

# Alastair Campbell

## *Writer, communicator and former Tony Blair strategist*

Alastair Campbell is a writer, communicator and strategist best known for his role as former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's spokesman, press secretary and director of communications and strategy. Often controversial and always prepared to speak his mind, Alastair is a sought-after speaker at events around the world, specialising in strategic communications, leadership, team building and crisis management. He is also a bestselling author and is still active in politics and campaigns in Britain and overseas.

Alastair graduated from Cambridge University in 1981 with a degree in modern languages and later became a journalist training with the Mirror Group on local papers in the West Country before joining the *Mirror* itself in 1982.

Alastair left in the mid 80s to work for Eddy Shah's *Today* newspaper as news editor but had a nervous breakdown and left to return to the *Mirror* after convalescence. He rose to become political editor and the paper's chief political columnist. He then worked briefly for *Today* under new ownership in 1994 before being asked by Tony Blair to be his press secretary when Mr Blair became leader of the Labour Party. He did this for three years, and played a key role helping to create New Labour and return the Party to power. After the 1997 election he became the Prime Minister's Chief Press Secretary and Official Spokesman, which entailed the co-ordination of Government communications and twice daily briefings of the press. He did this job for Labour's first term but after helping Mr Blair win a second landslide election victory, he became Director of Communications and Strategy. He resigned in September 2003 to spend more time with his family.

Alastair Campbell returned to the Labour Party for six months prior to the 2005 general election. He presented a series of TV interviews for Channel Five, whose subjects included President Clinton, Peter Mandelson, Bono and US cyclist Lance Armstrong. He has also written on sport for *The Times*, the *Irish Times* and *Esquire* magazine. He also conducted a tour of UK regional theatres to talk about, and be quizzed on, his time with Tony Blair. He was communications adviser to the British and Irish Lions rugby tour of New Zealand in 2005.

In his time in Downing Street Alistair was involved in all the major policy issues and international crises. He has said that in ten years in the media, and a decade in politics, he saw his respect for the media fall and his respect for politics rise. He was called to the Leveson Inquiry into press standards twice, first for his insights into modern journalism, second to give his views on the changed relationship between politics and media.

On July 9 2007, he published his first book on his time with Tony Blair, *The Blair Years*, extracts from his diaries from 1994 to 2003, which was an instant *Sunday Times* #1 bestseller. His first novel, *All In The Mind*, a frank examination of mental illness was published in November 2008. His second novel *Maya*, a gripping analysis of fame and the obsession it attracts, was published in February 2010. His third novel, published in September 2013, was called *My Name Is*, and tells the story of a young girl's descent into alcoholism. This led to him becoming an ambassador for Alcohol Concern. In 2015, his book *Winners: And How They Succeed* went straight to number 1 in the UK.

Alastair's charity projects have involved him playing football with Diego Maradona, and appearing in a one-off version of the popular TV programme, *The Apprentice*. He is chairman of fundraising for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research, and has personally raised well over seven figures for the charity through sport and other events.

In October 2008 Alastair broadcast an award-winning one-hour documentary on BBC2 about his own breakdown in 1986. Both the film *Cracking Up*, and *All In The Mind*, won considerable praise from mental health charities and campaign groups for helping to break down the taboo surrounding mental health. He received the Mind Champion of the Year award in May 2009 in recognition of his work to break down the stigma around mental illness, and continues to campaign on the issue both in Britain and overseas. He has also made a BBC documentary about alcoholism, and a film about wildlife. He also made a film about his love of bagpipe music, which ended with him performing in front of 2,500 people in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall.

Alastair Campbell is an engaging, entertaining and innovative speaker able to apply his insights and experience to the work of others with wit and passion.

***Alastair Campbell talks about:***

- Crisis Management in the Global Economic Crisis
- Current Events Worldwide
- How Pace of Change is Changing Politics
- Lessons in Leadership From Those I Have Known
- The Impact of 24/7 Media on Decision Making
- The Impact of Barack Obama on the World
- The Life and Times of Alastair Campbell
- The Pace of Change in China and India
- What is Strategy?

## **Client Testimonials**

This forthright journalist, broadcaster and author has provided my clients with fascinating, entertaining and memorable insights into the world of politics and journalism at the very highest level.

### **Paul Smith Associates**

He set out to carefully tailor his insights to a largely creative audience, and his anecdotes were told with the ease of a master storyteller.

### **Red Bee Media**

Alastair Campbell, the 'man behind Blair', is one of the true titans of his profession. His book will remain the important commentary on Blair in power. At the podium he knits together stories that offer penetrating insights into how politics and politicians really work.

### **Province of Ontario**

Controversial, thought-provoking and highly entertaining, Alastair gave a refreshingly candid insight into past and present political leaders and events that captivated our guests.

### **Ernst and Young**

I had the pleasure of producing the PRIA National Conference in Perth, Australia at which Alastair was the Keynote International Speaker. He is an insightful and compelling speaker. His approachable manner was refreshing and his flexibility and willingness to assist in the crafting of a positive experience for the delegates was tremendous. Alastair is a superb communicator, an exceptional individual and an unrivaled addition to any event.

### **Dominic Patterson**

Alastair was one of the highlight speakers at our major London event in 2008. He is a highly engaging and charismatic presenter who could not fail to win over an audience with his genuine warmth and wit. He also knows a lot of stuff about a lot of things and is a top bloke to work with.

### **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development**



## **Client Testimonials**

Alastair delivered a keynote lecture on leadership in the media age. He captivated the audience - believers and sceptics - with a brilliant and engaging presentation.

### **Henley Management College**

Involving Alastair as the key focus of a discussion forum for the medical profession was described by our clients as a stroke of genius. Not only was he delightful and charming to work with, but ensured the evening event was the talk of the medical congress and indeed was a hot topic of discussion amongst attending and non-attending physicians for months afterwards.

### **Galliard Healthcare Communications**

Infamously once described as a "ruthless, political hatchet man", Alastair Campbell is arguably the most famous Downing Street Press Secretary ever. This forthright journalist, broadcaster and author has provided my clients with fascinating, entertaining and memorable insights into the world of politics and journalism at the very highest level. He's a motivational and inspirational speaker in a class of his own.

### **Paul Smith Associates**

Alastair Campbell spoke at my Oxford University seminar on British government, on 'Politics and the Media'. He is one of the few people who understands both politics and the media. His talk was both witty and penetrating, and he answered questions in a clear and informative way.

### **Vernon Bogdanor, Oxford University**