

Karni Liddell

Former Paralympian, Presenter & Keynote Speaker

Karni Liddell is one of Australia's most successful, well-respected and highly awarded Paralympic swimmers of our time.

A former World Record holder, Karni represented Australia at the Atlanta Paralympic Games in 1996 and captained the Number 1 team at the Sydney 2000 Games, returning from both Games with medals. Karni was appointed Ambassador for the Australian Paralympic team and commentator for the Athens Games.

One of few TED speakers to receive a standing ovation, and described by AMP as "one of the top ten speakers", Karni instantly captivates audiences with moving stories from her journey to success. Along the way, she challenges listeners to let go of excuses in order to pursue success. Karni effortlessly relates her story to the highs and lows of business and life in a way that is relevant to audiences at every level.



More about Karni Liddell:

Karni Liddell was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy at 12 months. Her parents were told, by numerous specialists, that their first-born child would not walk or crawl and that she was unlikely to reach her teenage years.

However, instead of listening to the 'experts', Karni's parents soon realised that one of the greatest pleasures in life is achieving things people say can't be done! They began a rehabilitation program, which they invented themselves, and had her doing everything from horse riding at two, trampolining at three, and later, swimming.

Swimming became more than just a therapy, it became a passion - and the reason why Karni, her parents and even the specialists believe she is alive, walking, active and healthy. Not only did Karni walk, she established herself as one of the best swimmers in the world. She broke her first world record at 14 and went into the Sydney Paralympic Games as the fastest woman in the world for all her events. She was also responsible for helping Westpac Bank to raise \$1 million to send the full team to the Athens Paralympic Games.



Karni has been showcased in Inside Sport, modelled for Black and White, New Idea and several other magazines. She has presented on 4BC radio; worked as a commentator at the Athens Paralympic Games, at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games and at the World Swimming Championships; and presented for Channel 7 and Network Nine. Karni is a presenter on Channel 7's *Great Day Out*.

Karni has raised over \$1million throughout her career for the various disability charities she supports. Karni is currently the Engagement Manager for Disability Connect QLD where her role is to increase employment of People with a disability across the Public sector and the community. She was the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) QLD Ambassador, a member of the Qld Premier's Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council, and the Patron of the International Day of People with a Disability, an Ambassador for Kids Help Line, Muscular Dystrophy QLD and Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association.

Karni was awarded the Pride of Australia medal, she won the Qld Teacher and Trainer of the year (2015) and was awarded the Alumni of the Year award for the faculty of health at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Karni holds a Clinical Masters in Social Work (QUT) and a double Bachelor's degree in Communications from Bond University.

A passionate role model, who is dedicated to expelling the stereotypes surrounding disabled people and the Paralympics, Karni says, 'Accidents and disability don't discriminate; they choose beautiful people every day!'

By telling her story, Karni demonstrates to everyone who hears her that each and every one of us has a choice in life and that our choices should not be determined by our circumstances.

Karni Liddell talks about:

- Tough times, sporting success, health obstacles, family support and perseverance
- How we cannot control what life throws at us, we can only control how we handle what is thrown.
- Goal setting and how to handle adversity.

Client testimonials

“ The best speaker I have ever experienced’ was a sentiment echoed by high profile business executives and politicians at our event. Karni Liddell’s message to our business community proved inspirational to our audience on corporate, personal and family levels.

- Capricorn Tourism & Economic Development

“ When we invited Karni Liddell to join us as a guest motivational speaker at our annual conference for our top-performing employees, we did not anticipate the extent to which she



would capture the hearts and minds of our people. When Karni later joined us on a leadership development roadshow across Australia, there were few who not left absolutely inspired by her journey.

- Westpac

“ When Karni presented at the AMP national sales conference, an audience of over 1500 rose spontaneously in a standing ovation in tribute to both the story and the person behind it. This audience has been exposed to some of the best speakers from around the world and there is no doubt that Karni would be considered amongst the top ten speakers.

- AMP

“ We were absolutely delighted to have Karni speak at our recent staff retreat. A truly amazing, down to earth and positive person, she certainly was the highlight of our two days and definitely inspired us all. A number of staff commented that she was one of the best motivational speakers that they had heard.

- CQ Medicare Local

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