



**SHARING KNOWLEDGE**  
Author, speaker, professor and conductor Ben Zander will be in South Africa in August.



**A**t 69, Benjamin Zander travels the world at a pace that would make most 20-year-olds balk. When not conducting or recording, he tours and leads orchestras of business executives, leaders, politicians, students and economists in a symphony of possibility. He doesn't teach leaders how to extract potential from others; rather, he and his wife Rosamund Stone Zander teach how to lead by example and become the possibility they want to see in others.

Zander has undergone profound transformation in this, the latter half of his life. He attributes this to the relationship he shares with his wife, a psychologist and author. Together they penned *The Art of Possibility*, a best-selling book that has been published in 17 languages, and is lauded

BEN ZANDER, ACCLAIMED CONDUCTOR OF THE BOSTON PHILHARMONIC, PROFESSOR AT THE PRESTIGIOUS NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, AND CELEBRATED SPEAKER AND AUTHOR, HEADS TO SOUTH AFRICA TO TEACH LOCAL LEADERS ABOUT THE ART OF POSSIBILITY.

MANDY DE WAAL CHATTED TO HIM IN BOSTON.

# Symphony of



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BEN ZANDER

by gurus Tom Peters and Seth Godin. The Harvard Business School Press published the book, which has stayed on the *Business Week* best-selling book list almost perennially.

Zander’s own transformation story goes like this: he was at the height of his success when his marriage to Roz broke up. “My whole life was about striving. I was horribly driven, self-absorbed and needy.” This pivotal crisis point drove him to delve deep into his own psyche, unlike what he had done in his career, marriage or music. Roz became a central figure for this transformation by recognising that the couple could only mutually thrive by inventing a new paradigm for contributing to each other.

“She focused all her attention on the fact that we were still related, so we might as well be related in the best possible way. It’s a huge gift to realise that you don’t have to keep scorecards of what went wrong. You can actually say, ‘That is the past. This is the present. Now, what can we do?’”

#### Making others powerful

The pair then participated in the controversial Erhard Seminar Training (EST), which formed the basis for their ‘possibility thinking’. In short, this rests on the belief that within every human being there is the potential for freedom, choice and self-invention. It’s a belief that has become a life’s work for

the Zanders and changed Benjamin Zander’s style of conducting forever.

“Conducting is totalitarian, almost dictatorial,” says Zander. “I had been practising the top-down, hierarchical model of conducting for years. Then I realised the incredible: the conductor, the most physically active person in the entire music world, doesn’t make a sound! The conductor’s power depends on his ability to make other people powerful.”

The result is a tour de force that has been praised by the likes of BT, Shell, IBM, KPMG, Sprint, Nasa, and The US Army. Their workshops are a passionate interaction of singing, being and transformative experience that has made the Zanders one of the most sought-after management gurus of our time. This sees them return repeatedly to the WEF at Davos, where gathered leaders, politicians and journalists hang on their every word and gesture. **B**

*Brainstorm* and ITWeb are proud to partner with Symphonia, which is bringing Benjamin and Roz Zander to South Africa for workshops at Vodaworld in Midrand on 15 and 20 August, and Cape Town’s Artscape Theatre on 21 and 22 August. For more information, contact Johleen van Wyk at johleen@symphonia.net or call 021 913 3507. Alternatively, visit [www.symphonia.net](http://www.symphonia.net) or watch [www.itweb.co.za](http://www.itweb.co.za) for more details.

#### FROM MUSICAL PRODIGY TO MANAGEMENT GURU

Benjamin Zander was a musical prodigy by the age of eight. At nine, he was already composing and studying the cello with musical legends Imogen Holst, Benjamin Britten and the Spanish cellist and virtuoso Gaspar Cassadó.

Zander left school when he was 15 to live in Florence, Italy, and be taught by the great Cassadó. But life has an interesting way of shaping dreams. When Zander was unable to form the calluses on his fingertips, so necessary to becoming a world-class cellist, he had to transform and recreate his dream. He would complete a degree at London University, winning the University College Essay Prize, before going on to join the New England Conservatory, where he is a professor and teaches interpretation.

In the late ’70s, Zander became the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and soon established himself as one of the world’s most respected conductors. He has conducted the Israel Philharmonic for three consecutive years, and conducted orchestras as diverse as the Bournemouth Symphony, the St Petersburg Philharmonic, and the Malaysian Symphony.

He has a unique relationship with the Philharmonic Orchestra of London with which he has recorded a series of Beethoven and Mahler symphonies under the Telarc label.

The winner of numerous awards and honours, Zander received the Crystal Award at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in recognition of his contribution through culture and the arts to global understanding and peace.

# possibility