

## Elka Whalan

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### *Dual Olympian freestyle champion*

Dual Olympian Elka Whalan spent almost seven years at the top of Australian swimming achieving both Australian and Commonwealth records. In 2001 she recorded the world's fastest swim for the 200m Freestyle and was officially ranked Number One in the world. In 2003 she won gold in the 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m at the World Championships - the only woman ever to do so.

Following her retirement from competitive swimming, Elka established a successful career in journalism and the media. A great on-camera talent, Elka covered the London 2012 Olympic Games for Fox Sports. She also commentated for ESPN. She is a regular Jury member on *The Morning Show* and has appeared on high-rating shows like *Dancing with the Stars*, *Can of Worms*, *Deal Or No Deal*, *The Panel*, *Between The Lines* and *Pyramid*.

Elka Whalan is confident, humorous and animated and in high demand as a keynote speaker and MC. She has hosted or presented to many Australian corporations including Energy Australia, Macquarie Bank, Coles, Woolworth's and Uncle Toby's.

She has also spoken at primary schools, high schools and tertiary institutions nationwide, sports awards nights, high-profile charity fundraisers (where she's often been the MC) and even directly to politicians in Canberra. Her engaging, motivational message is relevant to people of all ages and all walks of life.

Elka is currently the ambassador for Allianz Life and she has also worked with Swisse Vitamins, Heinz Simply, ProjectABLE and Little Takas. She was the youngest board member on the Australia Day Council of NSW (2009-2011) and has been a McHappy Day Ambassador for the past 4 years.

Elka has modelled in many magazines including Marie Claire, Cleo, FHM and Alpha and was the face of the AGC Spring Racing Carnival in 2004.

Elka has also written for magazines and newspapers including Marie Claire, New Idea and the Sun Herald.



### **More about Elka Whalan:**

Elka was at the top of Australian swimming for almost seven years. A dual Olympian, she won Olympic silver in the 4 x 200m Freestyle relay in Athens 2004 and has come home with medals from World Championships, Commonwealth Games, the World Cup (Gold) and Pan Pacific championships. Elka has achieved both Australian and Commonwealth records including the Australian 400m Freestyle short course record, which she held for over five years. In 2001 she recorded the world's fastest swim for the 200m Freestyle and was officially ranked Number One in the world. Between 2001 and 2004 she was consistently in the Top Three in the world for both the 200m and 400m Freestyle.

In 2003, Elka spent a month in hospital after being diagnosed with a worrying heart condition. Yet her positive mindset saw her win Gold in the 200m, 400m and 800m at the World Cup just a month after her release from hospital, marginally missing world record times.

Elka ended her swimming career with no less than 10 Australian Championship Gold medals (both long and short course). She came home with a medal from every meet in which she ever competed apart from Athens (when she finished 4th in the 4 x 200m relay).

Elka is a passionate supporter of charity groups and has worked extensively to raise awareness of and funds for the Heart Foundation, Nelune Foundation and Ronald McDonald House. She is an Ambassador for the online sport community DoubleDrummer.com, a group which is supporting her endeavour to establish a 'swim for safety' program in Papua New Guinea through Australian Volunteers International.

### **Client testimonials**

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“ Elka’s delivery is hilarious. She is real, individual and so honest. Her aura and ‘zest’ for life is truly remarkable. Whether for team building, businessmen or motivation, Elka encapsulates it all with the right mix of experience, wisdom beyond her years and a great message.

- **Energy Australia**

“ With your charismatic stage presence you delighted the crowd with a down to earth and engaging speech on life and the dedication it took for you to be successful in accomplishing your goals in swimming. The way you were able to reflect and draw comparisons on how this can transfer to all sport and all aspects of life really kept the audience in the palm of your hand throughout. However I believe that it was your interaction with the audience and humour that left a lasting impression, with many in attendance commenting not just on your professionalism but your approachable attitude and demeanour. From comments I received over the weekend it would be safe to say for many delegates you were not only the hit of the night, but of the whole State Conference.

**- NSW Touch Football**

“ Elka combined youthful enthusiasm with wise words of advice about setting goals and going for them with determination. She really added an inspiring dimension to our Duke of Edinburgh Award presentation evening. The girls and their parents spoke so positively about Elka's honest and humorous delivery as she told us about her life journey so far. She related so easily to the girls at their age and stage and I am sure that many will be influenced to strive for bigger and better goals than they could have imagined beforehand.

**- Pymbles Ladies' College**

“ As MC for our annual women's breakfast Elka absolutely captivated our large early morning audience with her warmth and humour, and ably moved the event through its tight agenda. At every stage Elka was a consummate professional, and we have had many written comments of appreciation from our guests. The Heart Foundation is extremely grateful for the professionalism and immense warmth Elka contributed to our events in Melbourne. We have no hesitation in recommending Elka, and look forward to our next opportunity to work with her

**- Heart Foundation (Victoria)**

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