

We'd thought we would clarify

engage started as natural extension of the katoomba youth convention. Young Christians at university going into the workforce needed a conference for them, one that focused on their issues, not to the exclusion of others but as recognition that workers face some very workplace specific challenges.

What we want to see happen

We would love to see workers refreshed and inspired to live their whole lives as redeemed people. That's what **engage** is about. So that instead of a disconnect between work life, church life and life in general, that we as a group of redeemed workers add value to our city and lift up (shout)the name of Jesus in everything we do. Not that a lot of us aren't like this already, we want to encourage and equip and challenge all our hearts and minds to give glory to the one who is our ultimate boss.

engage is a work in progress

We expect - in fact, we want - **engage** to change, as we continue to think through the challenges young working people face and how best to serve people during the weekend. Your involvement, ideas, patience & feedback will help the conference to develop.

Some (of the many) things we discovered

Many of you are in teaching, IT and finance. You appreciated "the vibe" of **engage**, loving the talks, singing, late starts and relaxed atmosphere (though more so in 2007). On the flip-side, you found the queues for coffee too long, which frustrated a lot of you. Some of you love your jobs. But heaps of you find the workplace difficult, depressing, disconnected and even boring. Lots of you are regular church-goers who find it hard to translate the theology you are learning on Sundays to the rest of the week.

A few of the things we are working on changing

Here are a few of the things you suggested, that we are changing in 2009:

- A more relaxed atmosphere. Tickets in 2008 sold-out very quickly and the large numbers stretched the kcc site to capacity. By moving to two weekends in 2009, and capping the number of tickets available for each weekend, we are hoping to create a bit more space for people to come and enjoy a relaxed weekend from God's word. This should also give us more leg-room and the ability to bring back the tables in the auditorium.
- A worker-friendly registration opening time of 8pm!
- Coffee cart queues. One of our heavy-duty machines broke in 2008, which contributed (in part) to the long queues. We're working on it...
- More info on website including information about meals & whether we can cater for dietary requirements; the program and Friday night start time; facilities for mums with babies etc. Watch this space.

What you said about work

We asked you to describe your working life in 25 words or less. Here are some of the responses we received...

- "Very full on, I'm still getting used to it, emotionally draining" Primary school teacher
- "I love being busy but I don't want to do it forever. I have great colleagues yet I show no Christian testimony and it depresses me to the point of despair. Going to travel overseas next year anyway." Real estate
- "I work in a small department and have been incredibly blessed to establish close relationships with my non-Christian colleagues. Praise God I also feel that I have been in the privileged position to get to witness to them and talk about Jesus with my faith openly. While I'm not in love with the job, I love this purpose!" Marketer
- "Exhausting; people are driven by money and alcohol and I'm constantly trying to show them that's not me." Banker

- “Full on, plus TAFE three nights a week. No time.” Tradie.
- “I am a high paid city missionary.” Maritime engineer
- “Full time mum – I love working in the home, raising our child, it is such a privilege and a joy however it is also difficult and tiring and at times hard to remain focused and enthusiastic.” Full time mum
- “Deadlines, skipped-lunches, stress, intellectual engagement, nice people but not always time to talk, Christians are spoken about at work as being: arrogant because they believe in one truth; unable to think for themselves; conservative about stem cell research, abortion and sexuality” Journalist
- “Love the people I work with and my work but hours can be long and hard to see how it will work long term with a family” Corporate lawyer
- “It’s a new job for me. Each day is filled with danger, and the [people I work with] get drunk a lot, swear a lot, sleep together etc to forget the seriousness of their job. I struggle with being the only Christian...” Police officer
- “A means to pay the bills”