

**Pre-session questionnaire** | Feel free to answer electronically, to office@  
michaelprager.com. Ground mail address is 30 Fisher Road, Arlington, MA, USA 02476.

What is the ideal program length for your gathering?

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Do you want audience questions to be included within that time?

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What size audience do you expect?

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In general terms, who will be in the audience?

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Do you want the program to include a break?

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If you wish, Michael can interview a handful of prospective audience members so he can better meet the group's needs. If this is appealing, please identify a few.

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Use three adjectives to describe an ideal outcome for the event. If you wish, you can write a paragraph or so to answer.

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Do you have any special requests?

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## **Michael's audio-visual needs**

Screen

Projection system that interfaces with a Macintosh

Note: Michael assumes permission to record both audio and video, potentially with a videographer. Please raise concerns you may have.

## **Podium introduction**

Today's speaker was a daily newspaper journalist for three decades, most recently for 14 years at the Boston Globe. Since he accepted one of the company's buyout offers in 2007, he wrote and self-published his first book, "Fat Boy Thin Man," and is about to publish his second, "It Matters." "Fat Boy Thin Man" broke into Amazon's top 40 sellers shortly after its release in 2010, and reached No. 2 in a couple of subcategories. He's been interviewed on ABC's "World News Tonight," NPR, the Washington Post, and a host of regional and syndicated television, radio, print, and internet outlets. Please welcome Michael Prager.

## **Suggested press-release copy**

The best speakers have at least two attributes: They know how to tell a story, and they have stories to tell.

That's Michael Prager. His ability to tell stories has been honed since his teens, when he earned his first paid byline writing about the high school football coach's routine on the day of the big game. He worked in daily newspapers for 30 years, almost half as an editor and writer for the Boston Globe. He has since published a book, "Fat Boy Thin Man," and written another, "It Matters," that will be published this year.

The stories he tells arise mostly from his experience as a fat child and obese adult who is now overcoming that condition for more than 20 years. But he doesn't counsel on nutrition or dieting, which he says is a lot like the weather: Lots of people talk about them, but nobody does anything about them.

He talks about change: Achieving it, but also sustaining it. He says that after accepting a buyout from the Globe in 2007, he covered what he thought was the sustainability movement, but that he now identifies as the green-building movement. "Like many people, I vastly understated what sustainability encompasses — it's nothing less than how any living thing survives. Once I started to really get it, I saw great similarities between how I'd lived as an overeater [top weight: 365] and how many people approach daily life."

Prager frames the lessons he learned in the context of any human challenge, from individual concerns such as shyness or procrastination right on up to how to overcome global climate change. He calls it the selfish approach to selfless actions.

Prager, 56, lives in suburban Boston in the loving family he forms with his wife, Georgina, and his son, Joseph.

## Biography



Michael Prager believes in the power to change, born not from faith but experience. His trial was excess weight, begun as a fat kid and flowered as an obese adolescent, surpassing 300 pounds for the first time at age 15 and twice more until topping out at 365 pounds at age 33.

During that time, he lost more than 130 pounds twice, and lesser amounts more times, but never kept it off. If you'd asked him why back then, he would have said a) I know what I need to do; I just need to work a little harder, or b) I don't know. Today, he's maintaining a 155-pound loss for better than 20 years.

His first book, "Fat Boy Thin Man," broadens the obesity discussion in America to include the effect of food addiction and the value of lifestyle changes, rather than merely food-plan changes. The book reached No. 40 on Amazon's general list.

His current work interprets his experiences on a deeper level, so that its lessons inform any healthy personal change, rather than just addressing obesity. His second book, "It Matters," contrasts global sustainability with personal sustainability, his term for resolving personal challenges reliably over a long period.

His work has been covered by ABC's "World News Tonight," NPR, the Washington Post, and a couple dozen print, television, radio, and internet outlets.

Before devoting his professional life to this work, Prager was a daily newspaper journalist for 30 years, most recently for 14 years editing the Boston Globe. His essays, news and feature stories, reviews, and op-eds have appeared in dozens of newspapers and magazines.

Prager is blessed with a wife, Georgina, who believes both in him and his mission to communicate these ideas, and a son, Joseph. The family lives together in Arlington, Mass.

