

Marie Gleeson

Marie Gleeson is a former Irish Naval Captain turned leadership consultant and keynote speaker. She draws on her distinguished military and corporate career to deliver compelling insights on resilience, decision-making under pressure, and leading with authenticity in challenging and fast-changing environments.

KEY TOPICS

- Navigating Choppy Waters: Building High-Performing Teams in a Changing World
- No Passengers Allowed: Why Transformation Needs You to Step Up
- Charting Your Course: The Leadership Journey to the Captain's Chair
- The Difference is You: Why Your Role Matters More Than You Think
- Commanding with Compassion: Leading with Strength and Empathy

BIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Marie Gleeson is an inspirational leadership speaker and consultant, renowned for translating her military experience into powerful lessons for business and organisational life. A former Captain in the Irish Naval Service, she specialises in resilience, decision-making under pressure, and leading high-performing teams with authenticity and empathy.

Professional Background & Credentials

Marie's 20-year military career began as a cadet in 1998 and culminated in her appointment as Commanding Officer of the LE AOIFE. During this time, she led operations that included international drug interdictions, humanitarian missions, and the navigation of profound personal and professional challenges, including the tragic loss of a colleague at sea. These experiences shaped her deep understanding of leadership under pressure and the power of resilience. As one of the first female officers in the Irish Naval Service, Marie consistently broke new ground in a male-dominated field. She later advanced to key leadership roles such as Director of Shore Operations and Director of the Strategic Planning Cell, where she influenced strategy and operational performance at the highest levels. Following her naval service, Marie transitioned into senior roles in the private sector. She served as Chief Strategy Officer at Cognate Health and Director of Leadership & Human Performance at Ingenium, before founding NavMar Leadership, her own consultancy. Across these roles, she has worked with leaders and teams in the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors, delivering programmes that drive alignment, collaboration, and transformation.

Speaking Style & Audience Value

Marie is recognised for her engaging, authentic and often humorous speaking style. She blends storytelling with practical strategies, drawing directly from her experiences at sea and in senior leadership. Audiences value her ability to make high-stakes decision-making relatable, while equipping them with practical tools for resilience, collaboration and performance in their own environments. Her keynotes are not only inspirational but also highly applicable, leaving participants with actionable insights on how to navigate adversity, break through barriers and lead with integrity. Marie's reputation is reinforced by her recognition as a keynote speaker at major conferences including the Pendulum Summit, Institute of Directors, Northern Trust, NAPD and Kerry Group. Testimonials consistently highlight her raw honesty, emotional connection and rare ability to inspire audiences across sectors.

Leadership Roles & Affiliations

Marie's leadership journey spans commanding a naval vessel, directing operational strategy, and guiding corporate transformation. From her tenure as Commanding Officer in the Irish Naval Service to her senior roles at Cognate Health and Ingenium, and now as founder of NavMar Leadership, she has consistently demonstrated the ability to lead diverse teams through complex challenges with clarity and purpose. Contact us now for more information on how Marie can inspire your leaders and teams with powerful lessons on resilience, decision-making under pressure, and leading with authenticity in challenging environments.