



Dr. Thom Mayer

SPORTS PERSONALITY

Medical Director for the NFL Players Association

- Disaster Leadership- Pentagon on 9/11, Inhalation Anthrax at the US Capitol in 2001
- Managing NFL Concussion and Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis
- New book "Leadership is Worthless...But Leading is Priceless"

Dr. Thom Mayer's 2026 Biography

About Dr. Thom Mayer

Dr. Thom Mayer stands among the world's foremost authorities on crisis leadership, medical emergency response, organisational resilience, and operational excellence in high-performance environments. With a career defined by navigating some of the most significant public and corporate crises of our generation, Dr. Mayer's insights and strategies are highly sought after by executive teams, healthcare leaders, and organisations facing rapid transformation.

As Medical Director for the NFL Players Association, Executive Vice President of Leadership at LogixHealth, and Founder of BestPractices, Inc., Dr. Mayer has shaped policy and safeguarded well-being on the NFL's front lines for over two decades. He is also a Clinical Professor at George Washington University, Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke University, and a "Master of Disaster" credited with lifesaving leadership during events such as 9/11 at the Pentagon and bioterrorism incidents at the US Capitol. His crisis deployment in Ukraine further demonstrates a hands-on approach to global emergency response.

Tom Peters, the celebrated leadership expert, and USA Today have recognised Dr. Mayer as both "gaspworthy" and among the "100 Most Important People in the NFL." Dr. Mayer has received the American College of Emergency Physicians' highest honour and has been acknowledged for entrepreneurship, building, and successfully exiting multimillion-dollar ventures in healthcare staffing, management, and innovation.

Business Challenges Addressed

Dr. Mayer helps organisations tackle complex, high-impact challenges such as:

- **Leading teams through crisis:** Offering frameworks drawn from

AVAILABLE FOR

- Coaching
- Moderating and Emcee
- Speaking

THOM'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Business Continuity and Crisis Management

LANGUAGES: English

disaster zones, NFL emergencies, and hospital frontline practice, Dr. Mayer equips businesses to thrive under intense pressure and uncertainty.

- **Battling burnout and driving resilience:** His evidence-based approach to employee wellbeing, resilience, and adaptive capacity is rooted in research, unique field experience, and the latest strategies from sports medicine and emergency care.
- **Cultivating innovation and trust:** Dr. Mayer's keynote "Making Failure Your Fuel" demonstrates how innovation grows fastest where trust is strongest, and how leaders can reframe setbacks to unlock creativity and positive transformation.
- **Hardwiring patient/customer flow:** Drawing from his seminal work, "Hardwiring Flow," Dr. Mayer equips executives and managers with tools to increase efficiency, optimise service delivery, and address bottlenecks across healthcare and corporate operations.
- **Building high-impact culture:** With unique stories from NFL sidelines, trauma centres, and war zones, he shares methods to instil purpose-driven, adaptable teams ready to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Awards and Publications

- Author of 20 acclaimed textbooks and hundreds of articles on leadership, emergency medicine, and patient experience.
- Multiple award-winner: including the ACHE's James Hamilton Award and the ACEP's Outstanding Speaker of the Year.
- Nominated to the Pro Football Hall of Fame for his work transforming sports medicine safety protocols worldwide.

Meet Dr. Thom Mayer

Dr. Thom Mayer is the Medical Director for the NFL Players Association, Executive Vice President of Leadership for LogixHealth, Founder of BestPractices, Inc., and Clinical Professor of Emergency Medicine at George Washington University and Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke University. He was named the 2018 winner of the James D. Mills Outstanding Contribution to Emergency Medicine Award, which is the highest honor of the American College of Emergency Physicians. He was recently nominated to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. USA Today named him one of the "100 Most Important People in the NFL." Tom Peters, the internationally acclaimed leadership guru, referred to his work as "gaspworthy."

When asked about these awards, Dr. Mayer simply says, "I have only one talent. I know how to hire people who are not only better than me, but much better than me. They won the awards, not me." Dr. Mayer has been the founder, CEO, and principal shareholder of physician leadership, staffing, and management and ambulance transport companies with revenues in excess of \$100 million, which were then sold with an average IRR in excess of 38%. He continues to hold intellectual property rights to all the content developed by these companies.

He is one of the most widely sought speakers on healthcare patient experience, leadership and management, hardwiring flow, trauma and emergency care, pediatric emergency care, EMS/disaster medicine, and sports medicine. His work in each of these areas has resulted in changing the very fabric of patient care.

On September 11, 2001 Dr. Mayer served as the Command Physician at the Pentagon Rescue Operation and has served on 3 Defense Science

Board Task Forces, advising the Secretary of Defense. Most recently, in 2022, Dr. Mayer helped lead a mobile team to Ukraine treating almost 350 patients and training over 1,700 Ukrainian medical staffers.

He has published over 100 peer-reviewed articles, over 100 book chapters, and has edited or written 20 textbooks, including:

- Leadership for Great Customer Service: Satisfied Employees, Satisfied Patients: 2nd Edition
- Leadership for Smooth Patient Flow
- Hardwiring Flow
- The Patient Flow Advantage
- Strauss and Mayer's Emergency Department Management.
- Battling Healthcare Burnout

Dr. Mayer was named the ACEP Outstanding Speaker of the Year and has been named ACEP's "Over-the-Top" award winner 3 times. Battling Healthcare Burnout won the ACHE's James Hamilton Award for the best healthcare leadership book in 2022 and Leadership for Smooth Patient Flow won the ACHE's James Hamilton Award for the best healthcare leadership book in 2008. In sports medicine, his work at the forefront of changing concussion diagnosis and management in the NFL has changed the way in which these athletes are diagnosed and treated.

Dr. Mayer was the originator of the entire NFL Concussion Guidelines program, and thus has changed the nature of concussion diagnosis and management worldwide. He gives many examples of his NFL experiences in his talks.

Dr. Thom Mayer's 2026 talks & topics

Leadership is Worthless...But Leading is Priceless: What I Learned from 9/11, the NFL, and Ukraine

Dr. Thom Mayer has led a life at the forefront of leading through some of the most prominent crises of our generation, including serving as the Command Physician at the Pentagon on 9/11, Incident Commander for the US's first bioterrorism incident, Medical Director of the NFL Players Association, and leading a Mobile Emergency Team during the Ukraine invasion. This keynote is a contrarian approach to leadership, which is: Leadership is worthless...because it is a noun - something you say. But Leading is priceless...because it is a verb - the things you do, all day, every day, in every walk of life.

Dr. Mayer challenges his audiences to ask the right question - "How will I lead myself and my team today?" By helping them to embrace that leading occurs - no matter what job you do - in everything you do, he inspires others to lead themselves, their teams, and their families

Filled with stories and examples from Dr. Mayer's career as "The Master of Disaster," leading at the forefront of crises on the world stage, this presentation challenges but also inspires new and practical approaches to leading your life in times of crisis.

Making Failure Your Fuel: A Key Aspect of Leadership is Worthless...But Leading is Priceless

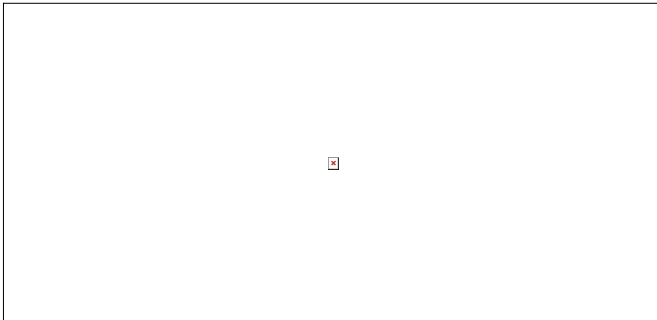
In his book “Leadership is Worthless...But Leading is Priceless” Dr. Thom Mayer presents many actionable yet contrarian concepts. One of the most intriguing of these is the idea of “Making Failure Your Fuel,” which builds upon the idea that innovation, which is an essential skill in these turbulent times, occurs not at the speed of genius, creativity, or intelligence, but rather at the speed of...trust. And the only way we can trust ourselves and our teams to innovate is to develop and perfect the talent of making failure our fuel.

Using stories and personal experiences from the NFL, the US Women’s’ National Soccer Team (including Mia Hamm and Abby Wambach), 9/11 at the Pentagon, Ukraine, Capital One, and world history and literature, this talk examines the details of using failure to motivate success, including:

- Failure is not the opposite of success-it is an integral part of success
- Failure motivates-Tom Brady and the NFL Draft
- Developing Your Failure Muscles-11 ways to use failure as fuel
- The Healing Power of Failure
- Limits Begin Where Vision Ends
- Taking ourselves lightly-and failure as our fuel

As Senator Mark Warner said in his comments on Dr. Mayer’s book, “Perhaps the greatest lesson Dr. Mayer has to offer is not to be discouraged by failure, but rather to use it as fuel-to take risks and get yourself back in the game. Leaders of all stripes can learn much from reading this book.” You can learn much from this talk.

Dr. Thom Mayer's Videos



What Dr. Thom Mayer's clients say

Dr. Mayer's talk was simple, eloquent...and devastatingly penetrating. In the 10 years of our leadership program, this was the best session we have had-and we have the world's best!

Duke University Leadership Institute

HE DID A GREAT JOB. Our folks really liked his presentation.

Oklahoma Hospital Association

Fantastic - Dr. Mayer did a masterful job weaving in details about our organization and really understood what our leaders needed to hear. He talked about the things that concerned them the most while also celebrating our highlights. I have worked with speakers for years but never before has one made it so personal, so relevant for our organization. Thank you, Dr. Mayer, for an inspirational and motivational presentation!

MultiCare

Dr. Mayer was incredible! He kept our audience engaged and they really enjoyed his stories.

creativeMINDS Data

Dr. Mayer was very engaging and a real draw for our conference. We received very positive feedback from our audience!

HRMA Region 2

Mr. Mayer was very engaging with our members and held to the topic we discussed in pre-planning calls. He was a pleasure to work with. He was positive with his message.

North Carolina Healthcare Association

Dr. Mayer was fantastic. He was very engaging and our audience loved him!

San Antonio Medical Foundation

At Bernstein, we work with many of the most successful, influential and innovative business leaders, artists, athletes and inventors on the planet. It is not easy to find speakers that can truly engage this type of audience, but Dr. Thom Mayer had them enthralled. His ability to craft a message and inspire listeners through anecdote, and the always well-placed quote, is unparalleled. Thom remains one of the most requested speakers Bernstein Private Wealth has had.

Bernstein Private Wealth

Your keynote was a massive success and resonated with everyone, moving them from laughter to tears. You are changing lives with your powerful message.

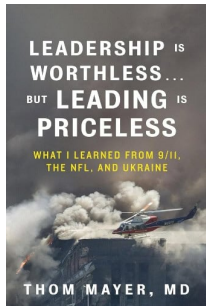
Thom Mayer, MD is a humble genius and a world-class communicator! His talk captivated a global audience and brought them to tears, while motivating them for action.

I have heard most of the world-class speakers and honestly, I have never heard anyone who so totally captivated an audience like you did. You wove stories, quotes, philosophical insights, and historical vignettes into a moving, meaningful fabric that affected us all deeply.

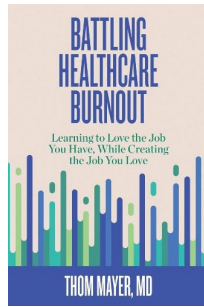
Dr. Mayer's incredible leadership and infectious humor are gifts for all of us.

You brought a truly superb and essential element to our Summit that will live long in the hearts and minds of all those who were privileged to hear you.

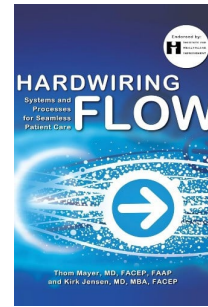
THOM'S LATEST BOOKS



Leadership Is Worthless...But Leading Is Priceless: What I Learned from 9/11, the NFL, and Ukraine



Battling Healthcare Burnout: Learning to Love the Job You Have, While Creating the Job You Love



Hardwiring Flow: Systems and Processes for Seamless Patient Care