

# Team Development & Coaching case study

## Imbedding a new team

### Alliances Portfolio Delivery Lead Team 12 months in...

#### What was the challenge?

The Alliances Portfolio Delivery team was formed some months before COVID-19 hit New Zealand. Party due to the newness of the team, filling resource gaps, and the disruption of COVID-19, the lead team never really had the opportunity to connect or bond, tending to stick to their silo's.

Six months ago the team restructured again. Although there was no change in lead team membership, there were changes in role responsibilities which were realigned to better meet stakeholder needs.

#### Why do this?

The team leader was very aware that the culture he wanted for the team would not come from structure change. He wanted the team to feel as equals, with valuable contributions to make, to be working together, collaborating, and learning from each other. Ultimately role modelling the organisation's values of connection, togetherness, safety and caring.

My brief was to support the lead team (consisting of nine senior managers) to create and enable the culture they wanted for themselves, and bring the leaders vision to life.

#### What was the benefit?

"My team and I have been working with Helen over the last year. Despite challenging circumstances, we have made progress with our team purpose and boundaries, collaboration, and understanding our strengths better. Team coaching has enabled us to have the conversations we need to have together, and ultimately this enables us to better deliver what we need to deliver."

**Christian Messelyn**

**Portfolio Delivery Director, Alliances Projects,  
Auckland Transport**

#### What next?

12 months into the development and coaching process, the team have made great progress.

However, as I write this, several team member changes are in play, and an organisational restructure has resulted in new functions joining the team. These changes will have a significant impact and a lot of focus on integration. The team development journey is never over!

#### How did it work?

All the work I do is tailored to specific needs of the team and their environment.

There are no cookie cutters here!

This engagement began by meeting with team members individually, discussing how they liked to work, what motivated them, and where they thought the opportunities for the team were.

Around the same time, all team members completed a High Performing Team (HPT) assessment, comprised of questions relating to their relationships with each other, their understanding of collective team purpose, engagement with stakeholders, and their ability to learn collectively.

Key themes coming through from the interviews and the HPT assessment were reviewed by the team. I supported them to create their own team development plan, including clear outcome goals and priorities.

A series of monthly team development sessions followed, covering bespoke interventions designed to support the team on their self-designed development journey. Early work included:

- Connecting silo's
- Creating a team charter including team ground rules of behaviour, clear and aligned team purpose, and application of organisational values.
- Appreciating and applying each others strengths.

More recently the team have been working on explicitly contracting their needs with each other, collaborative learning techniques, and building trust and psychological safety.

#### What happened?

The HPT assessment was repeated recently and the score increased from 3.6 to 3.8, out of 5 over 12 months. A good result.

Also, the development goals set by the team at the start of the engagement were recently reviewed. All agreed significant positive progress has been made.

More importantly and more noticeably, the way the team interacts with each other has changed. They say they enjoy spending time together, value learning from each other, communicate better and collaborate more.