



Karen Hough, *The Improvisation Edge, Be the Best Bad Presenter Ever, & Go With It*

Karen Hough is the Founder & CEO of ImprovEdge, www.ImprovEdge.com, and has been using improvisation as a catalyst for business training and consulting since 1998. ImprovEdge won the silver International Stevie Award for Most Innovative Company of the Year 2012, and Karen was recognized in 2016 as an Inspiring Woman by the WNBA's Indiana Fever and won the WBENC Pitch Pivot Award in 2020 in the first virtual competition of its kind. Karen is also the #1 Amazon Bestselling author in category and 800CEORead Top 25 Business Books for "The Improvisation Edge: Secrets to Building Trust and Radical Collaboration at Work" published by Berrett-Koehler, and a regular contributor to the Huffington Post and has been featured in The Harvard Business Review, Inc magazine and Investor's Business Daily. Her second book, "Be the Best Bad Presenter Ever: Break the Rules, Make Mistakes and Win Them Over" published by BK in 2014 won the Benjamin Franklin Gold Award. Karen's third book on using improvisation to drive innovation, "Go with It: Embrace the Unexpected to Drive Change" was published in 2017 by the Association for Talent Development.

She is the recipient of the Athena PowerLink Award for outstanding woman-owned business and was named a Semi-Finalist in TechColumbus' Innovation Awards 2011 for Outstanding Service. She is the creator/author of the Yes! Deck, "Managing Tough Conversations: The Everyday Coaching Model", and numerous articles and blogs including publication in ASTD's T&D magazine, Mashable.com and BusinessInsider.com. She is a Certified Speaking Professional and a national conference keynote speaker internationally on topics such as the hybrid present and future, negotiation, DEI, leadership, executive presence, and sales.

ImprovEdge is a government certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) and Ms. Hough served on the board of Key Bank's Key4Women initiative and the board of WELD (Women for Economic and Leadership Development) and the board of The Matriots Ohio. She currently serves on the CAPA Board (Columbus Association for the Performing Arts). Ms. Hough was honored as a Deloitte & Touche Wise Woman for their inaugural breakfast event in Columbus, Ohio, and she represented women entrepreneurs for the State of Ohio for the Saitama, Japan Women's Contingent.

Ms. Hough is a graduate of Yale University and La Sorbonne, Paris IV. She worked for many years as a senior sales executive in the network engineering industry in New York and Chicago.

She originated and expanded the sales and management efforts of three separate technology start-ups, launched partner programs and assisted in East Coast and National expansions. Ms. Hough has been a professional improviser and actor for 30 years. Her improvisational training and performance credits include over 100 live productions with the Second City of Chicago, Metraform/Annoyance Theatre, the Organic Theatre and the Purple Crayon of Yale, and many others. She was formerly the International Spokesperson for Stratacom, a spokesperson for Tivoli and Infiniti, and her TV and radio credits include CBS, Miller, Earthshare, Eli Lilly and S.C. Johnson.

Since 1998, ImprovEdge principles and exercises have been vetted through research projects led by Ms. Hough with MBA students at: Wharton School of Business, the Ohio State University, University of Massachusetts, Otterbein University.

Ms. Hough is deeply committed to volunteer activities and philanthropy. She is a mentor for the Otterbein Women's Network Initiative, and a portion of ImprovEdge profits go each year to support arts education through the CAPA Education Fund and the Marquis Awards, The American Heart Association, Computers for Youth, the Women's Fund of Central Ohio, kiva.org and DonorsChoose. Her volunteer activities include teaching improv classes for high school students in rural Kansas and confidence-building workshops for Chicago City schoolchildren. She is a former board member of the Yale Whim 'n Rhythm Alumnae Association, and is a volunteer for the Yale Alumni Schools Committee and the Yale Alumni Fund. She resides in Columbus with her husband, has three grown children and two dogs.