

The go-to speaker for Creativity Driven Transformation

Joel McKerrow

# Keynote Speaking Topics

2025



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## TRANSFORMING STAGNATION INTO CREATIVE MOMENTUM

### HELLO

If you're searching for a speaker who will captivate any audience, regardless of industry, while delivering an unforgettable event experience, you've found the right person. With years of expertise across the creative, professional, and educational fields, Joel McKerrow not only ignites passion and inspiration in his audiences, but also equips them with the tools to unlock their creative potential, enhance wellbeing and drive innovation. Your team will leave not just inspired, but empowered to bring a fresh, transformative vision into their work.

Once you have secured your booking please refer to the [Event Organisers Guide](#) for all Headshots, Biographies and details you'll require.



### A BIT ABOUT JOEL

From the Sydney Opera House, to Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Centre, to The Metropolis in Montreal, Joel McKerrow has spent the last fifteen years, on global stages, captivating hundreds of thousands of people with his passionate performative style, highly inspiring keynotes and dynamic hosting of events.

As the go-to speaker for Creativity Driven Transformation (with over 250 presentations in 2024 alone), Joel champions the belief that both CREATIVITY and STORY are far too important to be confined to only those we deem as being creative. Rather, no matter the person or the industry, Joel is passionate about unleashing people's creativity and equipping them for innovation.

Joel is the incoming VIC/TAS President for Professional Speakers Australia (PSA), is one of Australia's most successful performance poets (including representing Australia at the Individual World Poetry Slam Championships), is an author with Penguin Random House and is the founder/host of The Deep Place podcast.

Joel's extensive portfolio includes clients from Village Roadshow to Hager Electric, to AIME, to the Global Health Summit, to the International Transforming Education Conference. No matter the industry he will bring creative breakthrough for your people. Joel has also shared the stage with leaders such as Linda Woolverton (Beauty and the Beast, The Lion King), Krista Monson (Cirque du Soleil), Seth Godin, Ken Black (ex.Nike Creative Director), Annabel Crabb, Lisa Wilkinson, and Kate Ceberano.

# UNLEASHING CREATIVE MOMENTUM: Turning Inspiration into Innovative Breakthrough.

Most of us don't consider ourselves inherently creative, or see its value in our careers. Yet, according to the World Economic Forum, Creative-thinking is the NUMBER ONE in demand soft-skill for the future of work. Indeed, in a world that is constantly changing, no matter the industry, learning how to Unleash Creative Momentum might just be THE single most transformative skill that needed for organisations. Creativity was never meant to be just for the artists and the poets.

***What if every person on your team could, on cue, tap into inspiration and turn it into powerful, game-changing, innovative solutions?***

What if there was a pathway that led from stagnation into creative momentum? This keynote is your map to such a pathway. Through compelling stories, actionable-frameworks and engaging exercises, Joel McKerrow will not only energise and empower your people, he will ignite their creative potential and set your organisation up for innovative breakthrough.

## THIS SESSION WILL:

- Explore why we are so resistant to seeing ourselves as Creative.
- Unlock the Creative potential of each individual and team cultures.
- Empower people to break through creative-blocks.
- Help people to tap into creative-flow in generative ways.
- Provide a framework for the creative-process.
- Equip teams with intentional, innovative practises.

[VIDEO OVERVIEW](#)

## **STORYWORK:** Engaging Narrative to Spark Change

The stories that we tell become who we are – both as individuals and within the cultures of our workplaces. The success of an organisation therefore rises and falls on the basis of the stories told within it and about it. How crucial it is, therefore, to understand STORY in terms of the way it constructs identity and its power to transform culture.

Welcome to StoryWork—a powerful approach to leveraging narrative to ignite both personal and organisational change. In this keynote Joel will demonstrate how the right stories, told in the right way, can shift perspectives, build a sense of shared purpose, and create a culture of engagement and trust.

Through compelling examples and interactive exercises, you will learn how to harness the power of storytelling to communicate your vision, motivate your teams, and connect more authentically with your clients and stakeholders. Whether you're launching a new initiative, building a collaborative environment, or strengthening your brand's impact, this session will equip you with the right narrative tools to spark change.

### **THIS SESSION WILL:**

- Explore the power of narrative in defining who we are.
- Illuminate the power of STORY to transform culture.
- Explore the ways we can all craft better stories.
- Enhance communication in the workplace.
- Apply narrative tools to drive organisational change.

[\*\*VIDEO OVERVIEW\*\*](#)

## **LEADING FROM THE INSIDE:** How Creativity Fuels Wellbeing in Leadership

This session is designed to address the increasing demands on leaders in today's high-pressure business environments. As burnout and stress rise, leaders often feel drained and disconnected from their sense of purpose. This keynote not only explores how creativity can serve as an antidote for any leader striving for long-term resilience, fulfilment, and a deeper sense of meaningful work; but it shall also awaken each person's unique creative-self, no matter how dormant this self has been.

Drawing from years of creative engagement and leadership insights, Joel will both show how creativity can be used for self-reflection AND he will actively lead your people in on-the-spot creative experiments in their own wellbeing. These are practices which will both inspire and rejuvenate them in the moment, and also equip them with what they need for the realities of their everyday wellbeing. Through this process Joel will break down how, by reconnecting with their innate creative potential, leaders can experience profound personal growth, manage stress more effectively, and create thriving work environments that support both individual and team well-being.

### **THIS SESSION WILL:**

- Re-connect leaders with their unique creative-self in an explosion of creative energy.
- Empower and equip leaders to engage with creative-practices for their own wellbeing and mental health.
- Help leaders re-ignite their deeper sense of purpose in their leadership.
- Boost the culture of creativity within teams leading to higher levels of engagement, collaboration and professional/personal breakthrough.
- Build resilience for long-term fulfilment in the leadership journey.

# AN ANALGUE POET IN AN AI WORLD:

## Creativity and Connection in the New Era

In a world increasingly driven by algorithms and artificial intelligence, what happens when we skip the messy, human-centered process of creativity and rush to the output? In this session Joel unpacks how embracing the tension between analogue and AI, process and product, can lead us to breakthroughs that are not only innovative but also deeply human. Joel offers a roadmap to harnessing creativity that isn't just reactive but transformative, ensuring that we don't lose the soul of creation in the surface level of efficiency. This talk is a call to pause and rediscover the power of creative connection even as we reshape the workforce for more efficiency with AI.

This session delves into practical strategies for maintaining the humanity of our creative endeavours—infusing them with empathy, narrative, and connection. Joel emphasises that the creative process is not just a pathway to better outcomes, though it is, but is a vital mode of engaging in meaningful work and a more meaningful life.

### THIS SESSION WILL:

- Equip participants with strategies to *HOLD THE TENSION*, balancing analogue and digital, inspiration and automation.
- Rediscover the *Lost Art of Listening*: Cultivate deep listening as a foundational skill for creativity and meaningful work.
- Learn to embrace Telic and Atelic practices.
- Prioritise Purpose Over Productivity: Understand how skipping the creative process sacrifices innovation.
- Enhance Human Creativity: Learn to amplify human strengths like intuition, emotional depth, and narrative intelligence while still collaborating with AI.
- Build a Creative Culture: Gain actionable insights into embedding deep listening and exploration into team dynamics.

**#NOTE:** Each of these keynotes can also serve as the basis for PD training for companies and organisations.



## EVENT HOSTING MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Whether at the **Melbourne Town Hall**, the **Athenaeum Theatre**, or the Plenary room at the **Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre** (MCEC), Joel has served as the Master of Ceremonies for countless events, bringing his expertise and dynamic presence to every event he has hosted.

Known for his energetic and engaging stage presence, he brings a unique blend of humour, warmth, and professionalism to each event, ensuring they run smoothly and memorably. Whether guiding a conference, a festival, a retreat or a corporate gathering, Joel's ability to weave storytelling with event management makes him a sought-after MC who keeps audiences entertained and engaged from start to finish.

***"Joel is remarkably gifted at reading a room and knowing where to take them. He effortlessly blends into any event and brings such meaningful words to take the event forward." (William Decker - Graceland Festival)***



## CONFERENCE THEME POEM

Looking to kick your event off with a creative *BANG* while introducing your audience directly into the themes of the conference in a way that cuts through? Then this is what you need.

Joel writes and performs commissioned spoken word pieces that are a powerful blend of emotion, insight and creative expression. Time and time again, people adamant that they are "not into poetry," have expressed that Joel's performative work was actually their favourite part of a conference.



## POETIC WRAP UP

*Capturing the collective experience*

This add-on is something wholly uniquely and special. At conferences all over the world Joel uses his observational and linguistic skills, to translate what has been communally shared within the conference into a one-off, unique poetic performance that is delivered back to the delegates.

It is a poetic wrap-up that is sure to leave your attendees with both their hearts and their mouths wide open. Available either after each main session, or at the end of a conference. This is what it can look like...





## INNOVATION THAT ENDURES

### *Transformative Training for Teams*

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, innovation is not just a buzzword—it's a necessity. Joel McKerrow offers transformative half-day and full-day training sessions for LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT that is designed to help corporate teams not only embrace creativity but embed it into the very fabric of their organisation. This isn't about one-off brainstorming sessions; it's about creating a culture where innovation thrives and becomes a sustainable, integral part of your business strategy.

#### **1. Inspiring Teams to Embrace Creativity:**

Ignite your team's passion for innovation. Joel's training sessions are designed to inspire and empower every team member, helping them see the potential within themselves and their work to contribute to a culture of continuous innovation.

#### **2. Practical Tools for Innovation:**

Learn actionable strategies to foster creativity within your team and implement innovative processes that align with your company's unique context.

#### **3. Building a Creative Culture:**

Discover how to cultivate an environment where creativity is encouraged, nurtured, and applied to solve real-world challenges.

#### **4. Sustaining Innovation Long-Term:**

Explore methods to ensure that creativity doesn't just spark in short bursts but becomes a continuous, self-sustaining force in your business. Joel provides insights into maintaining momentum, so your team can keep innovating long after the training is over.

### HALF-DAY

A concentrated session that dives deep into the core principles of innovation and provides your team with immediate, practical techniques to start implementing.

### FULL-DAY

A comprehensive experience that not only covers the principles of innovation but also allows for hands-on application, team exercises, and the development of a tailored innovation strategy for your business.