

# Prevention, Performance, & Unlocking Executive Potential

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Innovating Mental Fitness For Leadership Teams





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# THE EXECUTIVE ISSUE

## An executive summary on the physical and mental health of our senior leaders

A company is a living, breathing organism, with the executives and leaders acting as the vital organs that keep it going. If any of these organs are of poor physical or mental health, the whole system's performance is compromised.

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Depression will be the number one health concern by 2030. This costs Australian businesses A\$8-10 billion per annum (2019), forecasted to be A\$45 billion per annum by 2030.

Executives are under immense physical and mental pressure. On average they sleep 24% less and work 23% more than the average worker. 90% struggle with work-life balance and 73% live a sedentary lifestyle. This puts executives at a high risk of chronic pain, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, burnout and depression.

Given the key role-modelling function leaders have, a two-pronged approach is needed, targeting physical fitness and mental clarity. A serious stand needs to be made by conscious leaders to prevent disease, perform at their best and unlock further, dormant executive potential.



# A MENTAL GLANCE INTO THE FUTURE

*We unite over our mental worst-being*

Right now, and in any one year, around 1 million Australian adults have depression, and over 2 million have anxiety; that translates into a conservative 12% of all working aged Australians.

**A\$ 8-10bn** cost to  
Australian  
businesses now

And the future outlook isn't good...

Depression is the  
**#1 health concern**  
by 2030

Depression costs Australian businesses already A\$8-10bn per annum, primarily due to productivity loss (presenteeism) and sick days.

A forecast indicates an increase to a conservative A\$45bn per year over the next 11 years.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that by 2030, depression will be the number one health concern on this planet – including all developed and emerging countries.

**A\$ 45bn** cost to  
Australian  
businesses by 2030

This is only 11 years away.



# THE **PHYSICAL DECLINE** IN HEALTH OF EXECUTIVES AND LEADERS **IS EVIDENT**

It is well known that executives are subjected to a demanding lifestyle.

They sleep 24% less and work 23% more than the average worker, which leads to poor health choices and conditions.

These factors put executives at high risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, burnout & depression. All this stress on the body shows up as chronic neck and lower back pain, fatigue, excess weight, poor diet and a shortened lifespan.

Chronic pain accounts  
for a **40%** of all forced  
retirements

Lower back pain is the 3rd most common reason we'll go to our GP, affecting 70-90% of the Australian population at some point in their lives. And chronic pain accounts for a massive 40% of all forced retirements.

Neck pain is the **4th**  
leading cause of  
disability

Neck pain is just as common, being the 4th leading cause of disability worldwide. As an executive working in an office, you're 45.5% likely to develop neck pain within the next 12-months. Both of these cases cost the Australian economy over A\$7.5 billion in lost productivity and give rise to the presenteeism phenomenon – when you're present, but not functioning at 100%.





# THE **PHYSICAL DECLINE** IN HEALTH OF EXECUTIVES AND LEADERS *IS EVIDENT*

**73%** of executives  
live a sedentary life

Besides being in physical pain, 73% of executives live a sedentary life and 90% struggle with work-life balance.

This leads to a poor diet, grabbing food on the run, increased alcohol consumption and eating out often.

Poor diet is the **#1 risk factor** for early death

Poor diets are related to early death more than any other risk factor, including smoking. The effect on the body is profound, leading to disease, weight gain and chronic fatigue.

**90%** struggle with  
work-life balance

A poor diet also affects your alertness, decision making and increases the risk of developing psychological problems such as burnout, depression and anxiety.



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Combine a poor diet with a sedentary lifestyle void of any physical exercise and we've got a recipe for disaster.

# THE MENTAL DECLINE IN HEALTH OF EXECUTIVES AND LEADERS *IS EVIDENT*

**Mental decline  
is inevitable unless  
action is taken now.**

Under tremendous and ongoing work-related stresses and demands our executives are suffering, and often silently, under their corporate mask.

**The only hint:  
Your engagement  
scores**

Think about your team members, your co-workers & colleagues, and also your management.

The only time executives get an idea of what is really going on for their teams is when the people engagement score of the culture survey is concerningly low.

Now is the time to think about our people beyond the corporate and business cost context, because every executive is a daughter, a son, maybe even a mum or a dad, and for sure a loved one and a good friend to somebody; all trying and doing their best.

**Chronic,  
unsuccessfully  
managed workplace  
stress can  
lead to burnout.**

Think about how many people you know who regularly complain about their frustration, unhappiness or stress at work. Chronic, unsuccessfully managed, workplace stress can lead to burnout.

Combine this with financial and/or relationship stress at home, little sleep and a poor diet - and we have a delicious, addictive, intoxicating cocktail, which we take a big sip from, every, single, day...

# THE MENTAL DECLINE IN HEALTH OF EXECUTIVES AND LEADERS *IS EVIDENT*

## Burnout finally officially recognised

Awareness is the first step to improvement.

In May 2019, the World Health Organisation (WHO) officially recognised burnout as an 'occupational phenomenon' in the classification of dis-eases. It is not classified as a medical condition, defined as "a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress".

Burnout is characterised by:

- Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
- Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- Reduced professional efficacy.



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The World Health Organisation is about to embark on the development of evidence-based guidelines on mental well-being in the workplace.



# AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH:

## 1. PREVENT & PERFORM

### - PHYSICAL FITNESS -

#### Work-related stress is a major risk

Work-related stress is a major risk for burnout, and burnout can grow into mental health conditions, like anxiety and or depression. Therefore, we need to include practical, healthy work-out meetings into our weekly work routine.

The fact is that regular physical & mental exercises can significantly reduce stress.

The physical benefits are well established – improved physical condition means less risk of disease.

When stress affects the brain and all its nerve connections, the rest of your body feels it as well. It stands to reason that if your body feels better, so does your mind and vice versa.

Improved blood flow to the brain boosts mood & motivation by **41%** & the ability to deal with stress by **27%**

Physical exercise is also vital for mental fitness – improving blood flow to the brain, boosting mood and motivation by 41% and one's ability to deal with stressors by 27%. Combining this with the release of hormones such as serotonin and dopamine, which increase alertness, interest and enjoyment, makes exercise especially important in high stress environments.



# AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH:

## 2. UNLOCK FURTHER EXECUTIVE POTENTIAL - MENTAL FITNESS -

Only **10-15%** of people  
are actually self-aware

Senior experience and a position of power can lead to a false sense of confidence in one's own leadership ability. A recent study reveals that even though most people believe they are self-aware, only 10-15% of people actually are.

Leaders who focus on building both internal and external self-awareness can learn to see themselves more clearly and reap the rewards. And the most exciting news: no matter how much progress we make and how much we learn about ourselves, there's always more to learn.

Research suggests that a high degree of internal and external self-awareness alone is key to:

- Making sounder decisions
- Building stronger relationships
- Communicating more effectively
- Becoming more confident
- Being more creative

Executive Coaching has undoubtedly proven its positive ROI especially, but not only, at C-level and their leadership teams over the past decade.

Benefits range from heightened self-awareness, increased motivation, to a boost in cognition at work.

Stretching the mind  
pays off

The financial ROI outperforms the investment by far (averaged at over 500% in various research papers).



# CONSCIOUS LEADERS

## TAKING ACTION NOW

Conscious leaders are well aware of the executive issue. They are creating wellness budgets to keep their people physically and mentally fit, and therefore their organisations financially well-performing.

New Zealand has dedicated **50% of their 2019 budget** to wellness

New Zealand's leadership team, Grant Robertson ('CFO') & Jacinda Ardern ('CEO') have dedicated 50% of their 2019 budget to their newly created wellness budget (NZ\$1.9bn | A\$1.8bn).



John Flint (CEO) turns HSBC into the '**healthiest human system**'

John Flint, the CEO of HSBC, shared the practical benefits of his wellbeing focus at DAVOS, the world economic forum this year (2019). Based on these positive impacts, he decided to turn his bank into "the healthiest human system".



Of course, this is not only a matter of costs, budgets and systems, but of workplace health and safety. It's in an employer's best interest to help to reduce its effects for financial, ethical, employee engagement and simply humanistic reasons. It's a great X-factor to attract and nurture the best executive talent for your organisation.

# WHAT IS YOUR WELLNESS STRATEGY?

Your  
wellness investment  
keeps your business  
financially fit

What if there was a simple, cost-effective pathway to increase your engagement score in a fun, engaging, meaningful and healthy way?

Are you ready for this  
executive wellbeing  
movement?

Think about a solution, that, while everything is focusing on AI and robots, is simply strengthening our humanness, doing something for oneself individually, while deepening meaningful connections with peers, strengthening empathy and team bonding.

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With the right strategy and commitment, you and your team could have all the tools and systems necessary to PREVENT physical and mental decline, PERFORM at your best and reach your highest POTENTIAL.

# AN INNOVATIVE & PRACTICAL 6-WEEK MENTAL FITNESS PROGRAM

While there are many ways to approach these challenges,  
We proudly present a unique 6-week Mental Fitness Program for you  
and your leadership team based on the P3-Model.

A comprehensive, strategically designed program  
innovating executives' social, mental, and physical  
fitness.



1. **PREVENT:** burnout, mental and physical decline,
2. **PERFORM:** increase engagement scores, job satisfaction and
3. **POTENTIAL:** heighten self-awareness, cognition and communication.



EXECUTIVE  
PERFORMANCE



GAIA  
COACHING

Physical Fitness

+

Mental Clarity

=

Mental Fitness

# YOUR MENTAL FITNESS FACILITATORS

Your facilitators have a combined 30+ years of experience in the corporate world as well as in the field of physical and mental fitness.



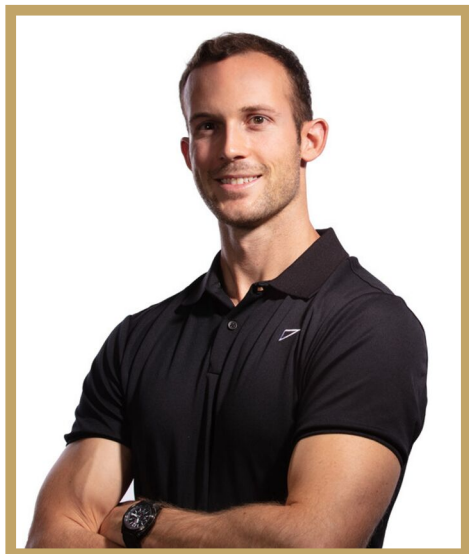
**SUSANNE RAUER**

Susanne Rauer is an Executive Master Coach and Coach Trainer offering highly personalised, boutique executive coaching experiences. She is the founder of GAIA Coaching, Google Maps' #1 result for Executive Coaching in Sydney.

Susanne is a conscious, multiple award-winning natural leader in her field with 25+ years of experiences ranging from providing management consulting, training, coaching and leadership to individuals and leadership teams of tier 1 corporations, such as Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Software AG and the German Army. She is one of the rare people who are inspired to go above and beyond. As an experienced and passionate public speaker, Susanne has delivered many training courses and presented at various conferences including the 'Gartner CIO summit'.

Susanne's passion is to work with exceptional leaders who are ready to outperform their status quo, make new conscious decisions, and author their own successful and fulfilled lives. She advocates the combination of operational, short-term and strategic, long-term benefits.

[www.GAIAcoaching.com.au](http://www.GAIAcoaching.com.au)



**MICHAEL GOSTELOW**

Michael Gostelow is an Executive Health Coach and Personal Trainer. He is the owner of Executive Performance which specialises in the physical health of leaders and executives, while coaching behaviour change for sustainable outcomes.

He holds a degree in Exercise & Sport Science from the University of Sydney. This study led him to work in one of London's premium strength and conditioning facilities, coaching both high-performing business leaders and professional athletes.

When Michael was in high school, his father went through severe depression which ended with an attempt on his own life. This story follows Michael wherever he goes, motivating him to help high-strung individuals improve their lives and avoid the same downward spiral.

He now works exclusively with executives and leaders, helping them improve their physical health and performance.

[www.execperformance.com.au](http://www.execperformance.com.au)



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