

## Wayne Simeon and Erica Benton, Coca-Cola Amatil New Zealand *Walk the Talk*

Pink Shirt Day, International Women's Day, Pride, and International Day of Friendship are all special events at Coca-Cola Amatil New Zealand, not just because of the causes they represent, but because they're examples of the teamwork that goes into creating a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered.

Wayne Simeon and Erica Benton are the co-chairs of CoDE (Champions of Diversity and Equality), the internal diversity and inclusion committee at Coca-Cola Amatil New Zealand (CCANZ). The committee's purpose is "to create a culture that recognises, embraces, celebrates and leverages our diverse talent, where everyone feels safe, valued, appreciated and significant".



The pair's leadership in diversity and inclusion has had a positive impact on the company's overall engagement score, and diversity and inclusion has now become a key driver of engagement. This was shown in the results of the 2017 Aon Hewitt Annual Engagement Survey.

There was 90 per cent agreement with the statement, 'My direct leader creates a working environment that respects individual differences' and 89 per cent agreement with, 'This organisation values diversity'. A total of 92 per cent of employees agreed 'they are proud to be part of this organisation'.

Employee engagement in key events such as Pink Shirt Day, and other events that celebrate diversity and inclusion, has increased significantly. Employees credit Wayne and Erica with being able to bring together people from all levels of the company to work towards a common goal.

"Wayne and Erica have always strived to create an open environment in CoDE, embracing all viewpoints and spectrums of our business, whether liberal or conservative. They always try to pull down the walls and bridge the gap over differences, and at least get us around the table and talk." - Credit Controller and CoDE member Karl Mokokaka.

"Passionate, committed and true advocates who have tirelessly championed the role of CoDE to our leadership team and connected with the people within the business to create positive impact and fantastic fun memories along the way. What resonates well with people is the joy of doing these activities. Wayne and Erica have brought people together to create those 'moments of happiness' that our company culture lives by". - Natalie Dorn, Innovation and Strategic Projects Manager and CoDE member.

"Both Wayne and Erica are open to new ideas and concepts that push the traditional boundaries of our understanding of a 'norm' no matter how much it would appear to shake the ground that we stand on. Because of this we are able to challenge the status quo." - Business Solution Delivery Manager and CoDE Member Darren Ruston.

Erica and Wayne have successfully shared their ideas with the executive team. Managing Director Chris Litchfield says by clearly demonstrating the impact on performance and engagement, and by showing the intrinsic link to the company's values (Stand Together), they have inspired the executive team to be mindful of diversity and inclusion at all levels.

"Erica and Wayne have been instrumental in championing diversity and inclusion at CCA. They challenge us as a leadership team to keep lifting the bar, and hold us accountable for making sure that it is embedded in everything we do. Through Erica and Wayne's leadership and the work of the CoDE team, we have a happy, healthy workforce who feel empowered to bring their whole self to work every day," he says.

The pair's influence has also been recognised externally in the presentation of awards to CCANZ. These include being Aon Hewitt Best Employer two years in a row in 2016 and 2017. The company has Rainbow Tick accreditation and received a 2017 White Camellia Award, which is given to organisations taking positive steps to ensure New Zealand workplaces are fair and equal and offer the opportunity to succeed.

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YOUR WORKPLACE MORE INCLUSIVE

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