

ABC 2024 Speakers



JASON BROLUND - Fire Chief, Kelowna Fire Department

Jason serves as the Fire Chief for the growing community of West Kelowna and Westbank First Nations. Jason led hundreds of firefighters through the devastating McDougall Creek Wildfire in the summer of 2023, evacuating over 25,000 residents and saving thousands of homes from destruction. Previously, Jason served as Deputy Fire Chief with the Kelowna Fire Department. Jason has been involved in emergency services for the past 28 years. He was directly involved in the emergency management component of major wildfires and floods in British Columbia and as a Venue Fire Commander during the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

Jason holds a Bachelor's degree in Technology with a specialization in Emergency Management. He has been awarded the British Columbia

Provincial Fire Services Long Service Medal and the Canadian Fire Services Exemplary Services Medal. In 2022, Jason was named West Kelowna Citizen of the Year. Jason is passionate about protecting communities from Wildfire and serves on the board of the Fire Chiefs Association of British Columbia.



PEDRO ANTUNES - Chief Economist, The Conference Board of Canada

Pedro Antunes is the thought leader and spokesperson for the Conference Board's suite of economic forecast products, as well as other reports and economic indicators that relate to Canada and its regions. Mr. Antunes has provided expert testimony before parliamentary committees. He makes numerous presentations on economic topics and dialogues with Canadian leaders, the public and media about issues important to Canada.

Mr. Antunes joined the Conference Board in 1991 after working with the Canadian Forecasting Group at the Bank of Canada. In addition to his contribution to regular forecast products, Mr. Antunes led research on the impact of demographic change on the financial sustainability of public health care, productivity and other issues affecting the long-term economic growth for Canada and its provinces. He also worked on several international projects, helping decision-makers in Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Ukraine develop appropriate forecasting and policy analysis tools.

Pedro is fluent in both official languages. He is married with one son and enjoys hikes with his dog and playing soccer. Mr. Antunes holds an M.A. (Economics) from Queen's University and a B.A. (Honours Economics) from Bishop's University.



BOB MCDONALD - Host of CBC's Quirks & Quarks

Bob McDonald is one of Canada's best-known science journalists, bringing science to the public for more than 40 years. In addition to hosting Quirks & Quarks, the award-winning science program with a national audience of nearly 500,000 people, McDonald is also a science correspondent for CBC Television's The National and Gemini-winning host and writer of the children's series Head's Up. He also hosted The Great Canadian Invention, Wonderstruck, and the seven-part series, Water Under Fire.

The host and writer of numerous television documentaries and more than 100 educational videos in Canada and the United States, McDonald has also authored five bestselling science books, with his latest being An Earthling's Guide to Space. He has also contributed to numerous textbooks, magazines, and newspapers, including The Globe and Mail.

An Officer of the Order of Canada and a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal, McDonald has been honoured for his outstanding contribution to the promotion of science with the Michael Smith Award from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Sir Sanford Fleming Medal from the Royal Canadian Institute, and the McNeil Medal from The Royal Society of Canada. In 2008, he won a Gemini Award for best host in a pre-school, children's or youth program or series.

McDonald holds twelve honorary doctorates from Canadian universities and two honorary College degrees. He also currently sits on the board of Friends of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory. In 2014, asteroid 2006 XN67 was officially named "bobmcdonald" in his honour.



PAM AUGUST - Former Director, Culture Activation at WestJet

Visionary, purpose-driven leaders recognize that there is untapped potential in their organizations. When this potential is left unrealized, it can lead to misalignment between an organization's brand promise (external experience) and culture (internal experience). Through her high-energy keynotes, Pam August helps leaders and their teams unlock this potential to see transformational results. She equips audiences with practical strategies to help activate potential, at home and work, for greater performance and impact.

August was the Director, Culture Activation at WestJet, where for 14 years she was a fierce champion and developer of people and culture as a key enabler of strategic success. Today, she is a trusted partner for high-performance organizations around the world through her consulting firm, Connecting Potential.

With a background in leading culture development and experience working with diverse organizations, August knows what it takes to uncover, align, and activate the best of what organizations already are and what they want to develop into. She brings deep insight and appreciation for what it takes to influence change and the energy and discipline it takes to see it through.

August is a sought-after guide, facilitator, coach, and co-creator with a strong foundation of lifelong learning. She has a Bachelor of Adult Education, a Master of Arts in Leadership, and certification as an Organization and Relationships Systems (ORSC) and Brain-Based Coach.



STEVE PAIKIN - Host, TVO's The Agenda

For over 30 years, Steve Paikin has been a trusted voice for Canadians seeking perspective and intelligent analysis of current events. He is an award-winning journalist, author, and documentary producer, best known as the anchor of TVO's flagship current affairs program, The Agenda with Steve Paikin. In his signature straight-forward and humorous way, Paikin's illuminating keynotes prepare organizations for what's next. He translates politicians' words into simple facts — what they're planning to do, what they'll probably fail to accomplish, and how this may affect business day-to-day.

Paikin joined TVO in 1992 as the host of their political series *Between the Lines*. He went on to co-create the Queen's Park news-magazine series, *Fourth Reading*, which he hosted for 14 years; to co-host *Studio 2* with Mary Hynes, followed by Paula Todd; and to co-create and host *Diplomatic Immunity*, a weekly foreign affairs commentary show. In 2006, TVO cancelled *Studio 2* replacing it with *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*.

Prior to TVO, Paikin was an anchor and Queen's Park correspondent for CBC Television's Toronto station, CBLT-TV, and host of a daily news and current affairs program on CBC News. He also held various reporting jobs in private radio and print media, including the *Hamilton Spectator* and Toronto radio station, CHFI, where he was a Toronto City Hall reporter.

Paikin has also produced several feature-length documentaries, including *A Main Street Man*; *Balkan Madness*; *Teachers, Tories, and Turmoil*; *Chairman of the Board: The Life and Death of John Robarts*; and *Return to the Warsaw Ghetto*, which won the Silver Screen Award at the US International Film and Video Festival and received awards at the Yorkton Film Festival in Saskatchewan and China's Shanghai Film Festival.

A bestselling author, Paikin has written seven books with his most recent being *Bill Davis: Nation-Builder and Not So Bland After All*. He has also moderated several election debates, including the federal leaders debates in 2006, 2008, and 2011 and the Ontario provincial leaders debates in 2007, 2011, 2014, and 2018.

Paikin has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto and a master's degree in broadcast journalism from Boston University. He holds honorary doctorates from McMaster University, Victoria University, Laurentian University, York University, and honorary diplomas.