

Robert Paylor Speaker Assets



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Speaker Fees

U.S. In Person Events: Keynote: \$10,000 plus \$2,000 flat travel and hotel

Virtual Events: \$10,000

International Events: please call

Home City: Sacramento, CA

Robert is managed by Kelly Bjorseth at Upside Speakers. For Questions & to Book Robert:
Kelly@upsidespeakers.com 913.766.3965

IMPORTANT NOTE: Robert requires an ADA wheelchair accessible room with a roll-in shower and two double (or queen) beds. If a hotel room is not available for those specifications, please contact us.

Speaker Summary

Paralyzed to Powerful: Unleashing Resilience and Redefining Possibilities.

On May 6, 2017, Robert Paylor broke his neck in the collegiate rugby national championship and was told he'd never walk or move his hands again, if he even survived.

At 20 years old, he was diagnosed with quadriplegia.

Today, Robert speaks to audiences around the world about how we all face paralyzing challenges—some mental, some emotional, some organizational—and how to overcome them.

The journey begins with one simple yet transformative question: “What paralyzes you?”

Key Speech Themes

Inspirational & Motivational, Resilience, Perseverance & Determination, Teamwork & Collaboration, Cultivating Purpose, Mindset

Short Bio

Robert Paylor was paralyzed from the neck down during the collegiate rugby national championship after a spinal cord injury left him with a prognosis that he would never walk nor move his hands again. Refusing to accept this prognosis, Robert embarked on an extraordinary journey of recovery, re-learning life's most basic functions and defying the odds to walk again. Now an inspirational speaker and resilience expert, Robert shares his powerful story and the mental tools that helped him overcome quadriplegia with organizations worldwide. Through his keynote, *Paralyzed to Powerful*, Robert inspires audiences to conquer what "paralyzes" them and turn their adversity into triumph.

Full Bio

In one moment, Robert Paylor was experiencing the pinnacle of athletic achievement, competing for the collegiate rugby national championship. In the next moment, his life took an unexpected and devastating turn. Robert suffered a severe spinal cord injury due to foul play, leaving him unable to move or feel anything below his neck. His doctor's prognosis was grim: he would never walk or move his hands for the rest of his life.

Even in the face of tremendous adversity, Robert maintained the drive to reclaim his life, but his challenges had only just begun. His rehabilitation journey began with battling spinal fusion surgery, pneumonia, and an inability to swallow, losing 60 pounds in only one month. He had to re-learn almost every basic human function, from feeding himself, to getting dressed, to brushing his teeth.

Rather than let this tragedy define him, Robert used it as a catalyst for an extraordinary journey of redefining what is possible. Through an unbreakable vision and years of relentless determination, Robert can now walk 500 yards, he stood to receive his diploma from UC Berkeley's top-ranked Haas School of Business, he married the love of his life, and is now sharing the mental tools that have helped him persevere through paralysis as an inspirational speaker.

Robert's story has captivated millions around the world, being shared by major outlets including *Sports Illustrated*, *People Magazine*, *Fox News*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. As a sought-after speaker, his message has stirred leading Fortune 500 companies like Visa, Intel, Samsung, Accenture, Edward Jones, and Meta, as well as collegiate and professional sports teams, schools, and associations around the country.

Everyone is paralyzed by something, whether it be mental, emotional, or organizational. In his keynote, *Paralyzed to Powerful*, Robert authentically relives his journey with the audience and shares the invaluable tools that he gained in overcoming quadriplegia. His message stirs organizations and individuals to both identify and conquer that which paralyzes them by cultivating purpose in their work, fully accessing the collective resilience of their team, developing a reflexive sense of gratitude, and maintaining positivity through even the most daunting challenges.

Topics & Descriptions

Signature Motivational & Inspirational Keynote

Paralyzed to Powerful: Unleashing Resilience and Redefining Possibility

On May 6, 2017, Robert Paylor broke his neck in the collegiate rugby national championship and was told he'd never walk or move his hands again, if he even survived.

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The journey begins with one simple yet transformative question: “What paralyzes you?”

In every organization, people are battling unseen challenges. Mental fatigue, doubt, fear, burnout—these are the things that silently paralyze teams, stall momentum, and cloud vision. Robert's keynote is a call to confront those obstacles head-on and build a mindset that turns adversity into strength.

With raw honesty and vivid storytelling, Robert relives his battle in overcoming quadriplegia and shares the mental tools that helped him defy the odds. His journey equips audiences not just with inspiration, but with a roadmap.

Through his keynote, Robert empowers audiences to identify and conquer their own paralyzing challenges and emerge stronger, more focused, and united in purpose.

Audiences will walk away from Robert's keynote with the ability to:

- **Control Their Mindset.** Learn how to recognize and replace negative thought patterns, focus on the controllables, and build habits that fuel perseverance, even in the face of overwhelming adversity.
- **Practice Perspective.** Gain powerful insight by reframing challenges through their own experiences, the strength of others, and the gratitude that comes from recognizing life's simplest blessings.

- **Make a Commitment.** Understand how progress is powered by purpose. Robert challenges audiences to commit *with* others for support, and *for* others as a reason to keep moving forward.

Robert's talk is more than a story of resilience—it's a practical framework for responding to life's toughest moments with courage, clarity, and connection.

Ready to overcome what paralyzes you?

Your audience will leave equipped with the mindset, perspective, and commitment to tackle whatever challenge lies ahead.

Healthcare Focus

Paralyzed to Powerful: A Patient's Perspective on the Power of Your Work

In healthcare, the pressure to care for others is relentless. Long hours and emotional intensity can quietly take their toll, leading to fatigue, disconnection, and burnout. While healthcare workers are trained to care for others, they often lack the space or support to care for themselves.

This adapted version of Robert's keynote speaks directly to the hearts of healthcare professionals, whether frontline staff, physicians, leadership, or support teams. With deep empathy and powerful storytelling from his perspective as a patient, Robert helps audiences reconnect with their deepest source of strength—the “why” behind their work.

Healthcare teams will walk away with:

- **Emotional Resilience Under Pressure.** Learn how to reset mentally and emotionally, stay grounded amid crisis, and reconnect with the mindset that sustains long-term service.
- **Perspective as a Healing Tool.** Gain strategies to reframe daily challenges, access gratitude in the hardest moments, and rediscover the meaning in the mission.
- **Commitment to Purpose and People.** Real strength isn't carried alone, it's built together. By leaning on each other, healthcare teams renew the strength needed to serve others with compassion, clarity, and purpose.

Safety Focus

Paralyzed to Powerful: The Human Side of Safety

Paralyzed by an illegal play in a rugby championship, Robert's injury is the result of a safety rule ignored. Today, he speaks with teams across industries to share the human side of safety: how every decision, every shortcut, and every moment of pressure is more than just following rules.

In this adaptation of his keynote, Robert moves beyond compliance to focus on culture, instilling a sense of personal responsibility, team accountability, and purpose behind every rule and

regulation. His story reminds safety professionals, frontline workers, and leadership that the systems they build and follow aren't just about checklists—they're about protecting others.

Audiences will walk away with:

- **A Resilient Safety Mindset.** Learn how to stay focused and calm in high-pressure moments by cultivating mental habits that support clear thinking and intentional action.
 - **Reframe Daily Challenges.** Learn how to view setbacks and stressors through a lens of growth, not frustration, fueling better decisions and emotional resilience on the job.
 - **A Culture of Care.** Shift from a rules-based mindset to one rooted in purpose, where safety isn't just enforced, it's embraced as a shared commitment to one another.
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Videos

Robert Paylor Promo Video: <https://vimeo.com/1095774188>

Robert Paylor Keynote Segment: <https://vimeo.com/1089914991>

Robert Paylor - The Power of Teamwork <https://vimeo.com/1099051819>

TEDx Talk: <https://youtu.be/35fVVfyjIGs?si=3Ddtazd2rNAOrWci>

Robert Paylor - Safety Topic video: <https://vimeo.com/1129637377>

Media

PAC 12 Feature: <https://youtu.be/wZqqv2bF7fQ?si=C7fd0OOdqcZPh197>

NBC Bay Area: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHh6vzm3AqM&ab_channel=NBCBayArea

Photos

[Robert Paylor Photo](#)

A/V, Stage and Green Room Requirements

In order for Robert's presentation to have the maximum impact, we ask that you coordinate with your venue and production team to provide the following items. If your event cannot accommodate these requests, please let us know. Robert has the experience and options to adjust accordingly.

1. If a stage or riser is being used, ensure that there is wheelchair access. Standard ADA guidelines suggest one foot of ramp length for every inch of rise and a ramp width of 36 inches.
2. Ensure there are no obstructions between Robert and the audience, such as a podium or chairs on stage.
3. A lavalier microphone is required.
4. Powerpoint slides will be included in the keynote, which will be provided before the event, so projector capabilities are required. Robert will also bring his laptop and a USB drive containing his slide deck as backup.
5. Please provide a slide clicker that is compatible with the computer that will be projecting Robert's slides. If it is preferred that Robert use his own computer, he will bring a slide clicker.
6. Robert would appreciate an A/V check with your production crew in order to test his microphone and step through his presentation slides. Please indicate what time he should arrive.

Stage Introduction

It's my honor to introduce our keynote speaker today, Robert Paylor.

Robert is a California native and proud graduate of UC Berkeley. He came to Cal as an exceptional athlete, starting for the legendary Cal rugby team. I'll let Robert share his story in his own words, but as Cal rugby was competing for its 31st national championship, there was an incident that changed his life forever. Robert's response since then has spread inspiration across the globe, with his positivity and unwavering determination.

His story has been shared by major news outlets including Sports Illustrated, People Magazine, and the San Francisco Chronicle, and his social media videos have amassed millions of views.

Robert's testimony is a portrait of courage, and serves as living proof that when we have hope, discipline, and a strong team to support us, we are capable of achieving more than we ever thought possible.

Join me in giving a big round of applause for our special guest, Robert Paylor!

For events with Q&A please refer to this:

[Robert Paylor Q&A Moderator Guide](#)

Testimonials:

Full List of Testimonials [HERE](#)