

Health and safety in manufacturing

Worker leadership programme: Ngā Puna Whai Oranga



Project information for E tū programme supported by an ACC Workplace Injury Prevention grant

E tū is the largest private sector union in New Zealand with a large membership in Maori, Pacific Island and migrant communities. E tū and its predecessor unions have a long track record in advocating for better workplace health and safety outcomes and providing a voice for workers with government, regulators, and in workplaces. We participate in tripartite processes at each level and support and provide training for leaders in health and safety.

About the programme:

Ngā Puna Whai Oranga aims to promote worker leadership in the manufacturing sector for better health and safety outcomes by facilitating a series of hui for workers as well as workplace engagement sessions with workers and management, to create the environments that allow worker leadership to emerge. There will be a specific focus on facilitating leadership development for Maori, Pacific and migrant workplace leaders.

Indigenous models of leadership will be explored and promoted for adoption in individual workplaces along with more dominant models. Barriers to leadership participation by migrant, Pacific Island and Maori workers will be identified along with strategies to overcome them.

The programme will identify leadership models and pre-conditions for worker leadership, promote these models in the H&S context, and embed them in selected workplaces.

Ngā Puna Whai Oranga will initially run for two years, after which it will be extended to more manufacturing sites to run until 2027. By 2023, it is envisaged that the project will be self-sustaining with E tū providing ongoing support.

E tū is an established and widely recognised sector leader for workers in manufacturing with a proven track record in health and safety. We have existing relationships with employers that can be used to engage with them around injury prevention. E tū is a longstanding member of the award winning Puataunofu programme.

E tū is a treaty-based organisation with Maori and Pasefika at governance level, including our President, our national Runanga, and Komiti Pasefika.

The opportunities in this project:

- To reach out to workers and employers to develop opportunities and leadership skills around injury prevention and harm reduction in the manufacturing sector
- To develop agreed participation structures around H&S to enable worker leadership
- To promote and support leadership development, with a strong focus on Maori, Pacific Island and migrant leaders
- To facilitate real and enduring change in workplaces
- To develop a transferable course and resource describing pre-conditions to leadership and incorporating indigenous and Pasefika leadership models
- To develop a digital strategy to engage members online and provide an accessible and ongoing chat forum.

Project objectives

1. A series of hui around the country to identify preconditions needed for worker leadership in health and safety, principles and skills for worker leaders, and different cultural approaches and leadership styles. Up to 25 participants for each hui.

2. A training resource and course that will be used in workplaces for workshops to establish a leadership charter for workplace leaders in individual workplaces. This will include different leadership and cultural approaches to leadership.

3. A series of workplace workshops with workers and managers at selected sites to establish leadership structures and principles. There will be an initial foundation workshop at these sites and a follow-up workshop after six months. This is to confirm the effectiveness of the programme in specific workplaces, or plan for improvements.

4. To create an online mechanism for engagement, such as but not limited to, Facebook, for continuous communication and information exchange.

5. Evaluation process and recommendations for the continuing programme.

6. To integrate the leadership model into the overall E tū health and safety programme by including it in organisers' work plans and the E tū education programme.

Outcomes

Six hui with a maximum of 150 worker leaders held around the country

Leaders will exchange ideas around H&S, learn more about safety from expert presenters, and identify pre-conditions required for good safety leadership.

Cultural barriers and leadership styles will be identified.

A model charter will be developed for selected sites.

A network of leaders across manufacturing

This will ensure the sharing of sector knowledge and buy-in to the project which will increase the likelihood of success and sustainability. The network and discussion forum will reduce the isolation of workers providing leadership on their sites and link them with others with similar issues.

A resource that is applicable to other sectors

A crucial part of the knowledge transfer plan is the creation of a resource, charter, and training course which can be used in other industries and settings. It can also be used to identify additional workplaces for leadership development.

Identify barriers for leadership specific to Maori, Pasefika and migrant workers

Knowledge and experience will be shared and recorded, and strategies developed to overcome barriers to improvements in H&S.

Identify different cultural styles and leadership skills

This will produce new ideas for leaders wanting to initiate H&S changes on their worksites, and to develop fresh strategies for effective leadership.

Workshops at different manufacturing sites to develop leadership and participation by workers in health and safety

These foundation workshops with management and worker representatives will develop the platform for selected sites that will allow leadership to occur. Projects for change will be identified.

Workplace risk reviewed and projects for change allocated

Workshop participants will identify their main concerns and take on the leadership of a project around those risks.

Follow up workshops on the selected sites

The follow-up sessions will evaluate progress, including H&S projects undertaken by worker leaders, and all parties will have the opportunity to re-commit to the project.

Better leadership for H&S in the manufacturing sector

The programme will improve health and safety outcomes by giving worker leaders a chance to advocate for better safety management. The fact that employers recognise and respect these leaders will enhance their effectiveness among the workforce, by providing them with more status and influence.

Integrate the leadership model in ongoing E tū health and safety activities

The project will inform E tū in its ongoing H&S project activities and it is envisaged that the new project-based leadership models of participation will endure.