

# Human Resources

New Zealand's Magazine for Human Resources Professionals

Spring 2019

**Why the words we use matter!**

**PLUS:**

HRNZ Conference Review

Soft Skills

Occupational Mindfulness

Diversity

**HR  
NZ** People  
powered  
success



# Welcome to HRNZ

Nick McKissack is Chief Executive of HRNZ. Nick is passionate about people development and sharing the success of members and organisations leading the HR profession in New Zealand.

In August we had Gihan Perera speaking at our annual HR Conference about the Best Workplaces on Earth. His presentation included a discussion about digital disruption and the need for organisations to change and grow if they are to thrive in the future. Gihan's view was that organisations either need to innovate or they will inevitably face disruption from external sources.

The same can be said for the professions. I've been reading about the future of the professions, and it's pretty clear that change is inevitable in an increasingly digital world in which information is more freely available. We're already seeing plenty of innovation in the professions – one example is Dr Lance O'Sullivan's initiative to create drive-through medical clinics. His mission is to make medical care more accessible to those who need it in rural communities. Lance talked about how he was leveraging technology to achieve this, when he spoke at our 2018 HR Conference.

At HRNZ, we're interested in considering the future of the HR profession. As the peak body for HR professionals in New Zealand, we have an obligation to help our members prepare for the future.

That's why HRNZ is about to embark on a journey to create a picture of

what the future of HR looks like. It's a journey that we want to involve as many members as possible in. After all, in the end, it will be up to all of us to create this future.

I met with a group of senior HR leaders from some of New Zealand's leading corporates after our conference to discuss the future of HR. There is a clear sense of purpose amongst this group to ensure that HR develops an understanding of the new problems for organisations created through digital disruption and that HR people help to develop the strategies needed to solve them. The group had a consistent view that the war for talent is very real and that organisations now need robust strategies to ensure they can grow in this environment.

So it's an exciting journey and one that we'll be spending more time working on in the coming months. We've kick-started things by surveying our members about the use of HR technology in New Zealand workplaces. We're hoping to learn about the technology our members are using, what's working, what's not and what are their future plans. The survey also asks members about their views on the use of AI.

We'll report on the results of this survey at the HR Summit we're planning for Queenstown in October. We'll also use that opportunity to

further the broader discussion about the future.

*“ We're looking forward to supporting our members to become tomorrow's leading HR professionals. ”*

It can be scary looking into the future, but overall it feels like an exciting time to be in the HR profession. We're looking forward to supporting our members to become tomorrow's leading HR professionals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick McKissack'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning and a sharp upward stroke at the end.

Nick McKissack  
Chief Executive HRNZ

# Being bold!



**Over 200 people with an interest in people development and human resource management met at Te Papa August for two days of brain food at the HRNZ Conference and Expo 2019. Kathy Catton reviews the highlights and captures some of the learnings.**

**W**hat a delight for HR professionals to have the opportunity to dedicate two days to looking forwards and upwards (and perhaps inwards) to the future of HR and what that means for our profession. HRNZ put on a stellar lineup of compelling speakers, with sponsors and exhibitors in amongst it in the Exhibition Hall.

One of the many highlights for me was the keynote speech delivered by Gihan Perera on creating the best workplace on Earth. Without doubt, this presents a significant challenge for us as HR professionals. We all know that the successful workplace of the future will be very different from the workplace of today. It's not just technology and automation, it's about the environment that we create for attracting a smart, diverse,

socially intelligent team to help our organisation thrive. We were treated to an interactive workshop by Gihan, which started the moment we arrived at the conference with a 'Challenges Wall'. This invited us to share what is currently holding our organisations back; this could be challenges such as embracing diversity, developing new skills and talents, offering more flexibility and empowering people to work independently. This exercise was an excellent opportunity to start to future-proof our organisations and stay ahead of the game in a fast-changing, employee-centric world.

## **What employees are telling us make up the best workplace on Earth (according to Harvard research):**

- Let me be myself (Diversity and Inclusion)
- Help me get stuff done (Authority)
- Discover and magnify my strengths (Talent)
- Make my work meaningful (Meaning)
- Don't get in the way with stupid rules (Good Judgement)



Gihan Perera presents to the HR Conference on the future of the workplace.

One nugget of gold that I took away from Gihan's talk was to find a 'reverse' mentor. We all know that mentoring programmes are easy to implement and can create a massive impact on employee engagement and productivity, but what about a more junior employee mentoring a more senior employee? What a great way to turn the tables on talent and access insights and perspectives to help us grow. For more great ideas, Gihan has a book available on Kindle via his website, called *Disruption by Design*, which is well worth checking out.

My interest was instantly piqued on hearing of the concept of the four-day week, delivered by Andrew Barnes, Founder of Perpetual Guardian. The story starts simply enough. While on a long flight to the UK almost two years ago, Andrew read an *Economist* article that told of office workers in the United Kingdom and Canada only being productive for 2.5 and 1.5 hours per day respectively. He came up with the genuinely original idea of giving his 240 staff at Perpetual Guardian one day off per week, on full pay, in exchange for their maintaining their normal levels of

output. He intended it to be a staff-led trial, which would test the effects of a productivity-focused, reduced-hours model of work on wellbeing, loyalty, productivity and engagement. What it resulted in was the start of what Andrew calls a "worldwide campaign" to make the four-day week the future of work.

Of course, with our HR 'hats' on, this idea raises a whole raft of issues such as holidays, breaks, leadership, trust, stress levels, commitment and empowerment, all of which were well addressed by Andrew. On asking him afterwards what his key advice for HR professionals would be on this subject, he said, "You've got to convince your board, your leadership, your CEO. So to do this, de-risk it. And to de-risk something, you need to look at the evidence. Trial it and research it".

Andrew highlighted the imminent launch of an online tool that he has created, in collaboration with Auckland University and AUT, available in the coming weeks to support organisations that are wanting to implement the four-day week. Yes, this is a big issue, but could be a huge turning point for many New Zealand organisations,

and a chance to "give people a better quality of life, to re-engage with their family, their community and their society".

And a word of warning from Andrew. "We won't get gender equality unless it's ok for guys to take time off." How can we encourage our male leaders to take time off and be role models for flexible working? More food for thought.

Activist, entrepreneur and GirlBoss New Zealand founder, Alexia Hilbertidou was a firm favourite of conference delegates. Her presentation focused on inspiring, funny and surprising insights into the minds of the next generation of young leaders and what they are engaging with online and what they care about.

Dismayed by the under-representation of women in leadership roles, Alexia founded GirlBoss when she was just 16 years old. Encouraging young women to embrace STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), leadership and entrepreneurship, GirlBoss is now New Zealand's largest organisation for young women. With 12,000 members and delivering programmes in over 100 schools, Alexia is one to watch.



Over 200 delegates attended the HRNZ Conference at Te Papa.

Relevant to HR professionals is her five-day intern Connect programme that currently allows 25 young women to get inside organisations and make a real difference. If your organisation (no criteria, any industry) genuinely wants to invest earlier in the pipeline and is serious about engaging women at the top level of your organisation, Alexia would love to hear from you.

**Hack the Gen Z mindset  
10–22-year-olds)**

- Short attention span
- Activists (they want to aspire and lead a revolution)
- Realistic
- Highly competitive (believe only the best can win)
- Savings oriented (wanting financial security)
- The least brand-loyal organisation (vote with their feet)

It's often the speakers who aren't directly involved with HR who can have a significant impact on our thinking. At this conference, they had an uncanny habit of gracefully getting us to think differently about our profession, our cultures and our beliefs. Rob Waddell, Chef de Mission for the New Zealand Olympic Team, and Dr Paul Wood, Doctor of Psychology were two such speakers (amongst several) who did just that.

Rob Waddell ONZM is New Zealand's only Gold Medallist at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and was a vital part of the Emirates Team New Zealand Sailing Crew in San Francisco in 2013. He has a long list of achievements in these sports and also off the water. Rob shared his life in sport and business and the overlapping nature of these two disciplines. Themes such as work ethic, excellence, attitude, teamwork and passion all find their way into the world of work and high-performance sport. "The main thing is keeping the main thing the main thing," was one of Rob's quotes that I will be making a personal mantra of mine.



Plenty of opportunities to network and share HR stories.



Dr Andy Hines (University of Houston) warns delegates... don't be surprised by the future of work!



Dr Paul Wood sharing his life journey, joined on stage by MC, Te Radar.



Rob Waddell ONZM discusses teams, performance and culture.



Sally Forrester, Melbourne Business School, talks to delegates.

**Rob's key to successful relationships, health and career:**

**Work ethic** – "Have I done everything I can to make the boat go faster?"

**Excellence** – "We are what we repeatedly do."

**Attitude** – "This is the biggest variable in sport, and potentially in business too."

**Leadership** – "What might happen next? What will I do?"

**Team work** – "It's the little things that make the big difference."

**Happiness** – "Become comfortable being uncomfortable."

Dr Paul Wood was the first person in New Zealand's history to progress through undergraduate and Masters degrees while in prison. Two days after his mother died, Paul lost control when his then drug dealer attempted to sexually assault him. Paul was convicted of murder for this offence and spent more than a decade in some of New Zealand's toughest prisons. Paul's educational pursuits, combined with a journey of personal exploration and change, allow him to help people strive towards their potential and flourish

through stress and adversity. He shared with us his stories of being 'inside' and how we can move from our comfort zones to our stretch zones to bring about growth and a better version of ourselves. For more on Paul's thinking, check out his YouTube channel and get a copy of his book *How to Escape from Prison*.

There were multiple other speakers I gained insights from. Jamie Tuuta and his call to action to influence leaders to support the challenges that

are faced by Māori for the benefit of all New Zealanders; Kristina Cavit and her Kindness Institute; Dr Elizabeth Berryman inspiring us to be bold as individuals, as HR professionals and as agents of change in the face of our crisis of bullying in the workplace. Aviva Berzon and her strategies for overcoming resistance to change and Dr Andy Hines for his eight disruptive changes that HR professionals should consider bringing to their organisation.



It was great to see so many sponsors supporting the event.

### Eight disruptive changes to the HR profession

- Multi-organisation career paths (let them go and take them back)
- Getting paid (shift from the number of hours on the job to the value provided by the work)
- Fairness is impossible (the need to personalise to attract talent)
- Time- and project-based employment contracts (this will become a mainstream practice)
- Working to live instead of living to work (work will be a shrinking portion of time in affluent nations)
- Work is a thing you do, not a place you go (work as a process that happens wherever)
- Augmented humans (augmented or enhanced humans will present challenges and opportunities)
- A post-work future (tech-led abundance)

Thank you to HRNZ for putting on an inspiring and thought-provoking conference. Annalise Paynter and Debra Leach of Wakatu Incorporated attended the conference from Nelson. "I really appreciated the diversity of speakers, all relevant to our work in HR. There were lots of initiatives to explore and plenty of practical advice to support us in our roles," said Annalise.

Amongst like-minded professionals, we can keep in mind that the world is growing faster and faster. We are the ones talking to managers about technology, trends and talents, so we are the ones who can make a difference. When I spoke to Gihan after his talk, he reminded me that, "People are smarter than we think. Look beyond the job description and work with them to facilitate change". So his challenge to you, in the words of Steve Jobs is, "What dent are you going to make on the universe?"



Aviva Berzon, Melbourne Business School, discusses Change Leadership.



Delegates enjoying the presentations.



The conference organisation team.