

The HopeFull
Organisation



THE HOPEFULL ORGANISATION · WHITE PAPER

THE HOPE ADVANTAGE

Building hope, resilience and
engagement in your people

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THE BRIEF

Wellbeing is now a business metric

Across Australia, every employer now carries a legal duty to manage psychosocial hazards at work, the same way you manage a physical one. Safe Work Australia's model Code of Practice, Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work, made it plain. You must protect the psychological health of your people so far as is reasonably practicable, and you must run a proper risk management process to do it. With Victoria's regulations taking effect in December 2025, that duty now reaches every state and territory.

For most workplaces, that is a shift in thinking. Wellbeing has long been treated as a nice-to-have. The data tells a harder story, and it shows up on the balance sheet. Here is the picture.

\$20b

lost by Australian employers each year to poor mental health

21%

say their employer cares about their wellbeing, a record low

2025

the year psychosocial hazards became a legal duty nationwide

That is real money, lost performance, and legal exposure in one picture. The law now expects every employer to get ahead of the harm rather than wait for it.

This white paper makes a straightforward case. Hope is the most practical wellbeing and performance skill your people are not being taught. I will show you what the research actually says about hope, why it belongs in your business and not just in a wellbeing policy, and how a hopeful team turns out to be a more engaged and productive one.

WHO I AM

A quick word on who is making this case

I'm Glen Gerreyn. At 17 I was a champion athlete with a real shot at the Olympics, until an illness ended my sporting career inside a single season. I had to rebuild from the studs up. That experience taught me what hope actually is, and, just as usefully, what it is not.

I also live with ulcerative colitis. It is incurable, and some days it hands me a fight before breakfast. So I don't teach hope from a textbook. I teach it from a body that has learned to keep walking on the hard days. Hope is forged in experience, and that is why this work lands with the person on a team who is quietly carrying something heavy. They can smell pretending, and they respond to the real thing.

For more than 25 years I have been a voice for hope, speaking to over a million people around the world, and I can hold a large auditorium while making each person in it feel seen and challenged. In 2012 I earned the Certified Speaking Professional accreditation, held by only a small fraction of speakers worldwide, and I was named Young Australian of the Year for Queensland for community service. I have delivered upward of 10,000 presentations and written several books, including *Get Your Hopes Up* and *Men of Honour*.

Off the stage, home is Brisbane, with my wife and our four children. I have spent my life learning what helps people flourish, and I am not finished. I translate the research on hope into a small number of proven seminars, built on what I have watched work in real rooms, with real people under real pressure. I hold one conviction underneath all of it: everyone deserves a future they are excited to step into.

CSPCertified Speaking
Professional**25+ YEARS**

experience

1,000,000+

people reached

10,000+presentations
delivered

GLEN GERREYN, CERTIFIED SPEAKING PROFESSIONAL

THE REFRAME

Hope is not a soft skill

Say the word hope in a boardroom or a leadership offsite and watch the arms cross. People hear feel-good posters and motivational fluff, and they switch off. I understand the reflex. Most of what gets sold as wellbeing has earned that eye-roll.

So let me be precise about what I mean. Hope, in the sense that matters here, is a measurable and trainable capacity to set a goal, map the pathways to reach it, and keep the drive to push forward when the first one is blocked. That is not my opinion. It comes from 30 years of research, and it has held up.

The psychologist C.R. Snyder built the science of it. He defined hope in plain terms.

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Hope is the sum of perceived capabilities to produce routes to desired goals, along with the perceived motivation to use those routes.

C.R. Snyder, founder of Hope Theory

Here is what that means in practice: every part of it can be measured, and every part can be taught. That makes hope a skill, and skills can be built on purpose.

If you want a version that will survive a hard-nosed executive team, take Dr Jerome Groopman, a Harvard physician who spent his career at the bedside of seriously ill patients. He wrote that true hope has no room for delusion. Real hope sees the obstacles and the pitfalls clearly, then finds the path through anyway. That is the opposite of soft. It is the most clear-eyed thing a person can do under pressure, which is exactly why it belongs in a results-driven business.

THE EVIDENCE

What the research says about hope

Hope has decades of research behind it. Six researchers, working in psychology, medicine, neuroscience and history, have spent careers showing what hope is and what it does. Here is the short version, and why each one matters in your business.

C.R. Snyder psychologist, Hope Theory

Hope is a measurable skill, not a mood.

Snyder showed that hope can be scored, which means it can be trained. A team's hope is not fixed. You can build it, week by week.

Dr Jerome Groopman physician, The Anatomy of Hope

True hope has no room for delusion.

Groopman's hope is clear-eyed. It names the danger first, then finds the path through. For a business that lives by targets and hard calls, this is the only version of hope worth having, and the only one your people will respect.

Shane Lopez Gallup senior scientist

Hope is contagious.

Lopez measured hope across millions of people and found it predicts performance, attendance and persistence. It also spreads from one person to the next. A hopeful manager does not lift one person, they lift the whole team.

Richard Boyatzis neuroscientist, Intentional Change Theory

The brain opens to hope and shuts to fear.

Using brain imaging, Boyatzis showed that appealing to a person's hopes and possibilities switches on the parts of the brain that are open to change. Lead with fear and you trigger the opposite, a defensive shutdown. It explains why fear-based management rarely changes behaviour for long.

Martin Seligman psychologist, The Hope Circuit

Giving up is automatic. Hope is learned.

For 50 years Seligman thought helplessness was the thing people learned. Then he and neuroscientist Steven Maier looked at the brain and found it backwards: switching off and taking the hit is the default wiring, and what the prefrontal cortex actually learns is control, the sense that your actions change the outcome. So a team that has stopped speaking up has not been taught not to care, it has been taught it has no control. Give people a real say over their work and hope is what grows back.

Rebecca Solnit writer, Hope in the Dark

In the space of uncertainty is room to act.

Solnit's hope is neither optimism nor despair, because both sit on the bench. Optimists assume it will be fine; pessimists assume it won't; both excuse themselves from acting. Hope is the one stance that gets on the field. At work, that is the whole game.

Put the six together and one picture forms. Hope is a measurable skill (Snyder), it is clear-eyed rather than naive (Groopman), it predicts performance and spreads through a team (Lopez), it is the brain state that opens people to change (Boyatzis), it can be learned because giving up, not hope, is the brain's default (Seligman), and it is the mindset that drives action instead of excusing it (Solnit). That is a tool. Tools belong in your business.

THE MODEL

Hope, meaning, action, growth

It has taken me 25 years to make this model simple. In a busy week, anything you cannot remember, you will not use. Hope creates meaning. Meaning drives action. Action produces growth. And growth re-ignites hope, so the cycle feeds itself. I call it the Hope Loop. Here is how it runs on a team.

THE HOPE LOOP



It starts with hope

A team that believes the day can go well, and that the hard parts are survivable, shows up differently. They make a plan and they hold to it when the work turns, instead of going to pieces at the first setback.

Hope creates meaning

When a person knows why the work matters and who is counting on them, at home and on the team, the job stops being a sentence to serve. Meaning fosters empowerment, focus and unity. A focused person does better work, because most mistakes begin with a distracted or rushed mind.

Meaning drives action

An empowered, focused team does deliberate work. They flag a problem instead of walking past it. They do the job properly instead of cutting the corner. This is the point where wellbeing becomes behaviour you can see in the performance numbers.

Action produces growth

Growth shows up for the person and for the business. People stay. Sick days fall. Engagement holds. And a team that grows believes more in the next challenge than they did in the last.

THE CASE

Why this is a business conversation

No serious employer ignores a physical hazard. You risk-assess it, you control it, and you do not let people work around it. That duty is not soft. It is the floor every business operates on, and it is written into law.

The mind sits under the same duty now. Unmanageable workloads, chronic stress, poor support, bullying, job insecurity: these are not background noise. They are psychosocial hazards, named in the Code of Practice, and at work they show up as disengagement, burnout, errors, conflict and good people walking out the door. Every one of those carries a cost, and most of them are measurable.

So treat the mind the way you treat the body. The hope advantage is the set of practical skills that keep a person's head clear under pressure: how to hold focus on the work that matters, how to reset after a setback, and how to notice a colleague sliding and actually say something. The Code already asks you to run a four-step process: spot the hazards, assess the risk, control it, and review. Building hope and resilience in your people is a control. A good one, and a cheap one against the alternative.

This control compounds. Train one manager well and you do not get one steadier person. You get a steadier team.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Protect the mind the way you protect the body. Hope is the control.

DELIVERY

What it looks like in your business

I come to your conference, your leadership offsite, your team day or your all-hands, and I deliver one of a small number of proven sessions. No slides full of theory. Real stories, a clear model, and tools a person can use the very next Monday. Five outcomes do the heavy lifting.

Sharper focus: the attention skills that keep a person present on the work that matters, drawn from the practice of mindfulness.

A resilient mindset: how to reset after a bad day or a hard knock, built on the daily discipline of gratitude.

Hitting the zone: how individuals and teams reach the focused state where good, fast work actually gets done.

Building your armour: the resilience skills that carry a person through a punishing quarter or a tough season.

Leading the team: how a manager carries hope to the people around them, on purpose.

Then the work carries on after I leave. The seminar opens the door; the language, the tools and the follow-up keep it open, in the team meeting on Monday, six weeks on, and the year after. That is where the engagement and retention numbers actually move, and where the spend pays for itself.



THE TAKEAWAY

The seminar is the spark. The Monday meeting keeps it lit.

ACTION

Three moves this quarter

You do not need a culture programme to start. You need three decisions, one for each of the people who usually own this in a business.

FOR THE HR LEADER

Treat psychological health like physical health in your next risk review. List the psychosocial hazards across your teams, the way the Code asks. Then name your controls. If hope and resilience training is not on that list, you have a gap to close before an audit, or a claim, finds it for you.

FOR THE EXECUTIVE

Book a session before your next demanding quarter, not after a wave of burnout. An hour with the team costs almost nothing against a stress claim, a missed target, or a good person who walks. Put it in the plan as a control, with a line in the budget.

FOR THE HEAD OF WELLBEING

Stop running one-off events that leave nothing behind. Build a through-line: a seminar that sparks it, language the managers carry, and tools that show up in the team meeting. Then measure it the way you measure everything else, in retention, engagement and sick days.

THE TAKEAWAY



You do not need a culture programme. You need three decisions this quarter.

CLOSE

Ripples of hope at work

In 1966 Robert Kennedy told a crowd in Cape Town that each time a person stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others, they send forth a tiny ripple of hope. Those ripples, he said, build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls.

It works the same way in a team. A manager who checks in on someone gone quiet. A leader who admits the deadline is tight and asks for ideas instead of barking orders. A colleague who notices another doing it tough and says something. None of it is grand. Each act starts a ripple, and in a workplace the ripples travel fast. You do not need a title to start one. You need to go first.

Hope is not the soft option. It is a measurable, trainable skill that the best researchers in the world have spent their careers proving, and it is the most practical wellbeing and performance tool you are not yet using. The law now expects you to protect your people's minds as seriously as their bodies. That is the hope advantage. Build hope in your people and you get a team that stays engaged, looks out for each other, and gets the work done. That is the whole case. Let me come and make it to your people.

The HopeFull Organisation

bring this to your team

Book Glen Gerreyn for your conference, leadership
offsite, team day or all-hands.

GET IN TOUCH

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