

Mitch Shapiro

Founder, President and CEO at Foundation for Sight & Sound

Smithtown, NY, US

It's not only through determination that I have overcome challenges, but a vision of who I can become and how I can help others achieve!

Biography

Mitchel Shapiro is a public speaker and the founder of The Foundation for Sight & Sound, a Not for Profit organization started with a consortium of personal and professional acquaintances.

Afflicted by Usher Syndrome, the leading cause of deaf-blindness, Mitch's disability has only served to sharpen his "vision." His singular focus on turning his personal adversity into opportunity for growth is truly an inspiration. As a motivational speaker to groups of all types and sizes, Mitch moves audiences with thought-provoking insights that challenge listeners to "see" past obstacles and take positive action in their own personal and professional lives.

During a difficult juncture in his life Mitch was forced to face his double disability for the first time head-on. Following 25 years in the food service industry, the sale of his family's catering business left Mitch unemployed. At the same time a marital divorce separated him from his children. For many, this would have been the end of the story, but Mitch found the strength to turn these adversities into a new beginning.

With determination and tenacity Mitch started a new chapter in his life. He raised more than a million dollars for a major national charity and has become a public spokesman for issues pertaining to blindness and disability.

He is a strong supporter of volunteerism. Mitch believes in the value of helping without the expectation of personal gain. His personal philosophy is to always lead with example, kindness, and integrity. Aside from his many professional accomplishments, Mitchel Shapiro is also notably recognized for his corny sense of humor.

Mitch has addressed all types of individuals, including school children and members of civic and business groups. For many years he has been involved in countless business organizations and has provided other charities with creative fundraising ideas. Mitch also founded his own charitable organization, the Foundation for Sight & Sound.

Importantly, he also launched a career as a professional speaker to inspire others. In this role, his powerful words encourage and motivate listeners to follow his example to make life-altering decisions.

Availability

Keynote, Panelist, Workshop

Industry Expertise

Philanthropy, Fund-Raising, Corporate Leadership, Professional Training and Coaching, Public Relations and Communications, Non-Profit/Charitable

Areas of Expertise

Disability Means Ability, Volunteerism, Non-Profits and Community Development, Entrepreneurship

Sample Talks

Overcoming Obstacles from Someone who Knows

Mitch shares personal experiences and thoughts as well as ways in which he himself has overcome his own challenges. You will NEVER hear the word can't in Mitch's presentations - he will tell you "you can do anything you put your mind to."

Event Appearances

Seeing Past the Obstacles

The Believe Symposium

Visually/Hearing Challenged Entrepreneurs and Business Success

New Jersey Institute of Technology Entrepreneurship Speaker Series

Education

Miami Dade College

Hotel, Motel Restaurant Management

Accomplishments

Man of the Year - Syosset Woodbury Kiwanis Club

Mitch received the Man of the Year award from the Syosset Woodbury Kiwanis Club. Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world, one child and one community at a time. Kiwanians are volunteers changing the world through service to children and communities. No problem is too big or too small. Why? Because working together, members achieve what one person cannot accomplish alone.

President & CEO - Foundation for Sight & Sound

The Foundation for Sight & Sound is a registered not-for-profit organization that funds its programs through fundraising events and limited private and public grants. We are dedicated to creating a world where people with vision and/or hearing challenges can realize their full potential, allowing them to lead lives of inclusion and not isolation. It's all about possibilities ... and potential.

Long Island Volunteer Center Inductee

In 2009, Mitch was honored by being a Long Island Volunteer Center Inductee (Health Advocacy). The Long Island Volunteer Hall of Fame celebrates the humanitarian spirit by inducting volunteer founders of nonprofit organizations whose vision, dedication and drive addressed a community need and began a legacy of service to improve the quality of life for Long Islanders.

Recipient - Marketing Executive of the Year (Pro-Bono)

Mitch received the Marketing Executive of the Year (Pro-Bono) award from the Long Island Business News/Long Island Ad Club. Long Island Business News is Long Island's only publication devoted to local commerce and has been the premier source of news and data on business, economic trends and the region's robust entrepreneurial sector for more than 50 years.

Advocacy Award - Suffolk Independent Living Organization

Mitch received the Advocacy Award from the Suffolk Independent Living Organization (SILO), which is a grassroots, consumer driven, civil rights agency. The goal of SILO is to partner with the community at providing access to all Suffolk residents so that people with disabilities can determine where they live, work and play in the County.

Recipient - Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award

Mitch received the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals – Long Island chapter. The Association of Fundraising Professionals, an individual member association, advances philanthropy through education, training and advocacy based on research, a code of ethical principles and standards of professional practice. The Long Island chapter gives support to professionals in the LI not-for-profit sector.

Testimonials

Mitch Zachary, Partner

It would have been easy for Mitch to fold up his playing cards and say he'd been dealt a bad hand; instead, he spends all of his time helping others improve their lives. He fosters a sense of appreciation and satisfaction in others while making them feel good about themselves.

Roxann Murphy

Your presentation was well received by our members. We very much enjoyed your humor & message about the significance of helping the underserved with hearing aids. You drove home the importance of communication through hearing from a very personal level. Thank you for being so intimate with us regarding the struggles of being sign and sound hearing impaired.

The exercise you had us participate in was fun; triggering laughter as well as tears, but most importantly impacted each one of us in a particularly penetrating & effective manner. It was very relevant for our profession & helps us understand the struggles the people we serve live with. We hope you will present for us again. You are an engaging speaker and held a very captive audience.

Rudy Saviano

When I listen to Mitch Shapiro, I am captured by the unique combination of wisdom and hope contained in his messages. Mitch guides his audience through a process which eliminates the impossible and redefines the path toward a goal. "Turning a disadvantage into an advantage" takes on new meaning when Mitch tells his story

**Victor Fusco, Esq., Managing Partner Fusco, Brandenstein & Rada, P.C. and host of Labor-Lines,
WGGB AM 1240**

Mitch Shapiro is simply an awesome speaker who can capture the attention of any group. I heard him speak about ten years ago, and knew that this was an especially talented individual. Over the years Mitch has not only spoken to hundreds of community and business organizations, but also hosted a radio show with me. This is a man who combines, passion, compassion, intelligence, fun, good humor and imagination in everything he does and whenever he speak,. I always enjoy hearing Mitch. His wisdom surely puts things in their proper perspective for all.

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