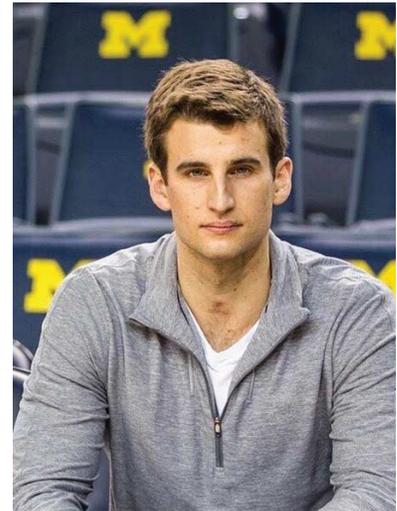




GOODMAN SPEAKERS | presents



## AUSTIN HATCH

My story is one of tragedy, incomprehensible loss and triumph.

On Labor Day of 2003, my family and I were flying from northern Michigan to Ft. Wayne, Indiana. As we were preparing to land, the aircraft crashed and burst into flames. My dad threw me out of the plane to save my life. He went back into the flames to get my mom, Julie, my sister, Lindsay, and brother, Ian, but tragically, was unable to. My mom, sister and brother did not survive.

My dad and I grieved the loss of our family members but we became each other's lifeline through the grief. We pushed each other to overcome, as we knew my mom, sister and brother would've wanted.

Eventually, my dad met a lovely woman named Kimberley, who had three kids of her own. They got married and together, formed a wonderful blended family. Meanwhile, I worked hard on my basketball skills and began to have success on the court. My dream was to play for Michigan. On June 15, 2011, Coach Beilein offered me a full scholarship to play basketball at The University of Michigan, which I accepted.

Nine days later, on June 24th, 2011, my father and "second mother" were flying to Northern Michigan to have a weekend of celebration. As we were preparing to land, the aircraft crashed, and my father and second mom were killed on impact. I suffered severe injuries and was nearly killed myself. After being in a coma for over two months, I had to relearn how to walk, talk and basically how to live my life. With the help of many incredible therapists, my family and friends, I made a great comeback to take the place at The University of Michigan that coach Beilein held open for me.

Nine years later, I am a graduate of The University of Michigan and am a full time motivational speaker with a message about Thriving in the midst of adversity. I am married to an incredible woman named Abigail, who was also a former varsity athlete at The University of Michigan. She pushes me to get better every single day. I consider myself blessed to be in a position to be impactful and speak to add value to a variety of organizations.

The question I had to find the answer to was how can I thrive in the midst of the adversity I face? We all face challenges today but I believe we can find ways to thrive in the midst of them.

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innovator disruptor scientist composer economist  
journalist ceo musician athlete  
mental coach actor chef author accountant  
motivator psychologist humorist adventurer

From my experiences, those who find ways to thrive in the midst of adversity do so with Grit. A lot of people have talked about Grit recently; it seems like a good trait for both people and for organizations to possess.

It has been said that Grit is working hard for a long period of time; that Grit is about consistency, not just intensity. That's true, but how can we apply Grit to daily our lives? How can we use this idea to help us, not merely survive adversity, but, instead, thrive in the midst of adversity? How can we use Grit to help us achieve any goal we set for ourselves and for our organization? I believe the following definition applies to overcoming adversity and to accomplishing any goal, as well.

There are four key components to Grit, but I believe Grit is driven by having a Greater Purpose for why we do what we do. If we are working just for ourselves, it is very likely that we will eventually face some form of adversity that will cause us to give up because we don't have a driving force for why we do what we do. If we are working for something bigger than ourselves, we will always do what it takes to get the job done, no matter the

task and no matter the circumstances. Not only will we find a way to overcome the adversity, but we will also find a way to get better because of it. Our Purpose drives Grit.

Growth Mindset, the first component of Grit. The Growth Mindset believes that every set back, every adversity, every failure, is an opportunity. Even when we inevitably fail or fall short of a goal, the Growth Mindset believes that failure is not a permanent condition. We can use it as an opportunity to get better. Adversity does not define us. Adversity can refine us if we approach it with the Growth Mindset. The event will probably not be a source of growth, but I believe we can grow from how we choose to respond.

Resilience, the second component of Grit. The decision to be resilient leads us to believe that we are not the product of our circumstances. We are the product of how we decide, how we choose to respond. We can overcome anything we put our minds to. If we make the decision to be Resilient, we focus on our Response to the adversity we face, rather than dwelling on the events that we can't control. The decision to be resilient will enable us to be agile as well. Sometimes, we just have to find a way.

Integrity, the third component of Grit. In the context of overcoming adversity, or working to achieve any goal, Integrity is about following through on our commitments, especially when our circumstances change. We owe it to ourselves, to the person we made the commitment to and collectively, we owe it to the team to always do what we said we would do, especially when there is a change in circumstance.

The Team First Mentality is the final component of Grit. I believe we should always think about our teammates first. We should train ourselves to think We before me. Sometimes we'll just have to do things because it's what the team needs. If do our very best to fill our role(s) to the best of our ability, the only impact we will have on our teams is a positive impact. "A rising tide can lift all boats!"

I believe that part of the reason I survived two plane crashes, endured tragic losses and made a great recovery, is to help others. I have been sharing my story and message about grit and thriving in the midst of adversity to inspire others to overcome the adversity they face in the years since. The question I had to find the answer to was how can I thrive in the midst of the adversity that I faced? We all face challenges every day, and I believe that it is my purpose to help others find ways to thrive in the midst of them.

## Testimonials:

Dominic Mirabella, Managing Director of Northwestern Mutual in Michigan: "In the space I serve, my goal is to assist clients and their families in preparing for what's next. Absolutely no one could've prepared Austin Hatch for what was to come next in his life as a plane crash survivor as a young boy and again at 16-years-old that left him in critical condition. Austin has felt the pain of losing family members in an instant and the heavy grief that would be nearly impossible for anyone to overcome. Yet, overcome is exactly what Austin did. He battled back to recover from his physical injuries and drove himself hard to become a member of the University of Michigan Basketball Team. Austin taught those around him that a mindset like his cannot be held down. He channels this grit, focus and energy into helping others understand that life isn't about what happens to you, it's how you respond to adversity. Austin is a shining example that through the struggles and loss one might have, you are strong enough to overcome any challenge and help those around you to be better. It's an honor to know Austin, see his exemplary character and I recommend him to the highest degree."

Steve Mitzel, CEO of Mspark: "Having heard and seen Austin's story we were looking for a speaker that could come talk to our sales and support teams about overcoming adversity. After a tough year in 2019, we wanted them to have optimism that they could win and believe in themselves. Austin was the PERFECT speaker for our team. His message of GRIT and overcoming adversity was so personal and authentic that everyone believed that they too could overcome adversity. Who knew that it would set us up for dealing with the COVID-19 fallout in the marketplace. To this day, our teams reference Austin's story and the GRIT behind it. Austin is such a passionate and motivating speaker. We were honored to have him come talk to us and help the Mspark team!"

Matthew Walls, Global Vice President of Franchise Development and Recruiting at Domino's: "I have known Austin since he was at the University of Michigan. I knew him, knew his story, and knew about his outlook on life. So, I asked him to speak to my team about Grit. After an hour, I realized there was so much about his story and about he approaches his daily life that I did not know. His message of determination, positivity, and purpose resonated with each of us in attendance. Austin's speaking style is authentic, his message is incredibly unique, and his view of life is refreshing. Each time I hear Austin speak, I am left exhilarated, focused, and committed to making those around me better."

Stephen Kennedy, VP of Marketing at Nestlé: "Austin hosted a virtual session for Center of Marketing Excellence team members focused on Digital, Communications and Media. With the team dispersed across the country, sheltering in their homes and dealing with the adversity that has been brought on by the COVID pandemic, it was the perfect time for Austin's message. Austin's message around approaching adversity with GRIT reinforced the key focus areas that will ensure we don't lose the successful momentum we had going into the pandemic. Having a growth mindset, being resilient and operating with integrity and as one team is what will keep our positive momentum going, and Austin did a great job of reinforcing the importance of all of these focus areas. He did a great job relating his life experiences to our industry and current business situation and we were fortunate to have him speak to the team."