

James Hewitt.

Human Performance Scientist

Speaker Pack

2024



Science-backed strategies for sustainable high performance

What is the key to sustainable high performance? As the pace of work continues to increase, this question is more pertinent than ever. Human Performance Scientist James Hewitt has conducted work and research with some of the world's highest-performing individuals and companies for over 15 years to find the answer.

For example, did you know leaders who sleep for seven rather than five hours are rated as more inspirational and charismatic, potentially boosting employee productivity by up to 225%? And what about enhancing creativity, which is ranked as one of the most critical skills in the future of work? It could be as simple as taking a stroll: 80% of brain grey matter is modifiable by physical activity, and a short walk outside can double the likelihood of generating an innovative idea. Even shifting company wellbeing by a single point could increase annual profits by \$2-3 billion yearly. Sometimes, the most important work doesn't look like work.



James' thought-provoking and practical, science-based messages have impacted and delighted audiences in over 30 countries, spanning sectors including aerospace, technology, finance, consulting, and pharmaceuticals, in leading business schools such as IMD, St. Gallen, and at three World Economic Forum Annual Meetings in Davos.

When leaders are looking for science-based tools to take their performance and organisational impact to a new level, they turn to James. Combining first-hand experience as a full-time racing cyclist with ground-breaking work and research, proven on Formula 1 tracks and Fortune 500 companies, James integrates endurance sports strategies with cutting-edge insights from neuroscience, physiology and organisational psychology to reveal a future where wellbeing fuels business success.



You can find James' showreel, here:

<https://vimeo.com/user110094002/jhewittshowreel?share=copu>

Keynote topics

Through his engaging keynotes, James explores dynamic topics, including:

Combating The Attention Paradox

If data is the new oil, we're paying for it with our attention, and we're accumulating debt in the form of increased stress and lost productivity. Addressing this challenge could be worth US\$468 billion each year.

The Future Of Performance

A new wave of AI systems is shaping the future of work, but what if, instead of being automated, the future is characterised by an AI-employee alliance which unlocks new levels of human and business performance? Learn how to translate this vision into a reality.



Rethink Resilience

Recent years have seen an increasing focus on people's wellbeing, with 80% of leaders reporting it was their top priority. However, some leaders are concerned that this greater emphasis might distract from performance. But what if this is a false dichotomy? Organisations with a dual focus on people and performance experience achieve 30% higher revenue growth, but to experience these combined benefits, they need to rethink resilience.

Navigating The Leadership Paradox

Leadership demands are growing as senior executives are expected to rapidly adapt to the shifting social, economic, geopolitical, and technological landscape. However, many leaders struggle with a performance paradox: leadership demands can impair the capabilities that leaders need the most. Find out how to tackle this challenge.

Leading Wellbeing

The world's most successful companies are laser-focused on enhancing efficiency and productivity. However, many senior executives often struggle to understand what workers need to sustain high performance without burning out in the process. Despite 80% of executives saying wellbeing was their top priority, 89% of workers reported work life is getting worse. Discover the solution.

Combating the attention paradox

If data is the new oil, we're paying for it with our attention, and we're accumulating debt in the form of increased stress and lost productivity. Addressing this challenge could be worth US\$468 billion each year.

68% of people say they don't have enough uninterrupted focus time in the workday. But why? Perhaps because the number of meetings has increased by 153% year-on-year. 42% of people multitask in these meetings. Meanwhile, 84% of people always keep their inboxes open in the background. 70% of emails are opened within 6 seconds of receiving them. We're interrupted once every 11 minutes. It then takes 23 minutes to get back up to speed on the original task. Consequently, even though workday length has increased by over 13% in the last two years, 64% of employees say they still don't have enough time and energy to complete their work.

The overwhelming inflow of data, emails, meetings, and notifications has outpaced our ability to process it. Together, these ineffective working patterns can result in hundreds of lost hours, an estimated cost to businesses of \$12,506 each year per employee (based on average salaries), and up to 22% of employees reporting symptoms of burnout. We need to rethink our approach to work.

Research in firms across five major sectors indicates they could gain US\$468 billion annually by optimising knowledge workers' time with dedicated focus periods. Employees also benefit from a greater sense of satisfaction and feeling less overloaded. The answer for how to achieve this optimisation comes from a surprising source: world-class endurance sports. Discover how to approach knowledge work as a cognitive endurance activity with evidence-based strategies to unlock enhanced focus, improved performance, and less stress in an always-on world.

KEY AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS:

- **Identify the Impact of the Attention Economy:** Learn about the costly effects of constant interruptions and multitasking on productivity and stress levels.
- **Recognise the Cost of Inefficient Work Patterns:** Gain insights into how ineffective work habits lead to significant time and financial losses for businesses and employees.
- **Identify Strategies for Enhanced Focus:** Discover evidence-based techniques to improve focus and reduce the distractions of emails, meetings, and notifications.
- **Learn from Endurance Sports:** Explore how principles from world-class endurance sports can be applied to enhance cognitive performance in the workplace.
- **Optimise Work for Better Wellbeing and Performance:** Walk away with a toolkit to optimise knowledge workers' time, enhance cognitive performance, and reduce stress, contributing to both personal and organisational success.

The Future of Performance

A new wave of AI systems is shaping the future of work, but what if, instead of being automated, the future is characterised by an AI-employee alliance which unlocks new levels of human and business performance?

77% of leaders think high performers work longer than average employees, but are they right? Not according to research which found no consistent correlation between performance and the number of hours worked. Instead, the highest performers are replacing the relentless pace of always-on work with a more deliberate approach, characterised by enhanced periods of focus, proactive recovery, and more effective collaboration with each other and emerging technologies.

By 2030, 30% of hours currently worked could be automated. If we use these extra hours to foster more human ways of living and working, the effects could be transformational. For instance, providing opportunities to rest effectively during the workday could increase performance by 26%. A two-minute break for a breathing exercise could improve decision-making performance by 50%. Simply providing time for adequate sleep could boost wellbeing and combat the estimated \$411 Billion cost to the US economy of not sleeping enough.

Of the people who report using automation tools in their work, 79% say they are more productive. They outsource busy work, automate execution, and enhance their creativity. And what about the bottom line? The top 100 firms in the “Highest Wellbeing Places to Work” list outperformed the S&P500 by 20 percentage points. Imagine a future where leaders no longer need to choose between high performance and wellbeing. This inspiring keynote presentation redefines the performance paradigm based on a regenerative model, where stress and rest are balanced to stimulate growth and where, rather than overloading us with emails, meetings, and notifications, technology enables leaders and their teams to reach their full potential.

KEY AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS:

- **Redefining Performance Metrics:** Find out why high performance isn't about working longer hours but rather adopting deliberate practices such as focused work and proactive recovery.
- **AI-Employee Alliance:** Learn how an AI-employee alliance can enhance human and business performance rather than just automating tasks.
- **Critical Capabilities For The Future of Work:** Discover which capabilities will equip employees to thrive, not just survive in this new era, and how to foster them.
- **Impact of Rest and Recovery:** Gain insights into how effective rest significantly boosts performance and why the most important work sometimes doesn't look like work.
- **Transformative Work Model:** Explore a future work model where technology supports, not overwhelms, and working patterns facilitate a regenerative approach that maximises both wellbeing and performance.

Rethink Resilience

Recent years have seen an increasing focus on people's wellbeing, with 80% of leaders reporting it was their top priority. However, some leaders are concerned that this greater emphasis might distract from performance. But what if this is a false dichotomy? Organisations with a dual focus on people and performance experience outsize growth, but to experience these combined benefits, they need to rethink resilience.

There's no doubt that work is getting harder and faster. Workday length has increased by over 13%, and after-hours work has risen by 28% during the last two years. The share of employees reporting that they work at very high speed has increased by 22 percentage points. However, all too often, resilience and the 'people agenda' are based on the desire to protect teams from these growing pressures of working life. What if we flipped the script from fostering resilient employees to focusing on developing 'antifragility'?

A resilient employee is damaged but recovers. A robust team is unharmed, but an organisation of antifragile employees where people and performance are integrated and equally valued are enhanced by challenge and uncertainty. This concept is more than theoretical. Organisations investing and focusing on their people AND performance achieve 30% higher revenue growth than businesses focused on people or performance in isolation.

Find out more about how this dual focus unlocks performance in the most challenging environments and discover why providing autonomy and intentionally generating uncertainty are critical for developing antifragile teams. Using case studies and cutting-edge research, this keynote provides inspiration and actionable strategies to equip teams with the potential to transform the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity of today's business landscape into opportunities for innovation and growth.

KEY AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS:

- **Dual Focus on People and Performance:** Understand the importance of balancing wellbeing with performance for outsized organisational growth.
- **Redefining Resilience and Antifragility:** Learn the distinction between resilience and antifragility and how fostering antifragile teams leads to enhanced performance under pressure.
- **Impact of Autonomy and Uncertainty:** Discover why autonomy and intentionally generated uncertainty is crucial in developing robust, antifragile teams.
- **Case Studies of Success:** Gain insights from real-world examples of organisations that have successfully integrated a dual focus on people and performance.
- **Transforming Challenges into Opportunities:** Explore strategies to turn the volatility and uncertainty of today's work environment into drivers for innovation and growth.

Navigating The Leadership Paradox

Leadership demands are growing as senior executives are expected to rapidly adapt to the shifting social, economic, geopolitical, and technological landscape. However, many leaders struggle with a performance paradox: leadership demands can impair the capabilities that leaders need the most.

Research in 81 companies, including more than 189,000 people, identified four critical capabilities that explain 89% of the variance between strong and weak organisations in terms of leadership effectiveness. The highest-performing leaders can quickly identify and direct their attention towards the highest priority outcomes, recognise patterns and solve complex problems, learn and seek different perspectives and demonstrate high emotional intelligence. However, the stress and demands of leadership positions can compromise these capabilities. For instance, 66% of leaders are not sleeping enough, diminishing brain function, impairing problem-solving and diminishing emotional regulation. 68% say they don't have enough uninterrupted focus time in the workday. Growing workloads make it challenging to exercise and increase sedentary time, raising the likelihood of experiencing high stress by 334%.

The solution is for leaders to rediscover a more human way of working. For example, leaders who sleep for 7 vs 5 hours are rated as more inspirational and charismatic, potentially boosting employee productivity by up to 225%. Learning to be more present could reduce time spent in meetings by 21%, liberating capacity for high-priority tasks. Even a 2-minute breathing exercise can improve performance by 50% and reduce stress. Imagine a future where leaders no longer need to choose between high performance and wellbeing. In this thought-provoking yet practical session, leaders will discover science-based tools to quickly adapt to changing conditions, rescue time and increase energy to maximise their impact while promoting a culture of sustainable performance.

KEY AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS:

- **Critical Leadership Capabilities Revealed:** Uncover the four essential capabilities that define leadership effectiveness, as identified in extensive research across 81 companies.
- **Navigating the Leadership Performance Paradox:** Understand how the increasing demands and stress of leadership roles can impede the very skills leaders need most.
- **Consequences of Leadership Stress:** Learn about the significant impact of factors such as inadequate sleep and limited focus time on leaders' decision-making and emotional intelligence.
- **Rediscovering a Human-Centric Approach:** Explore how adopting more human ways of working can enhance leaders' influence and effectiveness.
- **Science-Based Strategies for Effective Leadership:** Walk away with a practical, evidence-based toolkit to help leaders adapt to change, optimise time and energy management and boost performance while maintaining wellbeing.

Leading Wellbeing

The world's most successful companies are laser-focused on enhancing efficiency and productivity. However, many senior executives often struggle to understand what workers need to sustain high performance without burning out in the process. Despite 80% of executives saying wellbeing was their top priority, 89% of workers reported work life is getting worse.

So, what's the solution for unlocking human potential without jeopardising the balance between work and rest all humans need? It could begin with leaders recognising their outsize impact on employee wellbeing. For instance, research reveals that leaders have an equal impact on employee mental health as spouses (69%) and more than doctors (51%) or therapists (41%). Leaders' personal wellbeing also plays a role. 8 in 10 people expect their leader to model healthy behaviours, and did you know that team members report significantly lower psychological safety on days when their leader had a high level of sleep debt? Even leaders' attitudes to sleep are surprisingly influential. Sleep-devaluing leader behaviour undermines the sleep of subordinates, potentially leading to higher levels of unethical behaviour as employees' self-regulation is impaired.

In contrast, making wellbeing a strategic priority could be transformational for people and performance. Employees who strongly agree their employer cares about their overall wellbeing are 69% less likely to search for a new job and 500% more likely to strongly advocate for their company as a place to work. Overall, organisations that invest in both people and performance are 1.5 times more likely to remain high performers over time and experience 50% lower earnings volatility. In this challenging and inspirational keynote, you will discover how to apply cutting-edge wellbeing and performance science and take a systemic approach which enables leaders and teams to reach their full potential.

KEY AUDIENCE TAKEAWAYS:

- **Wellbeing as a Leadership Priority:** Understand the gap between executives' prioritisation of wellbeing and employees' deteriorating work-life balance.
- **Leaders' Impact on Employee Wellbeing:** Learn about the substantial influence leaders have on their team's wellbeing and the expectations for leaders to model healthy behaviours.
- **Consequences of Leaders' Wellbeing on Teams:** Recognise how a leader's personal wellbeing affects team members' psychological safety and ethical behaviour.
- **Strategic Benefits of Prioritising Wellbeing:** Explore how prioritising employee wellbeing leads to lower job turnover, increased advocacy, and better organisational performance.
- **Systemic Approach to Wellbeing and Performance:** Gain insights into applying wellbeing and performance science systematically to maximise the potential of leaders and teams.

Client testimonials & recommendations



"We were looking for an inspiring speaker that would be able to share new insights and a new perspective. What we didn't expect was for a total experience. James is able to combine elements of his work in sport, science and the corporate world to provide an engaging presentation. From the moment, James, stepped onto stage to his closing remarks, the audience was gripped."

Katherine Shenton
Global Head of Marketing & Communications
@ QuantumBlack, a McKinsey company

An Award-Winning Communicator

James won the Nordic Business Forum speaker contest, going on to speak for an audience of 7,500 people at the Nordic Business Forum's annual business conference. James delivered his keynote as part of a formidable speaker line-up including former President Barack Obama. You can watch James' presentation, here: <https://vimeo.com/402172588/22b52264c2?share=copy> and find a show-reel of other recent presentations, here: <https://vimeo.com/user110094002/jhewittshowreel?share=copy>



"James received really high customer evaluations. He empowered the audience with takeaways that are easily put into practice. The message was all science-backed, and the presentation was exciting. On top of that, James was super nice and easy to work with."

Ville Saarikalle
Head Of Speaker Relations
@ Nordic Business Forum



Information

for event organisers & agencies

Biography

James Hewitt is a leading authority in human performance science and sustainable high performance in the workplace. His ground-breaking work and research, proven on Formula 1 tracks and in Fortune 500 companies, integrates endurance sports strategies with cutting-edge insights from neuroscience, physiology and organisational psychology to reveal a future where wellbeing fuels business success.



Requirements For In-Person Audio & Video

Please ensure that your facilities have the following equipment:

1. Projector with PowerPoint presentation capability
2. Lavalier or Countryman microphone.
3. Two handheld wireless microphones for audience Q&A session (if required).
4. Wireless presenter for the PowerPoint presentation.

Requirements For Live Brain Monitoring Demonstration

James can integrate a live-brain monitoring demonstration into his presentations and workshops. This feature utilises a mobile, wireless EEG headset, which visualises James' brain activity, levels of stress and focus, in real-time, as a 3D rotating model on the screen. To deliver this demonstration, James needs to connect his Apple MacBook Pro laptop computer to the venue's presentation system.

This requires:

1. Facility to mirror James' laptop computer screen on the venue's presentation system.
2. An HDMI connection for James' laptop computer.
3. An HDMI cable long enough (or an accessible port) for James' laptop computer to be on stage with him (as the EEG headset communicates via Bluetooth).
4. A podium or table for the laptop computer.

Global reach:

James has presented 1000+ hours of keynotes, lectures and workshops:

- On 5 continents.
- In 30+ countries.
- For 50,000+ people.

Find out more:

jameshewittperformance.com

Twitter: @jamesphewitt

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jamesphewitt/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jamesphewitt/)

Bookings & enquiries

james@jameshewittperformance.com

Photos for use in promotional materials:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fccaygtztrb4qb/AADJNeDJmhc6Joo833BhUJ3a?dl=0>