

The Keynote Chronicle



Humor News from Jan McInnis

800-492-9394

www.TheWorkLady.com

Jan@TheWorkLady.com

www.linkedin.com/in/janmcinnis

My Recipe for Success

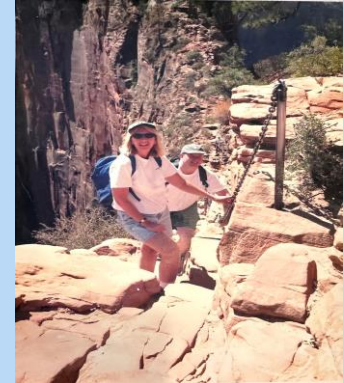
There I was, standing in sneakers and jean shorts, staring at Angels Landing: a steep, steep hike/climb of about 1500 feet up the side of a mountain in Zion National Park. I say “hike/climb” because you hike up to a point, and then climb to the summit using chains on posts that have been drilled into the mountain. And did I mention that it’s VERY steep?

I’m thinking, “Let’s do this!” Luckily, my friend Ron talked me out of it. This was, after all, my first time knowingly hiking in a national park (hence the jean shorts and sneakers). I was NOT prepared for this type of hike, but I was enjoying myself so much in the park that I figured I could do it.

This happened many years ago, and wanting to take on Angels Landing was a mix of being naïve and having an incredible amount of enthusiasm, which is the perfect recipe for thinking you can do ANYTHING.

I wasn’t always enthusiastic about hiking, but I was naïve. Back in my twenties, a friend organized a group of us to hike a very challenging mountain, Old Rag, in Shenandoah National Park. I had no idea we were in a national park or that this was a challenging hike. Most of us had zero hiking experience and didn’t know what to bring. Not to mention that Tom, our friend who organized the hike, gave us zero instructions. He was ex-military, so I’m guessing that, for him, this was a literal walk in the park. It was not. It was a killer march. If I’d worn hiking shoes that day, I would have thrown them away.

We all showed up wearing jeans and sneakers, after having stopped at the drug store, where each of us picked up ONE 12 oz. bottle of water. It was the heat of summer, and this hike was listed as VERY challenging. Many of us were out of water about an hour into the five-hour “experience.” It was steep, there was rock scrambling involved, and many switchbacks. The heat was also a killer, and I was thirsty for 90% of the hike. At the top of the mountain, someone pulled out a water gun and started a water fight. If I could’ve, I would’ve tackled that person for their water. Upon getting back to my car that night, I unconsciously swore off hiking. . . until Ron’s invitation.



Jan and Ron are contemplating the very dangerous “Angels Landing” hike in Zion.

Spotlight

Make sure You’re Using Jan For:

- ✓ Her “*Finding the Funny in Change*” Keynote
- ✓ Her “*Bouncing Back*” Keynote
- ✓ *Master of Ceremonies for your Banquet*

Scan my code to see a clip of my popular keynote “*Finding the Funny in Change*”.



Fast forward 15 years later when I moved to the West Coast and Ron convinced me to join him on a hiking trip to Zion. That trip didn't start off great, as we spent the night before the hike in Las Vegas at the casino New York, New York, and my car was broken into. (Kinda ironic that I was robbed at a hotel named New York, New York.) They stole a bag full of cans of motor oil (funny) and my electronic Rolodex (not funny). My sister had given that to me as a going away gift when I moved across the country, and it contained ALL of my saved contacts. Without it, starting over in a new state was really gonna be starting over completely.

I decided to ignore the theft for the moment and focus on the park. As we drove through the park entrance, my phone rang. The casino security guard had found my bag, including my Rolodex, in the garage stairwell. I'm sure the thief was furious that they risked jail time for motor oil, and some weird-looking electronic thing.

We spent the day hitting some really fun trails and my enthusiasm grew, and grew, and grew. . . until we were looking up at Angels Landing. I was gung-ho and ready for that climb! Ron, not so much. Luckily, I listened to him and we headed back down.

Now, after hiking at least 25 national parks around the country, with actual hiking shoes, hiking pants, poles and other gear (read: plenty of water), I STILL have not hiked Angels Landing, and can't believe I ever considered it! But the recipe is clear: enthusiasm mixed with a little naïveté, will make you WANT to tackle some big goals.

As leaders, it's your job to encourage that enthusiasm. Get people interested in a challenge by showing them a cool experience with an appropriate level of difficulty, like Ron did. Don't turn them off with no preparation, little information, and tough expectations, like Tom did. Leaning into people's naïveté so that they WANT to do big things is great, but make sure you're giving them good guidance so they don't fall off the mountain. Get this recipe right, and you and your group will soar.

Oh, and hike a national park! They belong to us, so go explore our beautiful properties (with the right equipment, of course).

About Jan . . .

Jan McInnis has written for Jay Leno's Tonight Show monologue as well as many other people, places, and groups radio, TV, syndicated cartoon strips, and even guests on the Jerry Springer show (her parents are proud). For over 20+ years she's traveled country as a keynote speaker and comedian sharing her unique and practical tips on what business leaders can learn from comedians (no, it's not about telling jokes). She can be reached at TheWorkLady.com, Jan@TheWorkLady.com or contact her assistant Brenda@TheWorkLady.com 703-581-7604

Jan has shared her customized humor keynotes with thousands of associations and corporations, and she is the author of 2 books: "Finding the Funny Fast" and "Convention Comedian." She was also featured in the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, and the Huffington Post.

Feedback from recent events:

"Jan McInnis's keynote was engaging and insightful, offering the perfect balance of humor and education. Her natural ability to weave comedy into her presentation kept the audience laughing while also delivering valuable lessons on easily incorporating humor into everyday situations. I loved how she made it accessible for everyone, emphasizing that anyone can bring in humor with a few simple strategies. Her relatable anecdotes and practical tips made the session entertaining and empowering, leaving us with tools to lighten the mood in our personal and professional lives. It was truly a fantastic and memorable experience!"

"Jan McInnis was the perfect keynote speaker for our annual School Secretaries Conference! Her hilarious observations were generously sprinkled throughout her presentation in a way that kept everyone on the edge of their seats. She created the perfect mood for our day, and the attendees absolutely loved both her message and her delivery. She is definitely a "can't-miss" keynoter!"

"Jan McInnis delivered an outstanding keynote speech at the CASTO 56th Annual State Conference. Her humor was infectious, and her message about navigating change with laughter was both entertaining and insightful. Jan's ability to connect with the audience and deliver a memorable presentation made her a highlight of the event. I highly recommend her as a keynote speaker for any occasion."

Connect with Jan on Social Media:

www.linkedin.com/in/JanMcInnis

JanFanS.com