

MICHAEL PAYNE

LEADERSHIP COACH • KEYNOTE SPEAKER • AUTHOR



“Pressure does not create character—it reveals it.”

Practical leadership for people who carry responsibility under pressure

Speaker Profile

Michael Payne is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, leadership coach, business owner, keynote speaker, and author of Unshaken Resolve. Across military command, corporate leadership, entrepreneurship, and personal adversity, he has learned what pressure reveals about leaders—and what people need from them when the stakes are high.

During 23 years of military service, Michael led teams through demanding assignments that included eight overseas deployments, four combat tours in Iraq, and battalion command. He later brought those lessons to 10 years with Dell Technologies and now serves as CEO of Designed2Sell Real Estate Group while coaching leaders, strengthening teams, and helping organizations navigate change.

Michael’s presentations combine real-world stories with clear frameworks, practical reflection, and actions participants can use immediately. His central message is simple: people do not need a perfect leader. They need a prepared, present, consistent, and trustworthy one.

SIGNATURE MESSAGE Leadership does not require rank. It requires character, courage, preparation, and responsibility.

Leadership at a Glance

YEARS OF ARMY LEADERSHIP	OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS	COMBAT TOURS IN IRAQ	YEARS WITH DELL TECHNOLOGIES
23	8	4	10

Why Audiences Connect

- Lived leadership experience—not theory alone.
- Steady, credible storytelling grounded in real responsibility.
- A people-first approach that never abandons standards or accountability.
- Memorable language and practical tools that translate directly to daily leadership.

CONFERENCE & LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

Signature Topics

Each session can be delivered as a 45-, 60-, or 75-minute keynote or breakout and adapted for leadership teams, industry associations, and professional-development audiences.

PEOPLE FIRST | SIGNATURE SESSION

Pressure Reveals the Leader: Building Teams That Trust, Perform, and Stay

When pressure increases, leadership becomes visible. Michael shows how everyday behaviors build trust, strengthen accountability, develop emerging leaders, and create a culture in which people feel valued and want to stay. Attendees learn to lead with consistency and care without lowering standards or avoiding difficult conversations.

AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Recognize the behaviors that build—or weaken—employee trust.
- Set clear expectations and reinforce accountability without creating fear.
- Identify leadership potential and turn mentorship into team strength.

Best for: Executives, regional leaders, property and operations managers, HR and training professionals, supervisors, and emerging leaders.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT | SIGNATURE SESSION

Lead Unshaken Through Change: Creating Clarity, Trust, and Forward Momentum

Change may be necessary, but people will not automatically understand, trust, or embrace it. Michael gives leaders a practical framework to explain the purpose, acknowledge legitimate concerns, create ownership, and reinforce new expectations while remaining honest and steady when every answer is not yet available.

AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Recognize why teams resist change and address uncertainty before it becomes opposition.
- Communicate what is changing, why it matters, and what happens next.
- Turn a decision into durable behavior through involvement, milestones, and reinforcement.

Best for: Leaders responsible for technology rollouts, ownership or staffing transitions, restructuring, policy changes, culture shifts, and operational transformation.

SHARED OUTCOME Build trust, communicate through uncertainty, strengthen accountability, develop emerging leaders, and remain steady when pressure reveals the true condition of a team.

BOOK-TO-STAGE INTEGRATION

The Unshaken Resolve Framework

Unshaken Resolve is the leadership foundation beneath Michael's speaking. The book is not used as a sales pitch or a substitute for audience-specific education. Its stories create credibility and emotional connection; its principles are then translated into behaviors leaders can use in the moments that matter.

CORE PREMISE Pressure reveals whether trust, preparation, clarity, character, and disciplined habits were built before the crisis.

1. **Preparation.** Readiness reduces panic and creates the conditions for calm, clear decisions.
2. **Belief.** People move with confidence when they understand the mission and believe their contribution matters.
3. **Mentorship.** Experience becomes organizational strength only when judgment and confidence are transferred to others.
4. **Character.** Titles may provide authority; trust is earned through consistency, courage, and responsibility.
5. **Calm under pressure.** A leader's emotional steadiness shapes how the team interprets uncertainty and chooses its next action.

How It Comes Alive on Stage

- A concise story establishes the human stakes and leadership principle.
- The principle is connected to a recognizable workplace or industry scenario.
- A simple framework gives participants language for action and conversation.
- Reflection and a 30-day commitment move the experience from inspiration to application.

AUTHOR PLATFORM Unshaken Resolve launched in May 2026 and has sold more than 400 copies—extending the message beyond the room and giving audiences a field guide for continued growth.

CREDIBILITY ACROSS ENVIRONMENTS

Speaking Experience

Michael's communication experience spans military leadership, global corporate environments, entrepreneurship, executive coaching, professional development, and community service.

Previous Speaking Engagements

- **Military leadership:** Command briefings, leader development, professional education, readiness, accountability, and decision-making under pressure.
- **Corporate leadership:** Presentations and leadership discussions during a 10-year career with Dell Technologies.
- **Business, real estate, and coaching:** Workshops and team sessions for business owners, managers, real estate professionals, and emerging leaders.
- **Faith and community:** Leadership conversations and community events centered on service, responsibility, resilience, and purpose.

UPCOMING KEYNOTE Selected to deliver the keynote address for the 2026 Gulf Shores 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony in Alabama.

Available Formats

Conference keynotes and education breakouts • Leadership workshops and team-development sessions • Executive and manager roundtables • Customized leadership programs • Moderated conversations and panels

Ideal Audiences

Business owners, executives, regional and operational leaders, property-management professionals, human resources and training teams, military and veteran communities, faith-based organizations, and emerging leaders carrying responsibility for people and results.

KEYWORDS People-First Leadership • Change Management • Trust • Resilience • Team Culture

Bring Unshaken Leadership to Your Audience



ORGANIZER PROMISE A compelling, credible experience that respects the audience, supports the event's purpose, and leaves participants with language and actions they can use immediately.

Ready-to-Read Introduction

Michael Payne is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, leadership coach, business owner, and author of Unshaken Resolve. Across 23 years of military service, eight overseas deployments, four combat tours in Iraq, 10 years with Dell Technologies, and executive leadership in real estate, Michael has learned what pressure reveals about people and organizations. Today, he equips leaders to build trust, communicate clearly, navigate change, and remain steady when the stakes are high. Please welcome Michael Payne.

Event Support

- Session descriptions and learning objectives tailored to the event audience
- Conference-specific worksheets, reflection tools, and 30-day action plans
- Presentation materials and promotional copy available upon request
- Flexible delivery for keynotes, breakouts, workshops, and leadership sessions

SPEAKING INQUIRIES & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

UnshakenResolve.com

LEAD WHERE YOU STAND. LEAD UNSHAKEN.