

Rachael Te Toko, Spotless Integrated Services

Walk the Talk

Health and safety policies mean workers go home to their families without harm at the end of each day. Rachael Te Toko goes the extra mile to make sure they do.

Rachael is a Zero Harm regional corporate advisor for Spotless Integrated Facilities Services. The company has a Housing New Zealand Contract that involves the delivery of multi-trade maintenance services to about 6,000 homes in South Auckland. The delivery of the contract is undertaken by a team of Spotless staff, who manage sub-contracting companies made up of 764 individual tradespeople.

Following changes to Health and Safety legislation in 2016, the team at Spotless developed the Koru Journey, a health, safety and wellbeing and mentoring programme for contractors that focusses on engaging staff through their ethnic cultures to better understand health and safety in the workplace and wider community.

General Manager Zero Harm Karen Daniels says Rachael continually goes the extra mile when it comes to developing and sharing material and content with contractors.

“Her ability to turn a dry topic into something interesting that has people engaged is testament to her passion to help people.”

When Rachael started in the role, many of the contractors had no policies or procedures in place. By tailoring the programme to the ethnic, age and gender breakdown of the contractors, Rachael was able to make sure information about safety standards was effectively communicated through a variety of delivery methods, including visual and verbal presentations. As English is a second or third language for many of the contractors, core information was translated into Tongan, Samoan and Filipino.

Rachael is a regular speaker at contractor meetings and presents information on topics relevant to the tasks completed by those present. Topics include asbestos, working at heights, risk management and incident reporting.

Rachael’s talent for communication ensures the health and safety message gets through in an effective way. Improved work practices and very low incident statistics show that health and safety is a now a priority, and feedback shows the positive change Rachael has initiated.

“Without a doubt having Rachael and the Koru Journey helping us with our Health and Safety has made a huge difference to all of us here at Coin Total Upgrades. We have a much better understanding of the Policy and Procedures. She explains things in a way that is easier to understand and along with that there is some fun. She has definitely changed our lives.” Dianne, Coin Total Upgrades.



"Before meeting Rachael and learning about health and safety I was clueless and had no idea that what we do can cause serious injuries and even fatalities, she's opened up a whole new window in our company that makes us think before we carry out any job," Contractor.

"She's got a lot of great ideas, great mind set of working safe, also understanding and patience with our Polynesian workers as English is their third/fourth language, [Rachael] explains things in ways my guys understand. They are comfortable to put their hands up and ask questions. We've done paper work and video sessions and the team really enjoy it." Fraser Hufunga.

Housing Contracts Manager Nicholas Davidson says respect for diversity and inclusion is the foundation for Rachael's work and the mentoring programme.

"We believe that it is not just one activity but a range of activities and innovations that improves understanding and leads ultimately to a stronger safety culture and better outcomes for all individuals. Rachael has been instrumental in identifying those innovations and bringing them together culminating in a powerful model that is accessible to the large and cultural diverse workforce that we have working on our government housing contracts."

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