

CHRIS HELDER

Best-selling author of
The Ultimate Book of Influence

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**BECAUSE IT'S BETTER THAN
POSITIVE THINKING**

WILEY

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About the author

Chris Helder is one of the most exciting speakers on the public speaking circuit in the world right now. A dynamic presenter, his highly entertaining speeches on influence have transformed how businesses communicate with their clients.

Chris has wowed more than 2000 audiences throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Europe and the United States. He is a frequent TV and radio guest who talks about the power of genuine communication.

Originally from the United States, Chris graduated from Colorado State University and served two years as part of the distinguished 'Teach for America' program, completing his teaching in Compton, California. A certified practitioner of Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP, INLPTA), Chris has synthesised his work from NLP, human typological analysis, advanced communications, motivational research and behavioural modelling.

Drawing from many different fields of research, Chris has created something simple yet powerful in his keynote

talks. His combination of energy, wit, humour and tailored content ensures he relates to every audience member.

Chris Helder's previous titles include the bestseller *The Ultimate Book of Influence* (Wiley).

He lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife, Lucy, and their three boys, Jake, Billy and P.J.

Preface

I am a motivational speaker—but I really don't like that title. I think it labels me in a way that somehow makes me seem like I'm not a regular person, when the fact is I'm dealing with a lot of the same stuff that everyone else is.

From establishing an identity to building relationships, all of us are riding this thing called 'life'. We all have to deal with the obligations that come with all kinds of commitments in many different areas—financial, business, relationship, parenting, family, friends and health.

Over the past 14 years, I have presented to more than 2000 audiences. I have been a keynote speaker, trainer, facilitator, coach and mentor to hundreds of thousands of people. I have witnessed many people spend endless energy on trying to change things they have absolutely no control over. Even if they don't *want* to change things, they spend a phenomenal amount of time worrying about them.

My goal in writing this book is to give people a simple tool that will help them focus on what is truly 'useful' in making the most of their life.

I was at a Christmas party last year when a man (who seemed to have had a few drinks) approached me and said,

‘I heard you are a motivational speaker.’ He snickered. ‘Why don’t you say something to motivate me?’

I laughed and tried to brush it off, but he persisted. ‘No, seriously, what do you tell people? Do you tell people to be positive? Is that what you say? “Be positive”?’

I hesitated. His tone was quite aggressive. For whatever reason, he was trying to provoke a response.

‘No, I’m serious. What is your thing? Why do *you* get to talk to people?’

I looked at him and realised he genuinely wanted to know. I suppose what he really wanted to hear was if there was anything new or different he should know about.

‘No,’ I said. ‘I don’t tell people to be positive. In fact, positive thinking doesn’t really work.’

He stopped for a beat. He hadn’t expected that, and I could tell that I had his attention.

So I continued, ‘Imagine if you’d just had the worst year of your life and someone came up to you and said, “Hey come on man, you’ve had a bad year. Don’t worry about it! Be positive!” How would you respond?’

‘I’d want to punch him in the face.’

‘Exactly,’ I laughed. ‘You see, being positive doesn’t really work. Instead, I teach something called Useful. It’s an idea called Useful Belief.’

‘Here’s an example of how it works,’ I went on. ‘If you’ve had the worst year of your life, you don’t need me to tell you to be positive. Instead, I would say to you, “All right, you’ve had a really bad year. You are at ground zero. The question now is, what is the most useful thing for you