

DUAL New Zealand Limited

RESPECTFUL CULTURE

SMALL-MEDIUM ORGANISATION FINALIST



THE STORY

With the ultimate goal of becoming an employer of choice and increasing staff engagement levels, DUAL New Zealand Limited sought to better understand the different groups represented in its workforce.

DUAL is an independent property, liability, cyber, motor and specialty underwriting agency with offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and underwriters based in Dunedin, Havelock North and Wellington.

Head of Human Resource and People Whitney Ignatiadis says the organisation recognised there were gaps in its understanding of the different groups represented in its workforce and what they needed to feel supported.

“Our ultimate goal as a business is to be considered a first-choice employer regardless of background or experience. For us to achieve this, DUAL needs to be able to provide holistic support

to employees, with specific opportunities and systems set up to support different groups.

“We are still in the early stages of our DE&I journey, however DUAL understands there is a direct link between employees feeling engaged and their performance. As our Group CEO David Howden often says, ‘If you take care of the people, the rest of the business will take care of itself.’”

DUAL has taken a big-picture approach to increasing its focus on diversity and inclusion with the aim of breaking it down into ongoing smaller projects and strategies.

Internal and external training sessions were held on subjects such as unconscious bias and neurodiversity awareness, with employees speaking about their personal experiences.

Existing policies and procedures were assessed, and changes were made to exclude bias in language and to influence the internal mindset of manager and employees.

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“These initiatives and opportunities came from a desire to do better and have a better understanding of different groups and their experiences, and how using this understanding will increase employee wellbeing and enable us to provide more tailored support and opportunities,” says Whitney.

Over the past few years the organisation has partnered with a wide range of businesses for training. They have included Hustle Education (te reo Māori training), NZSL4U (NZ Sign Language training), Diversity Works New Zealand (DE&I strategy support and awareness training), Work180 (female representation in the workplace and DE&I support and awareness training) and Diversity Council Australia (DE&I strategy support and awareness training).

“Through these partnerships we have also been able to better connect our leadership teams with the concepts of DE&I using experts who are able to provide real world examples of how supporting DE&I strategies and integrating the conversations into all levels of the business affects real change and provides authentic support for your employees.”

Feedback from employees is an important resource for planning future training, resources and volunteer opportunities.

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“We want to utilise the feedback from our employees to ensure we are connecting with topics that they are passionate about, whether through their own experience or to support people they know, while also addressing gaps in their knowledge to ensure in the long term we are supporting as many groups as possible, and providing opportunities for those underrepresented areas and people.”

THE CHALLENGE

DUAL New Zealand wanted to better understand the different groups represented in its workforce.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- An increased focus placed on the importance of diversity and inclusion across the entire business.
- Managers received training on understanding unconscious bias.
- Partnerships with a wide range of providers see staff receive training to achieve an increased understanding on topics such as te reo Māori, sign language, and female representation in the workforce.
- Employee feedback used to decide where training and support should be directed.



RESULTS AND BENEFITS

- Employees are increasingly engaged in diversity and inclusion initiatives and participation levels have risen.
- Unconscious bias training has changed the way language is used and how people communicated in the organisation.
- Recognition of employee feedback has boosted ownership of the initiatives.

KEY LEARNING

Small changes can have a big impact when it comes to creating an inclusive workforce.

