

KiwiRail

Emerging Diversity and Inclusion

When KiwiRail's first strategy for promoting Māori leadership did not deliver, the organisation undertook a new approach led directly by Māori themselves.

Founded in 1864, KiwiRail is a state-owned enterprise, running a 24-hour operation across New Zealand, employing 3,400 people.

KiwiRail decided to shift from an apprentice-themed approach, which failed to appreciate many behavioural drivers of Māori, to one specifically designed to focus on factors that affect low Māori achievement.



The Toi Toi Māori Leaders Programme was developed by Māori for Māori. The initiative leveraged the experience of Māori leaders who have overcome the challenges of environmental factors that could have led to under-achievement. The content and design took into account what behavioural competencies these leaders had applied, and integrated the delivery of these with Te Ao Māori principles in order to help foster positive outcomes for participants, their families and wider communities. Participants were self-nominated.

Toi Toi was strongly influenced by KiwiRail's learning and development 70-20-10 strategy. The theory behind this approach is 10 per cent of learning is conducted through formal learning, 20 per cent through peers and 70 per cent on the job.

The programme was delivered over 12 months in marae and classroom settings. Learnings included applying Te Ao Māori principles to explore leadership theory and learning behavioural competencies that accelerate learning and achievement.

The formal learning was complemented with a range of informal noho (workshops) and assignments, and participants were encouraged to source a mentor from within the business who aligned to their goals and vision.

The first noho was for participants only, however the following noho are open to management across KiwiRail to attend as a cultural development opportunity. KiwiRail's CEO and members of the executive and general management teams attended the second noho. Approximately 100 people are expected to attend the graduation of 18 participants. This will be made up of KiwiRail Board members, executive, regional and business unit managers plus 32 family members. Their commitment to travel overnight to an isolated West Coast marae has been an outstanding show of support.

KiwiRail Leadership Capability Manager Reuben Araroa says, "People taking part gained confidence in their ability as leaders to share their Toi Toi journey and learning with the wider KiwiRail whanau and their communities. Equipped with the tools for success, participants are now giving back to the

organisation by actively driving culture shifts within their circles of influence and contributing to KiwiRail's diversity strategy."

KiwiRail management has strongly supported placing the leadership and ownership for developing the programme in the hands of Māori; more specifically, Māori who have been there before and broken the cycle of under achievement. These Māori leaders were given access to business unit leaders, human resources and learning and development support, with managers accountable for supporting when required. The belief in Māori leadership to deliver a result sent a strong message of support.



KiwiRail's CEO Peter Reidy has embraced Te Reo by learning tauparapara, mihi whakatau, pepeha and waiata, and applying these within formal business settings. In the past, KiwiRail has had to rely on local kaumatua to guide and support its actions on marae. Toi Toi has enabled Peter to lead himself onto the marae with the confidence that he has grown capable Māori leaders within the organisation.

Peter has also committed financially to the programme. The original Māori Leaders Programme was funded by Te Puni Kokiri. After consulting with Māori leaders within KiwiRail, a commitment was made to internally fund Toi Toi, prioritising budget, time and resources.

Toi Toi Māori leaders have integrated Te Reo Māori into their daily work. As a result, non-Māori have become more familiar with the culture and understand its value in connecting people. KiwiRail has made a commitment to allow 30 minutes once a week for any employee to join a kapa haka group within the organisation. There are currently three main groups growing in Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch. The first rail industry haka has also been composed.

As a result of this programme, many participants have taken a leadership role while incorporating Te Ao Māori. Stand out promotions include Jake Barbarich who was promoted from Field Production Team lead to Upper North Island Manager. His leadership approach is being used as the benchmark for other business unit leaders. Logan Kahui went from being a mechanical workshop team member to Business Improvement Lead and Ray Brown was promoted from locomotive engineer to Māori Liaison Officer Te Kupenga Mahi. Brendan Smith set a development plan to become a Regional Manager. He has completed First Line Manager Level 3, a self-funded Diploma in Business Management, and is aiming for a Bachelor in Applied Management.

IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION,
TOOLS OR RESOURCES TO MAKE
YOUR WORKPLACE MORE INCLUSIVE

Visit diversityworksnsz.org.nz
or call 0800 DIVERSITY (348 377)