



THE ENERGY PRINCIPLE



CONTENTS

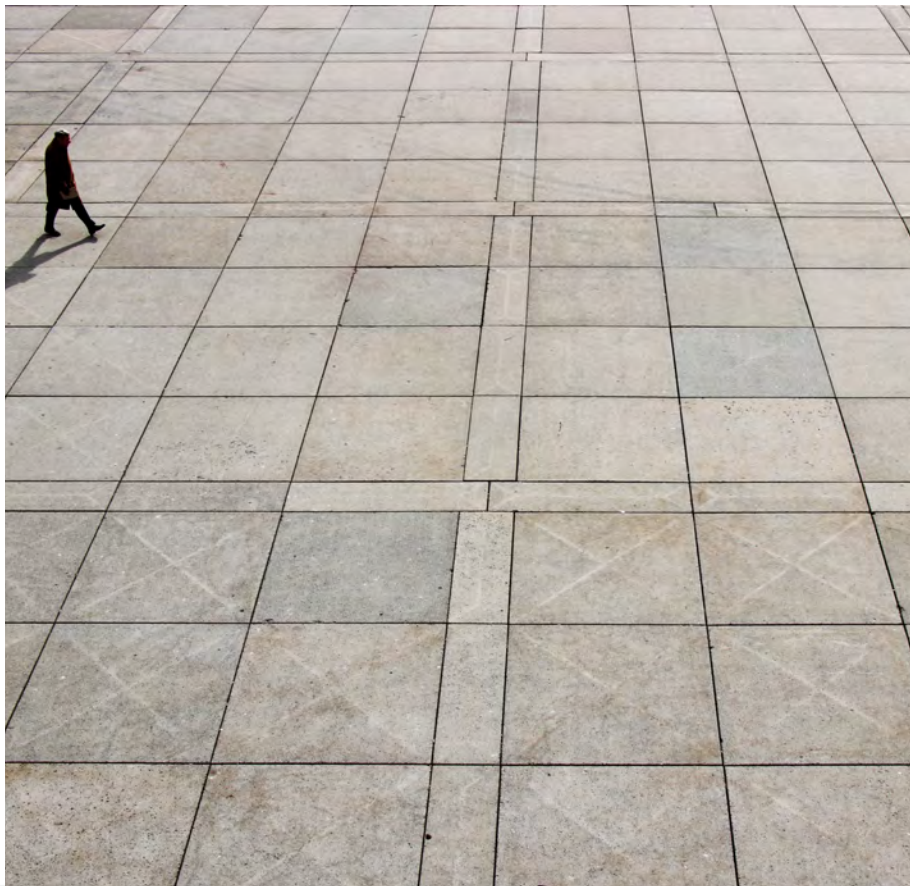
Energy Crisis	3
What does it mean for you	4
What does it mean for your organisation	8
A better way of working	10
Manifesto	13

WE ARE FACING AN ENERGY CRISIS AND THIS ONE IS PERSONAL

We're in the grip of an energy crisis. But it's not related to coal or fuel, or tied to an electricity grid. It's a constant demand for energy that is affecting our ability to create, connect and succeed and it's born of the modern context in which we live. A context in which we work longer, harder and often for less reward, in which the 24/7 nature of being 'plugged in' means we are always "on", overwhelmed by news, information, stimulus, and all whilst we struggle for a work/life balance in the face of increasing fear for our job security.

The impact of being constantly switched on, and the relentless pace of our modern lifestyle as we attempt to keep up, affects every aspect of our lives, draining us of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual energy.

On a day to day basis, we can find ourselves regarding this as 'opportunity cost', the natural price we pay for staying in the game. But at what point do we regard the cost as too high? And when it comes to personal and organisational success, is staying in the game enough, when staying ahead of the game is possible? And can we really afford to squander energy on what presents as the most urgent if it means we have little or no energy for the things that really matter?



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?

When we use all our energy at work, we have little left for our families and friends. At home, the consequences of running on empty are felt by those who need to connect with us the most. An overwhelming proportion of children say a parent is unable to disconnect from work while at home.

The impact of work is not just in the form of an intrusion upon our attention, it affects our capacity to participate in family life in other ways. One executive shared, "I'd just like to not fall asleep every night before my kids." Our children need and deserve to feel connected with us. The more beleaguered we feel by the pressures of work, the more we begin to short change our children by spending less time with them, or being less present. The same effect is often felt by our significant other, who may feel the impact of our dwindling energy reserves in the form of less interest, less desire and less emotional energy directed their way. The importance of interest, desire and emotional connectedness in maintaining strong and healthy relationships cannot be dismissed. Essentially, the less time we make for ourselves, the less time we have for others.

Stress limits our ability to concentrate and follow complex trains of thought. Consequently we are less able to create, analyse or problem-solve whilst feeling mentally fatigued. Clarity of perception and the most effective creative thinking are dependent on recuperative pauses in our day to recharge and refocus.





Scrambling for time and energy, we put off things that are important to us, things that are invested in our dreams and aspirations beyond work. Whether it be writing a novel, renovating the house, creating a garden or taking up a course of study, these are the things we de-prioritise despite being the very things most likely to make us feel happy or fulfilled. We forsake the dream of living a rich life when we give all our energy up at the office.

It's no surprise then that the long term effect of diverting energy from personal wellbeing into the pressures of our daily work life is declining physical health. When we operate in a persistent adrenaline-fuelled state and fail to take time out, our bodies shift into adrenal exhaustion, creating a myriad of symptoms affecting our overall health.

Further, when we don't take time out to interact with our natural environment and physically connect with nature in a way that allows us to fill our senses, our emotional and spiritual fuel tanks become drained. When these are empty, our capacity to be emotionally present and ability to see things optimistically is affected.

**IMAGINE AN
ORGANISATION
FUELLED BY
PEOPLE BRINGING
THEIR FULL
POTENTIAL TO
WORK EVERYDAY.**



It's stating the obvious that when we take steps to reenergise ourselves, we are able to improve our quality of life, both at home and at work, and are able to invest more of ourselves in the world around us. The benefits to our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing are felt in everything we do. We gain more time and headspace to connect with things we care for and are passionate about, more time and headspace to inquire and explore beyond established limits, more time and headspace to create, experiment, discover and innovate.

In KPMG's 2016 Global CEO Outlook, innovation is identified as one of the primary strategic areas of importance for today's CEOs. So it's now more important than ever to shift the paradigm away from time management, and focus on energy management. An organisation that offers solutions to employees' physical, emotional, mental and spiritual energy will experience the extraordinary returns on their investment in the areas of productivity, creativity and innovation.

Managing our energy is not rocket science. There are simple steps we can take everyday to ensure that we function at our optimum, steps that will bring about immediate and positive changes to our daily wellbeing.

In the workplace, the benefits of managing our energy effectively are significant. Imagine an organisation fuelled by people bringing their full potential to work everyday..

Performing at peak capacity allows us to stand out from those struggling with daily demands on limited reserves. This is a competitive advantage both in the workplace and in the marketplace where, much like elite athletes performing at the top of their game, top performers are valuable and in-demand.

As leaders, when we operate on a highly energised, creative and empowered level, we bring our best to the team. If we show up with a half tank, instead of a full tank, the entire team is affected. Energy is contagious. Leaders who are energised and inspired with purpose, lift those around them, fuelling the creativity and innovation of those they lead.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?

When an organisation's employees are mentally and physically stretched, experience declining levels of engagement, feel disconnected from management and struggle to invest in the organisation's vision, the result is corresponding increases in absenteeism, staff turnover and mental health compensation claims.

For the first time, across Australia, mental health workplace claims are exceeding physical injury claims. In Victoria alone, job-related stress claims have skyrocketed, with 58 compensation claims for psychological injury approved each week. In the last five years, mental health claims have increased by a staggering 45%, a trend mirrored in other Australian states.

A study conducted by PwC reveals that more than 6 million working days each year are lost in Australia due to absenteeism as a

result of untreated depression, and that, at any time, 1 in 5 employees are likely to experience mental health issues that impair their job performance. The impact of this absenteeism is more than simply a disruption to productivity and higher operating costs, it has an impact on the overall performance, creativity and adaptability of the organisation in the marketplace.

Increasingly, studies show that an organisation's performance is relative to the engagement level of its workforce, that a highly engaged workforce results in a high performing organisation. In another study conducted by Willis Towers Watson, employee willingness and ability to go the extra mile is clearly linked to engagement and directly affects the financial and operational success of the business.





Which means that the more energised, connected, inspired and engaged we are, the more effective we are in the workplace; and the more effective and energised we are in the workplace, the more our organisation reaps the benefits in increased productivity, creativity and innovation.

The business analogy of the elite athlete is well-established for good reason. The way in which an elite athlete regulates their energy for peak performance has been studied and the lessons apply for all us, particularly those of us operating in highly pressured competitive environments. Sports psychologist Jim Loehr's study of professional tennis players reveals how players who are able to drop their heart rate by 30bbs eclipse their competitor in endurance and performance.

The lesson is clear: those who are able to reenergise perform more powerfully and effectively than those who aren't.



OUR GREATEST CREATION IS THE LIFE WE LEAD

We need to find a better way of working. When we work better, we create better. To create better, we need to develop an energy management mindset.

There are four key areas of energy: physical (body), emotional (heart), mental (mind) and spiritual (soul). Collectively these areas of energy fuel our impulse to explore, experiment, play, analyse and discover, all key components of creativity and innovation.

Physical energy is arguably the most important in that it directly affects our emotional, mental and spiritual energy levels. We have all experienced how physical exhaustion is able to reduce our capacity to think clearly and to concentrate, to make it harder to control our emotions or to find motivation.

PHYSICAL ENERGY is managed through four key areas: exercise, nutrition, sleep and rest. Whilst many of us are aware of the benefits of sleep, nutrition and exercise, the importance of moments of daytime rest is largely under appreciated.

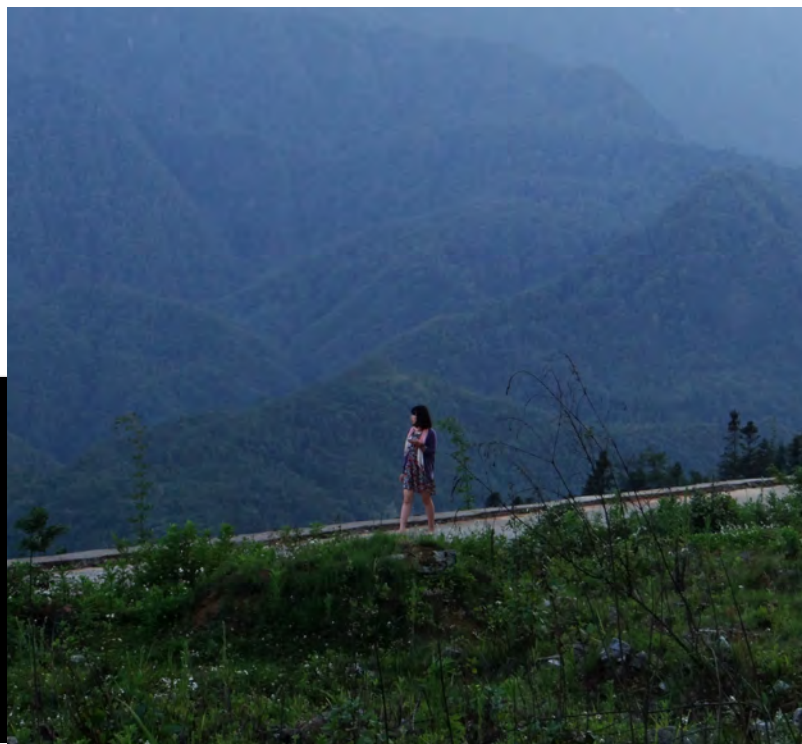
In energy management, rest means renewal. When we take time to turn off, have a cup of tea, take a lunch break or walk outside, we create the space to recharge and then to pick up where we left off with more mental clarity and the ability to get more done in less time. Thus the investment in renewal pays off handsomely. Think of when we get our most creative ideas. Most people report that this is when they are experiencing downtime: walking, showering, relaxing, riding a bike, casual conversations with friends. If we wish to increase our ability to think more creatively, renewal is a performance imperative rather than a luxury.

EMOTIONAL ENERGY is also restored through periods of rest. As human beings we are highly emotive; we process experience through a range of emotions that influence our daily interactions. How we feel emotionally affects the attitude or mindset that we bring to every task and impacts on those around us. We are more likely to innovate and embrace new ways of thinking when we feel safe, acknowledged, appreciated and valued. Organisations that develop a cultural approach to good emotional health foster an environment for creativity and innovation.

Depleted **MENTAL ENERGY** affects our ability to focus, leading us to feel distracted, confused and unable to fully concentrate. In a bid to multi-task our mind is overworking, trying to give attention to too many things, being pulled in different directions. We think this is the only way to get everything done. We need to choose or prioritise where we direct our mental energies, and develop the ability to fully focus on one thing at a time. This takes far less energy and gives us the return of a higher quality of work, done in less time overall. It serves us well to practice the ability to 'switch off' on cue, and quieten our mind by bringing awareness to our breathing, or developing our skill to meditate, even for short periods of time. Building and sustaining mental energy allows us to think clearly, problem-solve, perceive things in more complex ways, or more simple. It allows us to see beyond the detail, all of which leads to a mindset geared for maximum creativity.

SPIRITUAL ENERGY, or the energy of the human spirit, is connected to our sense of purpose, that what we do matters. As humans, we seek to make meaning of all we do, and when we can see the meaning of things, we are imbued with a greater sense of purpose. We are more highly motivated and powerfully fuelled by physical, emotional and mental energies to be at our most creative and innovative. With high levels of spiritual energy, we are charged with purpose and energised for positive impact. We think beyond our own self-interest and invest in something larger than ourselves.

These four dimensions of energy - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual - are interconnected, and collectively essential to peak performance.



TEP

WE CANNOT CHANGE WHAT WE DON'T OBSERVE

We live our daily lives often unconsciously. In the face of constant demands and the rate of relentless change, we keep doing what we've always done, defaulting to the point of least resistance. When we focus on meeting our immediate demands without thought for our personal wellbeing, we are operating in survival mode and too long spent in this mode will eventually lead to burnout.

Being aware of our energy levels at various points throughout the day, and responding appropriately is essential to spending more time in high performance mode, where we do our best work. Once we observe how we are managing our energy, then we can see when and how we need to refuel.



Take a moment for a self-evaluation.

How aware are you of your current energy levels?

How do you structure in rest/renewal breaks to your day?

How do you ensure you are getting adequate sleep?

How do you caretake your own physical, emotional and mental energy?

How do you create a sense of purpose for yourself that is motivating and sustaining?

Are you performing at your optimum?

It's not the number of hours we work that is the measure of our success but how productive, engaged and creative we are in the hours that we work. The more we push ourselves, the longer we go without a break to recharge and renew, the more we default to behaviours that undermine our overall effectiveness.

The Energy Principle

The Energy Principle puts the science of high performance to work, introducing leaders and their teams to actionable strategies to increase and sustain personal and group energy, helping them to spend less time in survival mode and more time in performance mode - where they are most effective, more creative and do their best work.

Our programs and events in the corporate training and development arena uniquely address the key components to outstanding leadership, personal wellness and a positive corporate culture.

We believe that if you take care of people, people will take care of business.

For more information or for a discussion on how we can help you to manage your energy and access your full creative potential, contact us at:

Email: info@theenergyprinciple.com.au

Or phone:

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