person in history to build and sustain a full-time career as a solo percussionist.
- Three-time GRAMMY recipient, including the 1989 award with Sir Georg Solti and Murray Perahia and a 2002 win with Bela Fleck.
- Companion of Honour (2017), DBE (2007), OBE (1993). First percussionist to receive a DBE.
- Polar Music Prize laureate, 2015. First percussionist to receive the Leonie Sonning Music Prize, 2023.
- Chancellor of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen; President of Help Musicians.
- TED speaker ("How to truly listen"), author of "Listen World!", and Founder of The Evelyn Glennie Foundation.

AVAILABLE FOR

- After Dinner Engagement
- Speaking

EVELYN'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Motivation and Inspiration
- Peak Performance
- Storytelling & Business Communication

LANGUAGES: English

Biography

Most leaders treat listening as a courtesy. For Glennie it is a working method, developed across four decades of performing music she could not hear in the conventional sense. Profoundly deaf from childhood, she trained herself to read vibration through her hands, feet and body, and built a career as the first full-time solo percussionist in musical history.

That practice is what corporate audiences engage with. The Royal Academy of Music graduate has performed in more than 60 countries, commissioned over 200 new works, and led 1,000 drummers in the London 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony directed by Danny Boyle. The technical achievement is unusual. The transferable insight is the discipline behind it: attention as a whole-body act, repeatable under pressure.

Her authority on the subject is institutionally backed. Three GRAMMY recognitions, the Polar Music Prize, the Leonie Sonning Music Prize, a Damehood and the Companion of Honour sit alongside the Chancellorship of Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen and the Presidency of Help Musicians. The book "Listen World!" and The Evelyn Glennie Foundation, established in 2023, take the same argument into schools, hospitals, sport and business.

In a leadership keynote she translates this directly. How a team senses what is happening before it can be measured. How a leader steadies a room. How sustained attention, not louder communication, is what shifts behaviour at scale.

Key speaking topics

- Listening as a leadership discipline
- Attention and presence under pressure
- Resilience and reinvention after personal shock
- Communication and team cohesion
- Inclusive leadership and difference as capability
- Creativity, craft and sustained excellence

Ideal for

- Boards and executive committees defining their own communication standards
- CHROs and culture leaders rebuilding internal listening practices
- Senior leadership offsites focused on composure, attention and decision-making
- Customer experience and frontline leadership audiences working on responsiveness

Audience outcomes

- A working definition of listening as an active leadership behaviour, not a soft skill
- A more honest read of how attention is spent in their own meetings and decisions
- Specific cues from a non-verbal craft they can apply to communication with teams and customers
- A reframing of personal adversity and reinvention as repeatable practice
- A clearer view of how presence and composure shape what a team will follow

Evelyn Glennie's 2026 talks & topics

Achieving the impossible

A keynote that uses Glennie's life as a working percussionist to argue that resilience, listening and reinvention are trainable disciplines.

Key takeaways:

- How to convert personal adversity into a repeatable working method
 - Why deep listening is a precondition for sustained high performance
 - How leaders steady teams through attention, not louder communication
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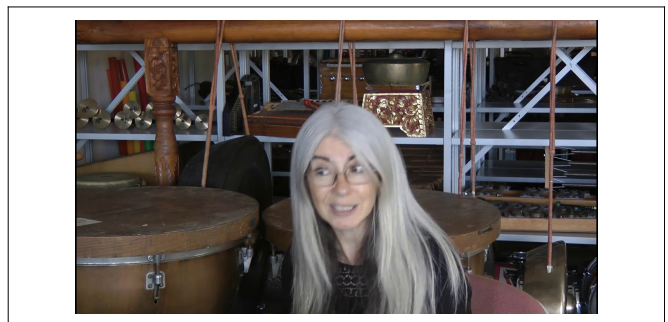
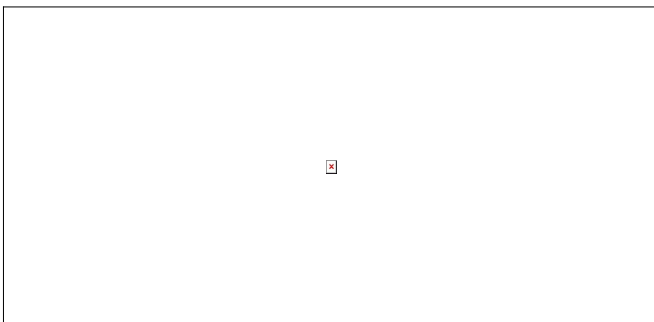
How to Truly Listen

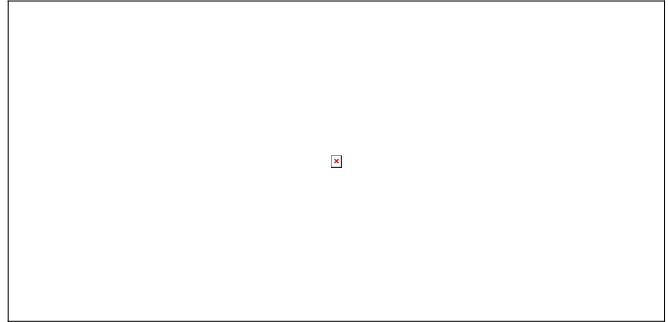
A keynote and workshop format building on her TED Talk, applied to senior teams, customer-facing functions and internal communication.

Key takeaways:

- The difference between hearing and listening as an organisational behaviour
- Practical cues for executive presence and composure under pressure
- Listening practices that improve team cohesion and customer responsiveness

Evelyn Glennie's Videos





Evelyn Glennie'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.

	EUR	GBP	USD
Home Country	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Asia Pacific	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Europe	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Middle East & Africa	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
South America	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
United Kingdom	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
US East Coast	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
US West Coast	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Virtual	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000