

Rachael Robertson

Antarctic expedition leader, bestselling author, leadership expert

Rachael Robertson is a dynamic leader and superbly strategic thinker under the most challenging circumstances. She successfully led the 58th Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition to Davis Station - only the second female to lead a team at the Station and one of the youngest-ever leaders.

Rachael is also a best-selling author, Australia's pre-eminent authority on extreme leadership and Australia's most booked female speaker. Her talents are in great demand from leading organisations around the globe.

As a keynote speaker and facilitator at over 1500 national and international conferences and events, Rachael Robertson shares what it was like to be a leader in such an intense and unique situation - and the many valuable leadership lessons she learnt during her time of exploration and discovery.

More about Rachael Robertson:

Rachael Robertson returned to Australia after 12 months in the Antarctic, where she successfully led the 58th Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition to Davis Station. She was only the second female to ever lead a team at the Station and one of the youngest ever leaders.

She managed a team of 18 people through the long, dark, Antarctic winter and through trial and error built a resilient and highly successful team based on the foundation that 'respect trumps harmony'. The most important rule was No Triangles - I don't speak to you, about them.

This leadership role is a truly unique experience. Antarctica in winter is totally inaccessible which means once the last ship leaves at the end of February, no one can leave the base under any circumstance (not even if you are dying) until the ship returns in November. It's a 24 hour a day, every day of the year, leadership role. In any circumstance, this would be a tough role, but for a female in a male dominated environment, it was also a very challenging one!

Prior to this Rachael held senior operational management roles for 16 years in a range of complex and challenging environments and now works in the field of leadership development sharing her experiences.



Since returning to Australia, Rachael has completed her MBA and written a best-selling book, *Leading on the Edge*, based on her year in Antarctica. The book is currently under option for film/TV.

She is an international keynote speaker and has presented at over 1,500 conferences around the world. Her latest book, *Respect trumps Harmony*, was released in April 2020.

Rachael presents with great humour, humility and passion. No matter the event, Rachael will leave your audience inspired, challenged and equipped to take the next step in their leadership journey.

Rachael Robertson talks about:

Leading on the edge - Rachael's most in-demand keynote! It resonates with audiences seeking inspiration, humor, and practical tools to build their leadership capability. Explore how great leaders build and invest in those around them and turn 'moments into momentum' by paying attention to the little things. This is all about showing BIG leadership in SMALL moments.

Future. Woman. Leader. - How women can get to the top and stay there. Rachael outlines the key personal mantras, commitments and career tools that every woman must use to progress effectively. Perfect for both women's and mixed events.

365 shades of white - An hilarious and compelling account of Rachael's time leading up to 120 people on in the remotest corner of the earth for a year. Hear about "life in the freezer", the plane crash, how "the bacon war" nearly derailed a \$20M science program and other unique stories backed by uncommon insight and useful tools.

The future of teamwork - How to quickly create an innovative, collaborative & high performing team. In this keynote Rachael uncovers the critical tools she uses to quickly create cohesion, purpose and resilience in teams. Practical tools you can put to work straight away.

Change is the new business as usual - How to make your organisation change-ready! Rachael provides the tools to navigate this world of 'flux' that dominates business today. Self-leadership, resilience, and persistence are the keys to succeeding in a world of seemingly constant change.

Remote and dangerous - Practical tools for increased safety leadership. Rachael recounts how she kept her team safe and sane through the long, dark Antarctic winter by building a culture of safety leadership. She provides practical tools people can use to create leadership around them.

Client testimonials

“ Rachael was engaging and responded well to the group. Her experiences are extraordinary and she did a great job of relating what she learnt. She was also able to illustrate the similarities between her roles and those of my team. In one word, "Terrific!"

- ANZ Bank

“ We were delighted with the feedback on Rachael from our advisers. Evaluation forms contained phrases such as: "Excellent", "Truly inspiring", "Interesting" and "Fantastic presenter - very informative and interesting". Working with Rachael over five events around Australia was a delight. She has a very professional and flexible approach.

- AXA

“ I have seen a number of speakers over the years, however Rachael was amongst the absolute best of them. I took so much away from her amazing story, and have relayed some of her messages to other people. Love the bacon war!

- Randstad

“ Rachael is a passionate and enthusiastic speaker. She has that magic mix of tangible down-to-earth stories that give way to strong and inspiring messages on leadership, relationships and life. She fully engages with the participants from the moment she arrives right through to the moment she leaves.

- Alstom

“ Inspirational leadership, real and fascinating stories. Great safety insights ... simply excellent.

- Exxon Mobil

“ Rachael's experience itself was incredibly interesting and different to most speakers you usually see at these kinds of events. She was honest, engaging and made her experience relevant to us. Having her for dinner to chat more informally after the presentation was great as she was interested in what we do, our challenges, etc. and gave us excellent advice by relating to some of the adversity she went through in Antarctica.

- UBS

“ I have never received so much positive feedback from a guest speaker as I have this time. People continue to tell me how impressed they were with Rachael's story. She provided a fantastic insight into difficulties around management in a remote site. Her messages and insights can be applied within our business. She shared a range of unusual and interesting stories which made her message even stronger.

- Crown Casinos & Hotels

“ Rachael provided insights and inspiration of leadership in a truly challenging environment engaging both new and experienced executives within our own "Challenging workplace".

- Village Cinemas International

“ Rachael presented in a casual manner which I think was really appropriate for our group of delegates, especially after 3 full days of workshops. Rachael’s down to earth story of an ordinary person achieving extraordinary things inspires us all to work with all the tools available to us and to make our own opportunities and not just wait for them to come to us!

- Choice Hotels Australasia

“ Rachael had us at hello. Her powerful introduction had all 230 plus of us enthralled and engaged. Rachael’s ability to tell her story and make it relevant to her audience is exceptional. Rachael could talk to leadership lessons she learnt in Antarctica and make them entirely applicable to our context, being local government. We have claimed Rachael as one of ours as she has a link to our municipality but we will let her tell you about this. She left us knowing that whilst every job has its Antarctic winter, she equipped us with strategies to get us through the cold. A wonderfully uplifting experience.

- Monash City Council (Virtual presentation format)

“ Rachael has presented at Trinity Grammar School twice in the last 12 months, and we asked her back for a reason! Rachael is an entertaining storyteller, an insightful and inspiring leader and a generous professional. We wanted to create a wellbeing type event that would bring our whole community together at a time when we are apart, students of all ages, families, staff and alumni. ‘Lessons from Lockdown’ needed to entertain, inspire and encourage. Rachael listened well and masterfully wove together a presentation that did all those things to all those different groups of people! The feedback from our community has been outstanding. We’ve had so many of our families tell us how much they gained from her presentation, including those who have adopted memorable strategies the very next day like ‘NQR’ and ‘No Triangles’. Rachael’s team were a delight to deal with and her unique experiences speak directly into the unique situation we all find ourselves (locked down in a global pandemic). It couldn’t be more relevant! We’re thankful to Rachael for her work with us and I wholeheartedly commend her to your school community.

- Trinity Grammar School, Kew

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