

LEADERSHIP

CILT NZ Leaders for the Future programme celebrates five years

EIGHT LEADERS from CILT NZ's Leaders for the Future 2018 programme graduated at the CILT NZ awards dinner in Christchurch. This marked the end of the fifth year of the leadership journey, with 41 graduates now having completed the programme. There were a number of alumni also at the 2018 dinner, celebrating the occasion with the graduands and talking warmly about their own experiences and how these had influenced their own leadership paths.

The Leaders for the Future programme involves a 10-day programme run over four months at different locations around New Zealand. It is targeted at mid-career and senior leaders, and involves learning from leaders within the sector while being immersed into different transport and logistics environments. It focuses upon leadership in terms of both understanding of self, and the manner in which this is applied in the leadership of others. Each year, the groups bond together and create networks across the country and across different parts of the sector – which sustain.

Words and stories

To celebrate the five-year birthday of the



Hamish McGhie addresses the CILT NZ awards dinner on behalf of the eight leaders who graduated from the 2018 Leaders for the Future programme

programme, here are the words and stories of those who have experienced it.

Hamish McGhie, strategic inventory manager, NZ Defence Force, Auckland (2018)

So what was this programme 'Leaders for the Future' for us, the alumni of 2018? It started out in Auckland with a mad dash of absorbing the stories of CEOs, academics, poets, politicians, traffic controllers, life-style gurus and more. The range of speakers was incredible, and to some incredibly baffling. But by our second round in Tauranga, and with the sharing of more stories (both personal and business) from the leaders of logistics empires, large and small, the penny started to drop.

This continuing procession of strangers opening up and sharing their personal insights to our group began to underline one of the other themes of our journey – that of 'rumbling with our vulnerability'.

After each session, feedback was sought on the quality of our speakers and messages received. We all responded strongly to those that truly opened up, shed their day-to-day armour, put the mantle of their

job title aside, and talked honestly about their own fears and challenges, failures and successes, and the true costs and rewards of their leadership journey. We recognised ourselves in their stories.

This shedding of corporate armour was furthered when we began presenting our own stories to each other. This was a truly difficult exercise for us all, but one that bound the group together. The penny dropped again. We were now a more cohesive, connected group, an organisation of individuals collaborating for a common goal, by rumbling with our vulnerability rather than maintaining our day-to-day protective layering.

By Christchurch and Wellington, we had become more conscious of the process, and we became more respectful of the process, what it was doing to us and what it was doing for us.

Throughout, Jo [Brosnahan] and Vicky [Pond Dunlop] provided the coaching framework to get the best out of the short time we had together. We were encouraged to listen with the intent to understand, rather than listening with the intent to reply. We were encouraged to lead with

intent, rather than manage by habit. This was put to the test during the feedback process from our own colleagues, managers and direct reports. Jo and Vicky were there to provide the perspective needed to process this personal feedback, connect the dots and provide a little nudge where required.

The culmination of the programme was the drafting of an authentic leadership plan and the letters of gratitude to each other. It was truly humbling to see the level of honesty and empathy that we gave to each other throughout these last vulnerable moments of the programme.

To be able to receive and willingly give that level of support and honest feedback, by choosing courageous conversations over comfortable ones, will no doubt be its own reward to us all and our organisations in the coming years.

Nigel Gear, CEO, South Port, Invercargill (2017)

Attending the Leaders for the Future programme was the perfect tonic for me, attending at a time when I needed to reinvent myself and set out on a new course. The programme allowed me to explore my leadership style and then provided me with the tools to improve and grow. One of the aspects that I thoroughly enjoyed was meeting leaders within the industry who shared their stories, the good and the bad, which gave excellent perspective on our own situations.

South Port will continue to support the Leaders for the Future programme, as we believe it is an excellent course that provides the right learning environment and experiences to grow as a leader.

Greg Pert, managing director and owner, Tranzliquid, Tauranga (2014)

The programme gives you the freedom to truly value who you are, to find out about one's self and to correct some imbalances in your life, to seek future aspirations in a humble and empathetic way. It enables you to meet and greet some of the most influential leaders New Zealand has to offer, and hear what they did to become successful with themselves and the people they must inspire.

These are some of the learnings from the Leaders for the Future programme: we must listen and learn to read between the lines, lead with questions, not answers, and allow our people to discover their strengths and cultivate them, ensuring accountability and ownership. Tranzliquid is proud to have put all our senior executives through the programme.

Michelle Lewis, national land transport programme manager, NZ Transport Agency, Wellington (2017)

From our first meeting at Auckland International Airport to our team dinner in Wellington, we went into the programme as individuals and came out as a team of leaders. We developed a strong bond as a team which allowed me to develop contacts in the port and logistics side of the profession that I didn't often get to network with.

While on location, we would move from the largest distribution centre in the South Island to a comfortable lounge in a guest house to share stories. We discovered amazing local eateries to reflect on the life stories CEOs shared with us as they opened up about their personal leadership journey.

I am always full of enthusiasm and energy when I talk about this course; you discover more than you can imagine about yourself, and the opportunities and openness of all the CEOs that participate is immensely valuable as you plan your move into senior management.

Chris Hunt, senior manager, project delivery, NZ Transport Agency, Wellington (2018)

During the programme, Jo and Vicky manage to mix some traditional leadership learnings with modern thinking that challenges



Jason McConnell, Les Fleming and Hamish McGhie during the 2018 visit to Ports of Auckland to meet with senior leaders of the port company

your approach to leadership. This is reinforced by some honest reflections by a diverse range of leaders from across New Zealand. I entered the programme expecting it to reinforce what I'd previously been taught about leadership, but came out of it with a fresh approach to what makes a great leader. Whether you're starting your leadership journey or are already on it, the Leaders for the Future programme will provide you with some new approaches to becoming a great leader.

Les Fleming, terminal shipping and planning manager, Port of Tauranga (2018)

You promised a journey and you delivered. The course is professionally designed and presented, and offered leadership lessons in a manner filled with genuine passion, warmth and sincerity. I know the experience has made me a better person. People have told me they see a change – I assume they mean for the better? I can't thank you enough.

Adam Harvey, container terminal manager, Napier Port (2014)

The Leaders for the Future programme benefited both myself and the company I work for by providing a better understanding of how to look after yourself and balance a busy lifestyle. It was a life-changing experience. Additionally, learning from experienced leaders and gaining their insights provided confidence to make bold decisions. The programme would benefit any individual who is in a people management role, seeking guidance and confidence to grow their role and career.

Maurena van der Lem, manager, performance and board appointments, MBIE Wellington (2017)

This course provided me with the tools to be an authentic leader. It allowed me to recognise my strengths and to get others' perspectives on how I lead. I was encouraged to embrace my personality and to trust my decision-making.

Most importantly, this course gave me the time to think. Very few of us with busy lives can carve out space for ourselves as our days are filled with family, work and community commitments. Yet I was given the opportunity of 10 days to reflect on how I got to be the person I am today. The course offered me the rare and precious gift of time: time to reflect, assess and prepare for those important next life steps. For me, this CILT leadership course was a game-changer.

Learn to lead

In the words of Selina Tusitala Marsh, New Zealand's Poet Laureate, who meets with the group, this programme requires a courage to explore and be open to new learnings:

"Lead when you learn your failures are a test, lead as you learn to lead from the best."

Information on the CILT NZ Leaders for the Future programme can be found at www.leadersforthefuture.org and on the CILT website. Expressions of interest for the 2019 programme close on 30 November; contact Jo Brosnahan at jo.brosnahan@gmail.com or phone 021 576 595 for further information



The 2018 Leaders for the Future programme visits RNZAF Base Auckland in Whenuapai



With the NZ Poet Laureate, Selina Tusitala Marsh, and former Waitakere Mayor Sir Bob Harvey at Vivace Restaurant, Auckland