

SHIRIN BEHZADI

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR • SPEAKER • INVESTOR • GAS STATION CASHIER TURNED BILLION-DOLLAR CEO



Shirin Behzadi is a keynote speaker, investor, advisor and entrepreneurial CEO. Born in Iran as the youngest of five to self-made parents, she embodies the superpowers of resilience and self-reliance. After fleeing the Iranian revolution at 17, she rebuilt her life in the U.S., working her way through college as a gas station cashier and eventually founded and led a billion-dollar company featured on the cover of Forbes. Along the way, she overcame extraordinary challenges, including surviving a brain tumor that forced her to relearn how to walk. Now, after selling her company, Shirin is dedicated to inspiring high-achieving entrepreneurs and executives to embrace challenge, turning adversity into opportunity. Her mission is simple: to help others dream boldly, lead courageously, and thrive through life's toughest moments.

Signature Keynotes

FROM GAS STATION CASHIER TO BILLION-DOLLAR CEO: THE SUPERPOWER OF ADVERSITY

Adversity is the ultimate accelerator, where each setback becomes a launchpad for reinvention and growth, forging our leadership edge in high-pressure moments, carving fresh paths no one has dared to walk, and revealing what Shirin calls “the superpower of adversity.”

TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE: THE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT EQUATION

Engagement is not a byproduct of good intentions. It's built when leaders intentionally invite employees into conversations, strategies, and vision that shape the organization's future. Shirin explores how listening with respect, creating meaningful channels for input, and communicating clearly transforms employees from observers into invested contributors. An equation for the next generation.

PLANNING FOR AND SECURING CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

The right capital partner can accelerate your growth but the wrong one can cost you your vision. Shirin shares what she learned securing equity partnerships on her way to building a billion-dollar company, giving your audience the pros, cons, and best practices to find the capital partners who are actually right for them.



2026 SPEAKER REEL

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“Stories like Shirin’s remind me how powerful the entrepreneurial journey can be. When leaders bring resilience, perspective, and purpose to their work, they expand what growth and leadership can look like.”

- Stasia Mitchell, Global Entrepreneur Leader at EY

AS SEEN IN:



Entrepreneur

Bloomberg

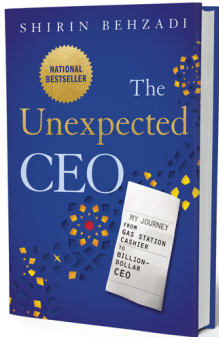
Forbes



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National Best-selling Author



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“ Shirin’s leadership journey—from bulletproof glass to the boardroom—shows that deeply empathic, values-driven leadership isn’t just possible, it’s profitable. Her focus on trust, culture, integrity, and people development isn’t a detour from performance—it’s the path to it. For current and aspiring leaders, Shirin challenges outdated models of power and sets a new, more humane standard—one that today’s workforce demands and future generations will expect by default.

— TAL GOLDHAMER, FORMER CHIEF LEARNING OFFICER, EY AMERICAS

Podcast Appearances



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In The Media

Entrepreneur

She Moved to the U.S. at 17 and Worked at a Gas Station — Then Became CEO of a \$1 Billion Brand

Shirin Behzadi's journey from a war-torn childhood to the C-suite is a masterclass in resilience.



Business Insider: As-told-to Essay based on a conversation with Shirin Behzadi, The Unexpected CEO



Nasdaq Celebrates the Launch of the Unexpected CEO by Shirin Behzadi



7 Best-Seller

The Unexpected CEO: My Journey from Gas Station Cashier to Billion-Dollar CEO

Forbes

From Gas Station Cashier To CEO: Lessons In Leading By Listening



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