



# Kumara Vine



He piko  
he kaainga  
Community Waikato

June 2023

Register now for the Resolving Differences Foundation Workshop with Stefan Doll

Wednesday, June 28, 2023, 9:30 - 11:30, via Zoom  
Find out more

## Strong teams resolve their differences

By Stefan Doll, Diversity Institute

People are different not only in age, gender or ethnicity. People have different needs, fears, habits, backgrounds, values, and different ways of thinking. The diversity in teams can be a huge benefit for each team member and the team's performance. Diversity can also be a source of conflict if people are falling into one of the following traps:

Trap 1: We assume that people are similar to ourselves and neglect our differences.

Trap 2: We are holding stereotypes and assumptions based on very little, often irrelevant information.

Trap 3: Unconscious bias is impacting our actions, often against our good intentions.

**Instead of falling into these traps, how can we resolve our differences and make our team strong?**

**Step 1 - Absorbing information in the most open and unbiased way.** This way we can determine where exactly the differences are. We are better prepared to find common ground and a way forward. Having greater self-awareness and making a conscious effort to apply a positive mind-set towards differences will already have a positive impact. So, what can you do?

- Understand similarities and differences by being curious and open and by changing your perspectives.
- Identify and reduce your (un)conscious bias.
- Stay positive, 49 out of 50 people want to get along with each other and do a good job.

**Step 2 - Processing information in the most open and unbiased way.** Our brain constantly makes assumptions

## CE Update by Holly Snape



Welcome to the mid-year kumara vine. This quarter, we are all about teams, and we have had some changes in our own governance team recently. We said farewell to Peter Humphreys who has some exciting new projects ahead, and we welcomed Chelsey Hawthorn and Ruth Barrowclough to our board. For more information about these amazing people, check out their bio's on our website.

We would like to encourage everyone to save the 18th September to their calendars. Community Waikato will be running our AGM at 4pm. We love to take the opportunity to share with everyone what we have been engaging in over the last year, over some food and drinks. We hope to see you there!

and judgments about a person's abilities, intentions, and motivations. All assumptions need to be checked through an open dialog with the person concerned. How does this look in practice?

- Understand the other person before trying to be understood.
- Separate the facts from assumptions.
- Focus on solutions, not problems.

**Step 3 - Acting on emotions.** Negative emotions are often a result of being too quick and superficial in the first two steps. They make our brain search and focus on information that is in line with those negative emotions, leading to rigid and biased views, which in return prevent a resolution. We need to slow down our brain. The most important step is therefore to recognise when negative emotions are at play and address them before trying to agree on a solution:

- Understand your own emotions and where they come from.
- Listen with empathy to understand the other persons' emotions.
- Accept responsibility for your part.

After going through these 3 steps, people are ready to determine future actions. The team is getting stronger every time they resolve differences which is a sign of diverse people truly caring for each other.

For more information: [www.diversityinstitute.co.nz](http://www.diversityinstitute.co.nz)  
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## Building Strong Teams

Over the past couple of years Community Waikato has received an increasing number of requests from community organisations seeking support and assistance to address relationship issues that have become sources of significant conflict within the organisation. The sorts of issues experienced range and can be within governance, between governance and managers or within the operations of the organisation.

By the time Community Waikato assistance is sought, these issues have typically escalated in seriousness, resourcing constraints have prevented them seeking professional HR or mediation support and they have become quite desperate for help.

Specialist HR, legal and mediation services are not offered by Community Waikato, and we were keen to explore creative and innovative ways to make these supports available to groups who require them as well as looking for opportunities to grow skills and knowledge in this area.

In March this year, Community Waikato hosted a conversation with people from a cross-section of different backgrounds and expertise, to explore creative ways to equip the community sector with the tools and skills and

enable access to external resources to deal with these types of challenges more effectively.

Our desire is to create an approach that will enable and empower community organisations to be good employers; create a culture for their people to thrive; effectively identify and manage risks; and respond to issues effectively and in a timely manner.

From the generous contributions of the 24 people who took part in the conversation, three clear needs were identified.

1. A Repository of Resources
2. Learning and Development opportunities
3. Access to Specialised Assistance

Working groups are in the process of being established to explore each of these areas, with the view to developing long-term and sustainable opportunities for the community sector.

In this article we have invited some of our generous contributors to share their tops tips for building strong teams.

## Introducing our contributors



Founded in 2006 **Everest all about People**, is literally all about people! We partner with businesses to build capability and culture, provide practical human resource solutions and workplace advice, recruitment, training, coaching and conflict resolution. We have a team of specialists with decades of shared expertise.

**Introducing two of our specialists, Sharon Jefferies and Jean Scholtz:**

Sharon has extensive experience in career and personal development coaching, and employee wellbeing. Building and developing relationships with clients and businesses is what Sharon enjoys, through effective communication and interpersonal skills.

Jean specialises in conflict resolution coaching, mediation, employee wellbeing, and individual coaching. Jean believes that the key to personal and business success is through empowered people who take ownership, accountability and responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and actions.



**HR Connect** is a locally owned and operated HR consultancy providing HR specialist support; recruitment; and organisational development in the Waikato since 2003, and the Bay of Plenty and Auckland regions since 2010. We work in partnership with businesses to add value and minimise their exposure to risk.

**Introducing our General Manager, Emma Fenwick:**

As General Manager, Emma joined the HR Connect team in July 2022. With over 20 years' experience in the Talent Acquisition and HR industry Emma has held a variety of senior leadership roles working across NZ and Australia for mid to large corporate organisations. Prior to joining HR Connect, Emma worked with Korn Ferry, a Global Management Consultancy firm for 16 years as Vice President of the Recruitment Process Outsourcing Business managing large talent acquisition teams providing onsite support to various clients such as Fonterra, Vodafone, NZ Post, Jetstar, Qantas, Nike and Aon. Here Emma partnered with businesses to provide both strategic and operational support across Talent and HR.



Kia ora, I'm Rhonda Parry, a professional transformational and leadership coach and founder of **Our Minds Matter**. I'm also a mum of five and wife to Dean the Builder. My career includes 25 years in global corporate environments helping organisations flourish at the highest level. Sadly, I also witnessed too many people - including myself - punish themselves in that pursuit of 'success', and yet when it arrived, still not being happy. Chasing happiness, living by the hormones of stress and wishing 'things' were different. Stress, sabotage and suffering! Sigh.

Fast forward (skipping the burnout phase!) and I'm now running my own business, super passionate about helping people transform the way they live by learning to lead from the inside out. I know, it sounds uncomfortable! Put more eloquently, I help people learn how to manage their mindset, emotions, unconscious operating system, behaviour and responses. AND identify the aligned action required to turn 'knowing' into 'doing'. Because knowing is one thing, doing is another!



**What does workplace wellbeing look like to you?**

**Sharon and Jean (Everest):** We believe people thrive in the workplace when they are actively valued and respected by their direct leader/manager and their employer. Psychological safety plays a key role in wellbeing, and this means it is safe to have an opinion, share ideas, give feedback, confide in the employer and know that there is no threat to their safety.

**Emma (HR Connect):** It's an essential investment in the physical, mental and social health of your people, to help them feel safe and to be their best self both inside and outside of work. For many years workplace wellbeing was defined as the 'physical' wellbeing of staff driving organisations to invest in things such as fruit boxes and free gym memberships. Whilst these are still very important aspects of workplace wellbeing, these things alone are likely to make very little difference. True workplace wellbeing takes into account many other aspects – emotional, financial, social and career wellbeing.

When an organisation actively supports a culture of wellbeing and their employees consistently have positive experiences, employees are more likely to give their best at work in their personal life, therefore increasing productivity and engagement.

**Rhonda (Our Minds Matter):** To me, what makes a workplace thrive is less about what it looks like and more about what it feels like. It's the sense of 'humanness' inside a workplace that means it feels safe to be 'me'. Safety, and belonging.

Psychological Safety is key to 'everything' because when we feel safe, we're operating from the part of our brain that gives us access to creativity, emotional regulation, resourcefulness, decision making skills, compassion, empathy, logical and conscious reasoning... And a myriad of other AWESOME skills we need at work, play and home – especially in these times of uncertainty, volatility and Mother Nature's wrath!

Basically we all, fundamentally, need to know that the answer to the question **"Can I be who I am and still belong to this group of people? Is it safe to reveal my true self, be authentic, share my ideas, put my hand up, own my mistakes.... ?"** is a resounding YES.

Imagine what that would feel like in a workplace gathering? Knowing you belong no matter what. That looks, feels and sounds like workplace wellbeing to me!

**What one action could improve workplace culture?**

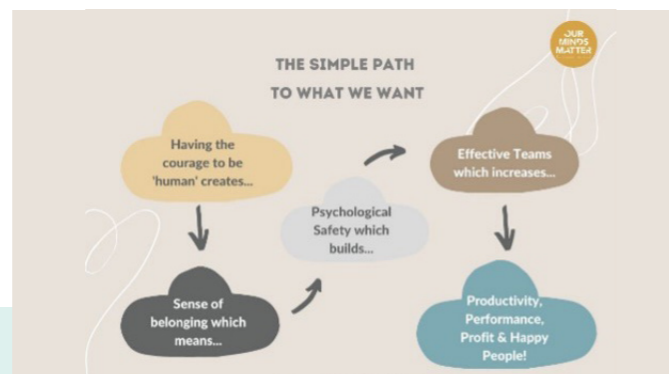
**Sharon and Jean (Everest):** Sharon and Jean both agree that setting Team Expectations and Agreements and clear communication are key to improving workplace culture.

**Emma (HR Connect):** Having a work 'culture' that truly prioritises wellbeing. Too often wellbeing is just a 'buzz word' - show your people you are invested in them, by leading this from the top down, providing an environment that values wellbeing as much as performance and financial results. Make time to really get to know your people and what is important to them. Understand why they are working for your organisation and ensure they know how they contribute.

**Rhonda (Our Minds Matter):** To foster team psychological safety, I encourage all managers, leaders and parents to remember these three human truths:

- No one is perfect. We're all perfectly imperfect whole beings!
- No one is immune from adversity, and the rough stuff. COVID proved that.
- We all want the same things in life – love, belonging, purpose, safety, peace, contentment....

This requires you to be vulnerable and admit to your own fallibility. This is code for accepting the perfectly imperfect human being you are and being prepared for this to be seen! People want to see the human in you! That's what grows connection. So share information about life outside of the office (within reason), admit your mistakes and failings, and role model having the courage to be vulnerable. It will encourage others to step up and do the same and create an environment of empathy and trust.



**What is one piece of advice you would give to managers and board members of community organisations when it comes to employing staff?**

**Sharon (Everest):** Reference checking is a critical part of the recruitment process. Do not take a short cut! Do the mahi.

**Jean (Everest):** Be clear about the skill set you need and the attitude you want in your business/team.

**Emma (HR Connect):** Take the time to get it right! Have a clear understanding of the requirements, skillsets and background needed – understand what the ideal candidate profile looks like and how to identify and engage with this demographic in the marketplace. Don't take shortcuts, run a robust and inclusive process remembering we are in a candidate short market so they are assessing you and your organisation as much as you are assessing them.

**Rhonda (Our Minds Matter):** To create that psychological safety right from the get-go, I strongly encourage managers and board members to be super mindful of someone's emotional intelligence when employing staff.

EQ. Unlike IQ, EQ can be learned. Yet so often our employment processes have a heavy bias on qualifications, skills and experience – the IQ or human-doing side of someone.

What if, instead, you flipped your employment practices and employed based on EQ (and trained for skills once you got the right person in the seat)? Research is showing that someone's emotional intelligence will have a greater bearing on psychological safety, therefore culture, therefore team effectiveness and therefore workplace wellbeing than their technical expertise ever will!

When thinking about someone's EQ, ask questions that flush out their levels of empathy. Can they understand and connect with others' emotions, perspectives, and experiences? Can they foster a supportive and inclusive work environment? Can they own up to their own humanness and admit mistakes? Or speak up calmly and confidently when they don't agree with a proposed idea? Can they regulate their emotions when the proverbial hits the fan? And how self-aware are they about the ways in which they trip themselves up and self-sabotage? Any and all of these sorts of enquiry will give you an idea of how much EQ they have, and whether they'll add to or deduct from the sense of EQ in the workplace.

**What is your favourite season of the year? Why?**

**Sharon (Everest):** Summer, I love the warmth and bright early mornings and longer nights so I can be outdoors.

**Jean (Everest):** I love autumn, the temperature is cooler! Beautiful crisp clear mornings and the extraordinary colours of the changing season.

**Emma (HR Connect):** You can't beat a good old Kiwi summer (other than this year's)! Beach, sun, swimming; spending time with friends and family and BBQs are my happy place.

**Rhonda (Our Minds Matter):** My fave season has got to be winter – log fires, winter walks, gardening in the rain and hot showers, what's not to like!?



**Sharon Jefferies and Jean Schultz**  
Everest



**Emma Fenwick**  
HR Connect



**Rhonda Parry**  
Our Minds Matter



## Reimagining Volunteering

By Chris Atkinson  
Regional Advisor, Volunteering Waikato

National Volunteer Week is upon us and once again all around Aotearoa New Zealand organisations will be celebrating their volunteers and volunteering. Volunteers are absolutely crucial to the fabric of our communities – if you doubt that, just imagine what your community would be like if all volunteers decided to strike for a couple of days. A lot wouldn't happen! In every corner of our towns and cities we can find volunteers – from sports fields and gullies to foodbanks and hospitals. Volunteers are leading the way on equity, sustainability, cultural, health, climate and social justice issues – much of it flying under the radar as they quietly get on and make an impact. The richness, generosity, diversity and cultural contribution of volunteers is massive, but often unacknowledged and sometimes taken for granted - so giving Volunteers their time to shine during National Volunteer Week is vital.

Volunteering Waikato, Te Ohu Tuuao O Waikato, believes that volunteers enrich lives and transform communities. A large part of the work we do is to support volunteering-involving organisations with best practise processes. Increasingly we know that a positive customer experience for your volunteers is essential for retention. We also work hard to ensure the concept of volunteering is clearly understood and is future proofed.

A big part of the work we do is to challenge preconceived ideas about who volunteers and why. Ask anyone to describe a typical volunteer and they'll probably think of an older person, possibly a woman and likely someone retired. The reality of volunteering in Aotearoa New Zealand is quite different from this preconception. Volunteering does not have any gender dominance. When it comes to age, Te Ohu Tuuao O Waikato statistics show that in 2022 the 20-29, 30-39 and the 60+ age groups were placed in volunteer roles in equal numbers – busting that "older person" stereotype. "Full-time employed" people were placed the most – outstripping the next labour status of "student" by twenty percent, with the "retired" group coming in third. When people find something they want to do, and love to do, they find the time to do it!

In its simplest form volunteering is about freely choosing to do something for someone else without expectation of reward or benefit. In many cultural contexts the word "volunteering" is not used to describe what many see as simply "helping out". Being of service, contributing, working for the common good, or an act of love, are all terms you'll come across when people describe what they do for others. Statistics show that all ethnicities in Aotearoa have a strong volunteering ethic – with



some reflecting quite staggering levels of volunteering. A 2021 study by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples found that 97% of Pacific peoples spend an average of 33 hours per week on unpaid work and volunteering. The concept of whakawhanaungatanga – relationships and connection- is strong across the volunteering landscape. National Volunteer Week -Te Wiki Tuuao aa-Motu is an opportunity to challenge commonly held notions of who is volunteering and profile the many faces and facets of volunteers in Aotearoa.

Like any other sector, volunteering is affected by external influences including the Covid-19 pandemic which has been hugely disruptive. Disconnection and social anxiety have discouraged involvement resulting in a tough recruitment market. Cost of living increases have also created huge barriers in people's ability to volunteer. Ideally volunteering is equitable – but the reality is that volunteering requires resources. Health, time, and money are all needed, along with skills, confidence, and competencies. Low unemployment and low immigration have also impacted on volunteer recruitment, as has the move of our baby boomers into retirement villages where their social and recreational needs can be met on their immediate doorstep. Organisations must pivot, adapt, and evolve in response to these new threats in order for volunteering to thrive.

There is no doubt that the future of volunteering is strongly linked to technology. Digital platforms that enable people to view, connect to and track volunteer involvement will become essential to organisations looking to recruit volunteers. Organisations need to remove barriers to involvement where possible so that volunteering remains a truly equitable, attractive, and less bureaucratic process. Gateway roles, project and micro roles, are just some ways to offer volunteers the opportunity to "try before you buy", with people generally shying away from long term commitments. SEEK Volunteer statistics found that roles requiring less than a six-month commitment averaged 4 applicants per role – roles requiring more than six months had 0.8 applicants per role. The success story within this statistic is that three out of four volunteers in short term roles had an ongoing relationship with the organisation after six months. Give a volunteer a great customer experience and they will stay!

The need for organisations to pivot to meet the needs of volunteers is huge and the time to do this is now. We know that many people want to volunteer but up to four out of five never find the role they would like to do – we



NZ Riding for the Disabled Te Awamutu – Rosalie Rea and her Tuesday Volunteers.

need to change that dynamic. Volunteering Waikato, Te Ohu Tuuao O Waikato, encourages organisations to be creative about how they involve volunteers – continuing with roles that haven't changed for ten or twenty years won't help volunteering survive. If we take a bottom-up approach to how people get involved, we might find we get more traction. Start with the problem or issue – invite people to be involved in solution storming – ask them how they would like to help, design a role, and give them a mandate to be involved. This way we get to onboard the entrepreneurial, serendipitous, social change and traditional volunteer. The sense of ownership and inclusion that we accomplish through this approach will bring dividends to the work we all do – let's face it, we need to be creative to change the status quo!

Volunteering Waikato, Te Ohu Tuuao O Waikato, is often asked if people still want to volunteer - and the answer is a resounding "Yes". A recent LinkedIn survey found that 75% of those surveyed were interested in starting to volunteer or to volunteer more. Of those surveyed 42% were interested in serving on a not-for-profit board – but only 1 in 5 were currently on a board. There are plenty of potential volunteers in our communities – we just need to connect with them in the right way with the right opportunity.

Volunteering Waikato, Te Ohu Tuuao O Waikato, offers a platform for organisations to find the volunteers they need and a vehicle for people to find the volunteer role they have been looking for. Our advisors are available to help organisations reshape and invigorate the opportunities they have – with an eye on achieving the mission and objectives of the organisation through volunteer contribution.

We see volunteers as game changers. Volunteers contribute to social cohesion, help build resilience and contribute to the vibrant strength of our communities. If we can harness their gifts of time, we can absolutely bring about the change we need to see. Let's reimagine volunteering – let's challenge those stereotypes, let's help existing volunteers to shine and let's ensure we position volunteering to be the future we all want to see.

#NVW2023

Thanks to all those  
Volunteers who shape  
and transform our  
communities!



NVW  
Te Wiki Tuuao ā-Motu  
national volunteer week

He wā piātaata  
Time to shine





# Community Waikato Workshops

■ June-Aug 2023

## Digital Marketing Workshop

13 June, 10am to 12noon, Community Waikato, \$60 community

Join us as we guide you through the essential topics to consider when building a digital strategy that will enhance your capacity to help your organisation succeed.

## Funding Workshops

Come to a free funding workshop delivered by the local community funders

- Ngatea - 14 June, 1pm to 3pm
- Morrinsville - 14 June, 5.30pm to 7.30pm
- Taumarunui - 21 June, 4pm to 5.30pm
- Waihi - 28 June, 10am to 12noon
- Online - 16 Aug, 9.30am to 11.30am
- Tokoroa - 30 Aug, 9.30 - 11.30am

## Coaching for Performance

14 June, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Community Waikato, \$75 community

Performance matters. We want to serve our community in the best possible way with the limited time and resources we have available.

## How to read Financial Statements

21 June, 5.30pm to 7pm, Central King Country Reap, Taumarunui, Free OR

23 Aug, 9.30am to 11.30am, Community Waikato, Free

Learn how to work together in constructive ways.

## Resolving Differences Foundation Workshop

28 June, 9.30am to 11.30am, Zoom, \$75 community

Learn how to work together in constructive ways.

## DiSC Communication Workshop

26 July, 9.30am to 12noon, Community Waikato, \$75 community

DiSC is perfect for anyone who wants to improve their communication skills, understand and manage workplace dynamics, and gain insights and tools that lead to a better understanding of themselves and others.

## Resolving Differences Mastery Class

2 Aug, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Community Waikato, \$75 community

Learn how to work together in constructive ways, a Mastery class follow on to the Resolving Difference Foundation workshop.

## Leadership in Practice Masterclass

28 - 30 Aug, 9am to 3pm, Community Waikato, \$450 community

Become an effective leader in today's world. This three-day Masterclass offers a practical approach to growing organisational leadership to enhance organisational effectiveness.

Register online at [www.communitywaikato.org.nz/workshops](http://www.communitywaikato.org.nz/workshops)