

DIRK KNEMEYER

Social Futurist & Provocateur

Dirk Knemeyer thinks most of what we believe about ourselves and our society is wrong. At the center of his ideas is a complicated tension: since the Age of Enlightenment the so-called hard sciences have transformed the world around us and are a magnet for the best minds, yet precious little effort and attention goes into transforming the most important thing of all: the human condition.

How could we pour our energy into putting people on the moon yet overlook the fact the vast majority of us are disengaged in our jobs and careers? Why have we invested in mapping the genome while neglecting the sad reality that the world remains rife with war, terror, and violence against women? How is it that we hold smartphones that share, friend, and like with people around the world, yet ignore that more than two million U.S. marriages end in divorce each year? For all of our success in developing technology we've failed in developing ourselves.

The result is a society lacking in collective wisdom, maturity, and discretion. This has two tragic results: 1. Despite having access to an embarrassment of comforts and opportunities, the majority of us report being unhappy and disengaged; and 2. The reach of our technology far exceeds the grasp of our ability to wield it properly, exacerbating our dysfunction while putting our species and planet at risk. Yet, human beings have a unique capacity to change the world around us. If we are to find personal happiness and true enlightenment, we must also find a way to change ourselves.

An agitator against the status-quo, Dirk's provocative positions and engaging style motivate audiences to rethink their assumptions while fundamentally changing how they see the world. He exposes the failures of convention and is the catalyst for change each of us truly desires in the world but is too steeped in the minutia of daily life to consider. Dirk shows us that the key to achieving happiness and well-being rests in our ability to better understand and leverage the real power of the human species.



“You have this rare ability, to see things that others cannot and inspire them to achieve it with you.”

Peter Simlinger

Director, International Institute for Information Design

SPEAKING TOPICS

The NEXT Series

Dirk's experience in strategy, branding, and technology combine with a decade inside top technology companies to provide visionary paths to business excellence.

Business Next: Redefine Your Market with Future Tech

Workforce Next: Get the Most from Millennials

Customer Next: Attract and Retain Future Customers

The WE Series

Dirk's years studying the human condition synthesize with his research into culture, society, and government enabling him to present new social and national models.

Humanistic Capitalism: A Better Model for Organizing Society

Redesigning Democracy: Updating Our Governance for the 21st Century

The Human Scale: A Superior Way to Live

The YOU Series

Dirk's models for human understanding are applied to various aspects of our lives, providing a blueprint to help you maximize your precious life.

It's Your Love: Enjoy Wonderful Relationships

It's Your Life: Being Yourself

It's Your Future: Make the Most of It

Testimonials

“Your presentation is a hallmark, precedent making event, and one we should definitely try to build on and appreciate and take as an energy source.”

David Malouf

Manager, User Experience & Principal Designer
Intralinks

“Dirk infused a new energy into our group. His rousing presentation had a roomful of leading practitioners and design academics re-considering basic assumptions. He got a lot of people thinking.”

Jay Melican

Visiting Professor
Illinois Institute of Technology

“The first time I met Dirk I knew I was dealing with a powerful visionary.”

Michael Cromwell

Owner/Chief Creative Officer Cromwell
Communications

“Dirk’s presentation and perspective really resonated with our audience, resulting in lively conversations.”

Robin Tooms

Principal, Vice President, Strategy
Savage Brands

“Dirk is an excellent speaker with a flare for the dramatic, and put together a great presentation.”

Pabini Gabriel-Petit

Founder, Publisher, & Editor in Chief
UXmatters

Venues & Clients



BIOGRAPHY

Growing up, Dirk struggled to fit in. As a child he changed schools four times, dropped out of high school as a freshman, and spent two years in reform school. At 18, he secretly married his high school girlfriend and had two children by the time he was 22. Faced with divorce at 25, Dirk decided not to pursue a PhD and moved into the world of business. Over the next five years he sought to find his place in the world, evolving from a fundraiser, to an advertising executive, to a management consultant, to a designer, to a business executive. While Dirk achieved excellence and won various awards in these contexts none was a proper fit, so he decided to create his own place in the world. In 2004, he co-founded software design consultancy Involution Studios in Palo Alto, California where he spent more than a decade working with leading technology companies like Apple, Oracle, Microsoft, Shutterfly, and PayPal. He has now started multi-million dollar creative companies in Silicon Valley, Boston, and his native Ohio.

Over the past decade Dirk has given dozens of speeches around the world including conference keynotes in Europe and the United States. His audiences are diverse, speaking or keynoting at conferences like TEDx, South by Southwest, Transhumanism+, Frontiers of Interaction, and the national conferences for a variety of design organizations. He has also written articles about business, technology, and society in publications like Core77, UXmatters, and BusinessWeek, as well as served on the boards for 15 different companies in industries ranging from education to design to media.

Dirk is a student of human personality and behavior and the mastermind behind Facio, software that combines performance management with a deep understanding of personality to create better employment outcomes. He is certified in a variety of personality profiling tools. Dirk is a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a Master of Arts in Popular Culture, a cross-disciplinary program emphasizing sociology, psychology, and anthropology. He also earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from The University of Toledo.

dirk@goinvo.com +1 408 387 3690