

# Sarah Furness


## Battlefield to Boardroom

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**Keynote Speaker, Author, Coach**

Former combat pilot equipping leaders for the new era.



A large military helicopter, likely a Chinook, is shown in flight against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The helicopter is viewed from a low angle, showing its main rotor blades and tail rotor. The background features a range of brown, hilly mountains under a clear sky.

# Sarah Furness

## Education and Foundation

After graduating from Cambridge University, Sarah embarked on a journey to pursue her dream of serving as a combat helicopter pilot in the RAF.

## Military Leadership and Operational Experience

As a Squadron Leader, Sarah led operational combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. She was the first female helicopter pilot to fly and lead UK Special forces missions and was Operational Commander in Afghanistan. Her specialist training includes Risk management, Human factors and Traumatic Incident management.

## Post-Military Mission

Sarah retrained as a mindfulness coach and cognitive behavioural therapist in order to better understand human behaviour under pressure. Drawing on her extensive operational experience and deep work in Human Factors she has created the HABITS and Practise Scared Method; Sarah translates pressure into practical tools that help people think clearly, act deliberately, and improve over time, not by avoiding mistakes, but by learning from them.

# Previous Clients



# Sizzle Reel



Click Me!



Sarah Furness

Speaker | Pilot | Author

Speaker | Pilot | Author



# Key topics

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## Performance

How to Thrive “Under Fire”

## Leadership & Teamwork

Harness Collective and Emotional Intelligence

## Change/Growth/AI

How to Outgrow the Competition

## Competence and Confidence

Practise Scared

“Big thanks to you Sarah Furness for your inspiring talk in our Airbus Global Supplier Conference 2024.”

**- Charles Huguet, SVP Procurement Governance & Strategy**



# Performance



- DISRUPTIVE IDEA: How we perform under pressure is not a mark of our character. It's a mark of our training
- DISRUPTIVE IDEA: Multitasking is a myth - it decreases performance and increases stress.
- Takeaway #1 Prioritize and focus one ONE thing at a time.
- Takeaway #2 Collaborate don't duplicate. Say No to tasks and people where appropriate to reduce duplication or over-dependency.
- Takeaway #3 Practise sacred (gain the competitive edge by making stretchy behaviours automatic)
- Key takeaways – greater productivity, greater decision making, reduced errors, reduced burnout

“We learned some awesome combat techniques that can be used to train our minds to be bulletproof when we're facing the worst.”

**- Tailgating with Geniuses**

# Resilience

- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** We distrust discomfort because it's become unfamiliar, not because it's dangerous.
- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** Imposter syndrome is not a syndrome that needs to be cured. It can be leveraged to identify gaps in our knowledges and identify our unique strengths
- Takeaway #1 Internal strength and self trust is built when we sit with discomfort rather than resisting or fuelling it - we are stronger than we think
- Takeaway #2 Resilience is built when we take ownership of our choices however they turn out, rather than waiting for someone to rescue us.
- Takeaway#3 Practise Scared is how we train our brains to lean into discomfort. The outcome is competence and confidence.
- **TAKEAWAYS** – greater resilience, happiness, retention, loyalty, self-reliance.

“Sarah Furness leading us out for the day! Helping us understand all about [how] we can thrive under fire.... There can be no one more qualified!”

- **The Talent Gathering**





# Growth/Change/AI

- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** We cannot eliminate uncertainty, we can learn how to navigate it and leverage it. AI is only one part of the future we need to prepare for.
- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** Mistakes are not the issue, it's how we view them.

- Takeaway #1 The advance of AI/tech is only one element of an uncertain future - nonetheless it highlights critical thinking, communication and collaboration are the enduring skills of the 21st century
- Takeaway #2 Sharing mistakes is the fast track way to increase trust, encourage innovation whilst multiplying learning and evolving more rapidly.
- Takeaway #3 Harness tech, don't be hostage to it. Let tech do multi-tasking so you can focus on the things that require the human touch.

- **TAKEAWAYS** – growth mindset, confidence, increased buy-in, increased creativity and collective intelligence, increased probability of success of change initiatives.

“The highlight of the afternoon was a keynote session by Sarah Furness, a former RAF combat helicopter pilot and Squadron Leader. Sarah shared her experiences of embracing vulnerability and thriving in uncertainty - valuable takeaways for all our resilient leaders.”

-HG

# Leadership/Teamwork

- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** The biggest thing that holds us back is fear, which translates to self doubt, hostility and censorship.
- **DISRUPTIVE IDEA:** People don't just need to feel "psychologically safe", they also need to be brave.
  - We can leverage our fear to lead more intuitively, inclusively and emotionally intelligently - this requires accountability and inner work
  - Skillful leaders convert group think into collective intelligence by asking "brave questions" and taking challenge on the chin.
  - When we give people permission to challenge us we strengthen, not weaken relationships.
- **TAKEAWAYS:** greater team cohesion, trust, collective intelligence, authentic leadership, self confidence.

"The standout moment for me was Sarah Furness' keynote speech on leadership, where she drew on her experience as a Puma pilot flying in conflict zones. Obviously, the storms that Sarah faced in her career were quite different to those that Donald Millar and I face, but her thoughts on leadership do translate from the battlefield to the exciting world of UK Real Estate! With a flight to the UAE coming up, I'm looking forward to delving into her book Fly Higher."

**- Michael M., Spencer West LLP**

# Books

**Fly Higher:** No.1 Best Seller and a must-read for self leadership

“Gripping, real, honest and fun.”

“Like being told the secrets to success by your coolest wisest friend”

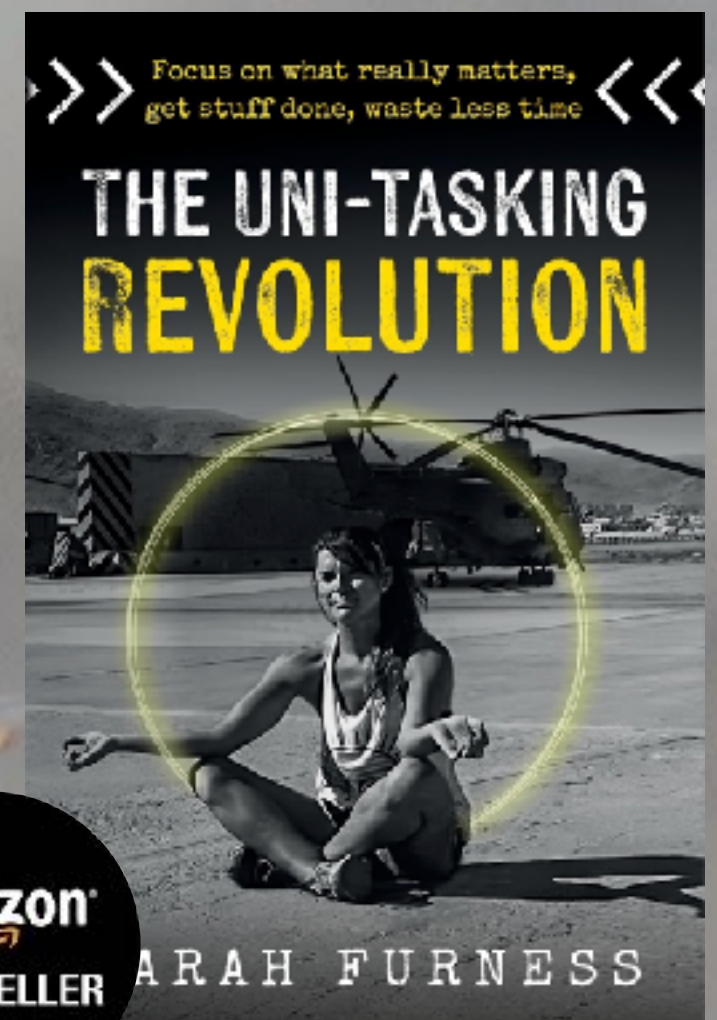


**The Uni-tasking Revolution:**

International best seller - ideal for high achievers who want to get more done.

“Uni-tasking? Total game changer”

Signed and bulk copies available.  
All prospects can receive an advance copy on request.



“The reason we love working with Sarah is because she seems to effortlessly blend inspirational stories with incredibly useful and memorable tools”

**- Ben Fennell, CEO, The Growth House**

# Thank You



“Sarah Was Brilliant.”  
-HG