



Accident Compensation Corporation

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

FINALIST

**WATCH
VIDEO**



Conversations that create space for employees to engage on important topics that help build connection and inclusion are a key part of the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) journey towards developing an inclusive workplace.

ACC has offices all over the country with staff helping prevent injuries and get clients back to everyday life if they've had an accident.

The organisation's leadership framework is built on four behaviours – inclusive, accountable, customer-focused and curious. The Chief Executive actively champions diversity and inclusion in regular communications with employees and has deliberately recruited a more diverse executive team.

In 2018 ACC started building leadership commitment to inclusion by holding workshops for leaders that aimed to build a strong understanding of the ideal workplace and the role of leadership in creating it.

Chief Talent Officer Sharon Champness says, "All ACC's leaders held conversations with their teams on inclusion where teams celebrated diversity, discussed unintended bias and committed to increasing inclusion."

Collaboration is an ongoing commitment as ACC intentionally builds a culture of inclusion.

"Teams create inclusion in many ways. Following our regular engagement surveys, teams discuss results and build a plan of what they want to improve together. Three times a year, we conduct a team conversation throughout ACC on a specific theme. These conversations create space for teams to engage on important topics that build connection and inclusion," she says.

“In developing policies, designing offices, introducing initiatives and implementing new systems, we intentionally consider inclusion in our decision making. We reach out to our employee diversity networks to ensure that the voice of employees can be heard in design activities.”

There are six employee diversity networks and each has a sponsor from the executive team.

The networks have supported many initiatives including an accessibility toolkit, encouraging employees to include pronouns in their email signatures, the introduction of a Rainbow learning module, the introduction of parents’ room and quiet rooms, and learning sessions on mental wellbeing for leaders.

Other initiatives introduced to build a more inclusive workplace include a flexible dress approach. Employees were invited to reshape the organisation’s guidelines.

“Employees enthusiastically contributed with hundreds of responses. The reshaped guidelines allow employees to “dress for their day”, trusting employees to make the right decision depending on what their day involves. Cultural dress is specifically encouraged. Employees indicate that the guidelines better allow them to bring their whole selves to work,” says Sharon.

Additionally, ACC has recently announced that employees can choose to work from home for up to two days a week.

“While we continue to build an inclusive workforce, we know that there are groups in our workforce who are under-represented compared to our customers. We are actively

addressing this by focusing on proactive recruitment of Māori and people with disabilities,” says Sharon.

The organisation remains future-focused, with a commitment to ongoing change.

“ACC is not perfect. Last year we conducted a workforce survey, specifically focused on understanding inclusion. Over 2000 responses were received. Nine per cent of people reported that they did not feel able to bring their whole selves to work. Responses indicated that most people practice inclusive behaviours, but this isn’t yet universal. We shared these results openly with our employees, celebrating the inclusion that most people experience and acknowledging our need to continue to improve.”

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THE AIM

ACC wanted to improve the wellbeing and psychosocial safety of its workforce through alignment of its internal culture to its organisational purpose of “improving lives every day”.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- 600 leaders attended a one-day workshop to build a strong understanding of the ideal workplace and the role of leaders in creating this.
- Māori leadership programme introduced using a Māori for Māori approach
- Recruitment teams ensure shortlists have appropriate diversity representation with particular focus on increasing representation of Māori and people with disabilities, who are under-represented in comparison to customer base
- Workforce surveyed with a specific focus on understanding inclusion.
- Respectful and Inclusive Workplace policy introduced.
- Six employee diversity networks established: Ability@ACC, Pride@ACC, Women’s, Cross-Cultural, Māori Employee, and The Mind (removing the stigma around mental wellbeing) and an annual budget of \$50,000 was allocated to supporting their activities.
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Innovation grants provide for teams to collaborate on projects to improve wellbeing of their team.
- Flexible working options included.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BENEFITS

- In the most recent engagement survey, employees rated their leaders on average as 4.38 out of 5 on “I can have open and honest conversations with my leader”.
- ACC employees currently score an average of 4.22 out of 5 on feeling connected to their team.
- Experience for Māori clients is being improved with the introduction of Rongoā Māori and partnering with Kaupapa Māori providers in injury prevention and service delivery
- External recognition received with the Accessibility Tick, and Above and Beyond award from Workbridge.
- ACC is a sponsor of the Cross-Agency Rainbow Network which has helped to fund activities that promote inclusion across the public sector.

KEY LEARNING

Building genuine inclusion and diversity is a long journey that requires ongoing commitment.

**DO WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WELL
AND DO WELL BECAUSE OF IT.**

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