



Howard Putnam was raised on an Iowa farm and learned to fly out of a pasture in his Father's J-3 Piper Cub. He entered the airline business as a baggage handler at Midway Airport in Chicago for Capital Airlines at age 17. Capital was soon merged into United and Howard held thirteen different positions in sales, services and staff assignments in several cities, before being named Group Vice President of Marketing for United Airlines, the world's largest airline, in 1976.

In 1978 he was recruited to become President and CEO of fledgling Southwest Airlines in Dallas, TX. While at Southwest Howard Putnam and his team tripled the revenues and tripled profitability in three years. They also successfully guided Southwest through airline deregulation and Southwest was the first air carrier to order the Boeing 737-300, which later became the largest selling aircraft ever for Boeing.

Howard Putnam led the visioning process at Southwest as well as further developing the "fun" culture and excellent customer service that Southwest is still known for today. Southwest has been profitable every year for over thirty years, a record unsurpassed by any other airline.

In 1981, Howard was recruited by the board of directors of Braniff International to come aboard as CEO and save and/or restructure the financially failing airline. He was the first airline CEO to successfully take a major carrier into, through and out of chapter 11. Braniff flew again in 1984.

He is the author of *The Winds of Turbulence* on leadership and ethics. Harvard University wrote a case study on his experiences at Braniff, "The Ethics of Bankruptcy" as a model as to how to handle stakeholders in crisis.

He has also been an entrepreneur, serving as Ch...

Howard Putnam

Speech Topics

- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Innovation
- ☐ Ethics
- ☐ Disruption
- ☐ Corporate Culture
- ☐ Change



Testimonials

"I've heard nothing but rave reviews since you left the stage. Your presentation really supported the CHS message and resonated with our audience. In my 15 years of hiring the annual meeting keynote, you are clearly the easiest individual with whom I've had the pleasure of working. Your communication skills are terrific and your commitment to learning about the organization was evident in your presentation. It's no surprise the end result was so outstanding!"

- CHS, Inc..

"It was our pleasure having you speak - we received A LOT of feedback on how much everyone enjoyed your presentation and how relevant the information you shared was to our current goal of putting our customers first in planning. You truly contributed to the success of our event and helped make it both enjoyable and memorable. We look forward to receiving your weekly e-mails and hope to have the opportunity to work with you again in the future."

- Discover Financial Services.