

Tomorrow's Workforce Award Entrant: Vector



When Vector won the New Zealand Diversity Awards Tomorrow's Workforce Award in 2015, the milestone not only recognised the hard work and enthusiasm of many people, it accelerated the impetus to continue the company's drive to have a diverse and inclusive workforce.

In the past two years, Vector has continued its journey to create an environment where people feel comfortable and safe contributing their ideas and perspectives regardless of who they are or where they come from.

Working from the company's comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Plan Vector has maintained a focus on three key themes: women in the workplace, all ages at work and culture in the workplace.

Developed jointly by the Diversity and Inclusion Council, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Human Resources team, the plan covers a range of initiatives including talent identification and succession planning, inclusivity initiatives, manager training, learning programs and workplace education, developing links outside the business to other diversity and social groups (including corporates) and maintaining the Rainbow Tick certification it proudly earned in June 2016.

Vector is New Zealand's largest distributor of electricity and gas, owning and operating networks which span the Auckland region. Vector employs just under 800 staff and more than 1,000 contractors.

Age discrimination was tackled head on in a workshop called "Introduction to Unconscious Bias for Leaders."

Vector recruited international facilitator and neuroscience expert Sue Langley to teach staff about changing biased thinking. Vector's board, executive and management has now been through this course.

Vector has begun a job share programme at Vector's Kapuni plant in South Taranaki to support ageing staff. The programme is currently at Expression of Interest stage. At the other end of the age spectrum young parents are being supported by reintegration into the workforce workshops.

"We are absolutely committed to the ongoing growth and development of our business and our people and we see diversity as a critical enabler. A diverse business is a healthy business. I am very proud of the progress we have made in integrating the principles of Vector's Diversity Policy into the way we work every day." - Michael Stiasny, Chairman of the Vector board.

Doug Ray has worked for more than 19 years at Vector after moving to New Zealand from the United Kingdom. He believes that diversity and inclusion has changed Vector for the better: "Vector did the things it needed to do to actually develop diversity. And then we won the award. And we didn't rest on our laurels after that. We actually went and did some more stuff and developed it even further. And so I really saw that as great leadership. Not just the ground floor underneath, but actually from the top. And they gave us the authority to change our own behavior as well."