CRAIG WING

Preparation hardens Decisions



SPEAKER KIT

Dr Craig Wing, PhD

Keynote speaker, author, and futurist

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HOW TO INTRODUCE CRAIG

IN PROGRAMMES

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BIOGRAPHY

Short

Dr Craig Wing researches how organisations prepare for futures they cannot predict, and his research and personal experience are the foundation for his view that preparation hardens decisions.

He is a keynote speaker, an author, and a futurist. He is based in Africa and speaks globally, and holds several academic adjunct positions.

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He founded WhatTheForesight, the organisational diagnostic derived from his doctoral research, and wrote Four Future Seasons, published by Penguin Random House, which launched at number 6 in Amazon's Hot New Releases and sold out its first print run inside five months.

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Long

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True innovation isn't about thinking outside the box, it's about thinking within multiple boxes. Craig's diverse career trajectory has equipped him with the ability to navigate the unknown with confidence. Engineering, an MBA, six founded companies, three years inside Google and a doctorate are just a few examples of the variety of experiences allowing Craig to connect dots and bring views and research on how you can prepare for the future.

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Academic, corporate exec and entrepreneur are three different careers, and most people working in foresight have had one (if at all!), which shows up either as academic frameworks with no real application or as advice recycled from someone else's research, but presented with supreme confidence.

Craig has had all three: Engineering degrees from the University of the Witwatersrand (systems thinking and analytical approaches), MBA from Babson, the top-ranked entrepreneurial college in the US (business application), six founded companies (startup and agile approach), Head of Small Business Marketing at Google South Africa, where he produced Woza Online, which put 50,000 South African businesses online inside a single year (scale and commercial application), and the secondment as the first African to Google X (innovation and disruption).

Finally, there is his doctorate from the University of Johannesburg under Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, then the university's Vice-Chancellor and now Rector of the United Nations University (research and academic rigour).

Teaching and advisory

- Adjunct faculty, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.
- Faculty relationship, Duke Corporate Education.
- Adjunct faculty, University of Johannesburg, and associate of the Wits Tayarisha School of Governance.
- Senior Fellow, Babson Institute for Social Innovation, Babson College.
- Advisor to the Wits Innovation Centre and Wits Enterprise.

Recognition

AFLI Desmond Tutu Fellow (2015), in conjunction with Oxford's Saïd Business School. World Economic Forum Global Shaper, inaugural South African member (2011). Mail and Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans (2012). CIO Today Most Inspirational Leader (2024). TEDx speaker (2011).

KEYNOTES

FIVE KEYNOTES

Four Future Seasons

Most leaders plan for a singular future as an extension of the past, so when it does not arrive as expected the planning is rendered useless. This talk, based on Craig's PhD, demonstrates how to think through multiplicitous seasons using "backcasting", where you work backwards from a preferred future.

Boat Lock

Everyone says leadership, vision, culture and technology are what make a company great, hence most budgets are allocated to leadership offsites, values sessions and investments in the latest technology. But what if that's incorrect? Four years of data from 759 leaders show that five different capabilities decide performance, and this talk, with cutting-edge research and statistical analysis, will demonstrate that perhaps your assumptions are wrong and you are "opening the wrong gate".

How to be Human in an Age of AI

People everywhere are asking which jobs AI will take, driven by technology doomers and techbros espousing the virtues of technology. But what does the research (MIT, Harvard, Wharton) really show as the real defence against the impossible-to-stop wave of technological disruption?

Holy Shift

A megatrends talk usually lists ten forces and leaves you no better informed than when you arrived. It is based on Craig's own research, demonstrating that we are moving even faster than "exponentials" and that when more than 3.46 changes occur, we have transcended exponential into factorial. This talk exposes five signals (versus trends) and shows how to determine them before they change your world.

Thriving in an UNSAFE World

VUCA was a phrase coined in 1987 by the US Army War College that has since become common language in the business world (in fact, some speakers still use VUCA as the next best thing!). However, VUCA describes the world we live in today, not how to deal with it. UNSAFE allows us to confront the new realities head-on.

MC AND HOSTING

MC, HOSTING AND MODERATION

While Craig specialises in keynotes, lectures and workshops, he is often asked to MC and host high-level events. These engagements are typically rare given his busy schedule and commercial comparison doesn't always match standard keynotes. When he does, Craig is often praised for his high energy, being able to carry an event across a full day or multiple days. His ability to weave a coherent "golden thread" across speakers and his infusion of humour and relatability are hallmarks of his MC skills.

FORMATS AND DELIVERY

- Formats: keynote, half day, full day, multi-day programme, conference hosting, panel moderation.
- Delivery: in person anywhere in the world, or virtually from a studio set up for it.
- Based in Johannesburg, working across South Africa, India, Thailand, Qatar and Ireland.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- A countryman or hands-free microphone.
- A high-resolution projector or screen, with house speakers for audio.
- The presentation can be sent to the event team up to 24 hours in advance, brought on a USB stick, or presented from his own laptop, which needs only an HDMI connection.

BOOKINGS

He takes bookings for keynotes, MC and hosting, workshops and advisory work, both directly and through speaker bureaus.

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Photograph 1 of 4 · Portrait, suit · for print use, credit Dr Craig Wing



Photograph 2 of 4 · Portrait, smiling · for print use, credit Dr Craig Wing



Photograph 3 of 4 · Portrait, green background · for print use, credit Dr Craig Wing



Photograph 4 of 4 · Portrait, dark background · for print use, credit Dr Craig Wing