

**PRESS RELEASE
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**Benjamin Zander in South Africa to conduct a symphony of
possibility**

“Classical music touches everybody’s soul”, says world-renowned conductor and public speaker Benjamin Zander, “and it holds the key to transforming the relationship between leaders and their followers.”

The 69-year old Benjamin, who has been conducting the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra since 1979, combines his passion for classical music with incredible public speaking skills to turn boardrooms across the world upside down with his extraordinary take on leadership.

In August 2008 South Africans will have the opportunity to be touched by Benjamin’s extraordinary passion and together with psychotherapist Rosamund Zander he hopes to “re-ignite the flames of possibility for South Africans”.

Like most other transformational speakers Benjamin can be seen on stage with a lapel microphone and a flipboard, but he has another secret weapon – a piano. His presentations are a combination of his enigmatic passion and practical demonstrations aided by classical music, and as a result are more of a musical experience than teaching sessions. His methods may be unconventional, but the business world cannot seem to get enough of it. Tom Peters, acclaimed self-development author, calls him "the hottest property on the business guru circuit ".

Benjamin, who has appeared five times as a keynote speaker at the World Economic Forum in Davos, is also co-author of *The Art of Possibility*, a partnership between him and psychotherapist Rosamund Stone Zander. His presentations are an outflow of the message contained in the book. Challenging the reader to step out of the world of downward spiraling into a world that radiates with possibility, the book encapsulates the message that has made Benjamin one of the most sought-after public speakers on leadership and attitude.

Benjamin draws his inspiration from a deep-seated passion for classical music, which has always been an intricate part of his life. Born and educated in England he started to compose musical scores at the age of nine, studying with England’s leading composer Benjamin Britten. Leaving school at the age of fifteen, he moved to Florence where the great Spanish cello maestro, Caspar Cassado, would mentor and teach him for the next five years. After completing his cello training at the State Academy in Cologne, Benjamin traveled throughout Europe performing as a chamber

musician.

An inability to develop calluses on his fingers (a prerequisite for anyone who wishes to be a professional cellist) forced Benjamin to abandon his aspirations of becoming a professional musician. Unable to abandon his love for classical music, he became an orchestral conductor. He has been conducting the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra since 1979, and regularly performs as a guest conductor for other orchestras.

But how did a musical maestro come to be a speaker on leadership who has been invited by giant organisations like IBM, NASA and British Telecom to share his message?

It was Benjamin's passion for classical music that led to his discovery of the message that is taking him throughout the world, transforming and challenging assumptions wherever it is taught. His message is as radical as it is simple, and basically teaches that any leader's power derives from his or her ability to make others feel powerful. According to Benjamin the relationship between the conductor and his orchestra is a metaphor for real life – a powerful bond that can be replicated in the workplace.

“My eureka-moment happened the day I realised that the conductor does not make a sound, says Benjamin. “He is silent. It is the players who play. My power is enormous, but it consists entirely out of my ability to make other people feel powerful.”

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Sources

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