

**Realising Pacific potential in Aotearoa New Zealand:
Occupational Segregation and Pathways to Leadership**

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With the voices of:

Teremoana Maua Hodges

Faumuina Lalau Siuomatautu Auvele-Tapelu

Siesina Manoa Latu

An acknowledgment to tangata o le moana

To all our moana peoples, stand tall.

The giants whose shoulders we stand on are the legacy of warriors, expert navigators, chiefs, orators, scientists, poets, artists and activists who have gone before us.

Their stories are woven in to our histories, our memories and our hearts like the finest ie'toga, tapa, tivaevae and cloth, which make up our identities.

They remind us who we are, and whose waters we flow from.

Hold tight to this knowledge and remember, you are inherently worthy.

Special thanks

Meitaki maata; Faafetai tele lava; Malo 'aupito...

To Teremoana Maua Hodges, Faumuina Lalau Siuomatautu Auvele-Tapelu and Siesina Manoa Latu for allowing me to capture your personal and cultural insights for the purposes of this document and for the advancement of all moana peoples.

Fa'afetai tele lava mo le avanoa...

To the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Thank you for the opportunity to experience the public sector through the pathways you've established with Tupu Tai.

For the blessings from Leilani Tamu, Grace Iwashita-Taylor and Dr Karlo Mila, thank you for not only demonstrating what Pacific leadership is, but for gently guiding my va'a, to embark on my own leadership malaga.

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Introduction

In review of the 2018 census statistics, a common theme is visible, in which Pacific people and in particular Pacific women, are grossly under-represented in leadership within the public sector, as well as a variety of other occupation areas across Aotearoa New Zealand.¹

Census data shows that less than one percent of chief executive, general manager and legislator roles are occupied by Pacific peoples within New Zealand government ministries and other crown entities. Within the same sector there is also an over-representation of European public service managers and policy analysts.²

This trend within governance, presents a problem - that these spaces don't adequately reflect the makeup of New Zealand's diverse population. Therefore missing opportunities to utilise Pacific voices which could shape national policy and decision making.

The lack of ethnic diversity within leadership is not unique to the public sector either, it is a growing challenge for many sectors. Even in an occupational area where there is a higher presence of Pacific management representation, such as in education, health and welfare Services - the numbers still disproportionately fall short.¹

This underrepresentation of Pacific peoples within leadership roles, is commonly termed in academic literature as *occupational segregation*.

Although it is not always easily measured, the impact of occupational segregation is felt by many in the Pacific community, as they experience significant bias and limitations to career advancement.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explore Pacific definitions and pathways of leadership, to give public and private sectors the tools, to build culturally responsive solutions in addressing and closing the gaps of occupational segregation.

Firstly, the document will explore key themes from literature about the impacts of segregation, as well as cultural considerations that unpack and define Pacific leadership dynamics.

Then it will follow with personal accounts from *Teremoana Maua Hodges*, *Faumuina Lalau Siuomatautu Auvele-Tapehu* and *Siesina Manoa* who provide insight into pathways of leadership from their own specific cultural lens.

As a conclusion, recommendations will be highlighted, these can be used to improve pathways for Pacific leadership representation.

Methodology

The approach that underpins this project is qualitative, as it selects a small group of tau'nga (cultural experts) from Cook Islands, Samoan and Tongan backgrounds, who share their stories and insight. The information that was gathered utilised Talanoa, a Pacific approach to gathering information, which styles a flexible semi-structured discussion style.

All three tau'nga, were identified through snowball selection, having been nominated by their communities and recognised for the leadership roles they have undertaken, as well as their ability to articulate leadership and cultural concepts.

Disclaimer

Specifically, the voices captured in this document will explore Cook Islands Māori, Samoan and Tongan ideas of leadership. Currently, Cook Islands, Samoan and Tongan people make up the majority of the Pacific population residing in Aotearoa New Zealand at approximately 89%.³

While there are similarities within Pacific cultures, it is recognised that each group has their own unique processes, languages and customs regarding leadership. For this reason the author has chosen not to use a pan-Pacific lens in exploring concepts of Pacific leadership. Instead this document will honour the unique perspectives of specific Island groups and their people.

With these limitations in mind, the issues explored in this document are still relevant to the broader Pacific population living in Aotearoa New Zealand as they are more adversely affected by occupational segregation than the general population.

Footnotes

¹ Statistics New Zealand. Occupation dataset prepared for the Ministry for Women.

² Te Kawa Mataaho (Public Service Commission). Public Service Workforce Data. Found At:

https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/assets/Legacy/resources/2018-Public-Service-Workforce-Data_pdf_0-v2.pdf

³ Statistics New Zealand. Pacific People ethnic group. Found At:

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-ethnic-group-summaries/pacific-peoples>

Key themes from the literature

Gender and traditional leadership

“And on the frontlines, in the glare of public disapproval, are our women, articulate, fierce, and culturally grounded...women’s mana has given birth to a new form of power, based on a traditional belief: women asserting their leadership for the sake of a nation”

-Haunani-Kay Trask

In our Pacific Islands, surviving myths and legends provide proof that matriarchal leadership existed prior to the influence of Christian missionaries and colonialization (Finau, 2017).

However, with the introduction of male hierarchies by missionaries in the early 1800’s this began to change the structures of traditional Pacific leadership and de-value the status of women and matriarchs.

Since the introduction of these colonial influences, many Pacific Islands women have dominated solely in informal leadership spaces within Pacific Island societies. Tupou’s research recognises this history, and notes the contributions of Pacific women, in the growth and development of family and local community. Both in Pacific homelands and in Aotearoa (Tupou, 2011).

Tupou also notes, that now, more than ever, many well educated Pacific women are beginning to enter in to historically Pākehā-male dominated occupation fields, but face limitations to progress in their careers and to advance in to senior management and leadership roles within their chosen fields. This is identified as being due the additional challenge of not only having to overcome gender-based bias, but also racial and ethnic barriers to career advancement (Tupou, 2011).

Systemic barriers and the “glass ceiling”

Collectively, all Pacific peoples; men, women and gender-diverse are significantly more underprivileged when it comes to career opportunities, recognition and remuneration in Aotearoa, despite often performing in similar occupations.

Tupou’s (2011) research explores the effects of occupational segregation within specific fields, she highlights the issue as being due to favoritism, which significantly privileges non-Pacific and non-Māori to advance in their careers. Other studies note this as elitism, which occurs within recruitment, often resulting in decision makers hiring in their own image (Rivera, 2012).

This can be seen through the current national statistics, in which:

- Pacific people are massively underrepresented in the top three tiers of management in the public sector, only accounting for 3.4% of Chief Executive roles (Te Kawa Mataaho, 2018)
- Pacific women, followed by Pacific men, having the lowest average salaries in the public sector, of any gender ethnic group (Te Kawa Mataaho, 2020)
- Pacific academics making up less than 1% of professors nationally, earning less than non-Māori non-Pacific academics, while being least likely to gain promotion (McAllister et al., 2020)
- Pacific employees nationally, being paid significantly less, earning 77% of the average Pākehā wage (Treasury, 2018)

Notably, McAllister’s (2020) research that highlights the gaps in the tertiary education sector in pay and leadership, has raised the issue of entrenched bias and institutional discrimination that Pacific academics face in their field. Raising how needed it is for these issues to be addressed at a systemic level, before any tangible change can be seen.

This experience is not unique to Pacific academics either, as a wider breadth of literature shows that many ethnic minorities experience this form of occupational discrimination in various sectors.

Commonly, this is characterised as the “*glass ceiling*”, which acts as a barrier for many Pacific people, to progress forward in to higher leadership and management positions (Tupou, 2011).

The weight of this glass ceiling, by means of having little or no representation, often means that Pacific voices are not represented in decision making spaces. This in turn centres a narrative, that is based on an assumed ‘General’ population, which doesn’t reflect the diversity of community needs. Simply put, by having Pacific people in leadership positions, there is an opportunity to highlight Pacific indigenous knowledge, bringing forward solutions which work for Pacific communities.

Visibility, aspiration and representation

“Our Tupuna and Atua qualified you before you were born...”

Our Pā Metua (elders) and Tau-nga (experts) are the original institution of knowledge”

-Analeiss Enoka-Robertson

The impacts of a lack of visible role models in all different kinds of occupational fields and roles, means that Pacific people more often have the perception of limited opportunity structures (Harr, 2019). For children, career aspirations start young. With a report from the Tertiary Education Commission (2019) noting, that the jobs children show interest at age seven, being influential in the careers they choose throughout their lives. Within the report, Pacific children are also noted, as being the least likely to be interested in pursuing professional occupations. With their aspirations aligning more to careers of family members, than any other ethnic group in Aotearoa.

The Ministry of Pacific People's Lalanga Fou report (2018) further reinforces this idea, as Pacific youth noted that being able to see others succeed, who are like themselves, is a major motivation for them to also succeed and move up in the world.

This emphasises the importance of having visible Pacific leadership, as it can expand young Pacific people's imagination, to aspire to careers that they may not previously considered.

Additionally, leaders play an important role in helping their communities overcome these imposed limitations. They serve as a source of inspiration to others and show a wider breadth of possibilities when it comes to careers and vocations (Haar, 2019).

When leaders are from specific ethnic backgrounds, such as Pacific, they serve as a beacon of hope in their communities, showing others that success is possible for them also (Faletutulu, 2017).

Power relations and leadership positioning

Often research that is done to define leadership styles, explores Western views and definitions, which are leader-centred and are detached from cultural context. While there are emerging schools of thought that view leadership as a practice - something that is done, rather than specific skills or traits that people possess (Crevani & Packendorff, 2010) this only partially aligns with Pacific narratives and constructs of leadership.

One aspect of this, is that many Pacific cultures have action-based leadership principles, such as the practice of serving the community. According to Paea (2015) these practices work, not only as qualifiers for leadership, but are tied to cultural community values. This is because, cultural identity and leadership are deeply intertwined.

Another thought, is that to fully understand Pacific leadership, we must centre relational ways of thinking, being and doing. Because from a Pacific worldview, all leadership occurs within the context of the relationship.

Connected to this, is the concept of *Vā*, which has precedence in the South Pacific and aligns with the relational world view. *Vā* has various names among South Pacific cultures and is loosely understood as a space, which connects all people and all living things (Webb-Binder, 2009).

This construct shapes identity and unites people through a shared relational space that has purpose and history. The acknowledgement of *vā* also means that Pacific people engage in relationships from a place of mutual respect and reciprocity. This is often in contrast to the more Westernised leadership positioning, which takes a hierarchal view.

Relationships are additionally guided by regulations of social and cultural etiquette. This is due to the importance they hold, as *tapu* or sacred. *Tapu* implies the presence of divinity and so, is guarded and demands that people are intentional and respectful in their interactions with others (Pasefika Proud, 2012).

The language of Pacific leadership

“We sweat and cry salt water, so we know the ocean is on our blood”

-Teresia Teaiwa

Indigenous languages are often called the life-force of Pacific cultures. Carrying significant meaning, and values, which shape tradition, culture and world views. Therefore, when a language dies, histories are forgotten, and identities are lost or changed irrevocably.

The same can be applied to English translations of Pacific concepts, as the process of translating loses cultural significance fails to relay how interconnected, historical and sacred the language and practices are to Pacific cultures (Pasefika Proud, 2012).

Notably there is a discrepancy when translating the term leadership in to a Pacific context.

As Tamasese demonstrates that not only do Pacific definitions and practices of leadership exist within community-based contexts but are interwoven with history and connected to the natural environment; land, waters, forest, skies and the cosmos (Tamasese, 2005).

This speaks to a traditional positioning where Pacific people have traditionally acted as custodians for many of these domains.

Many Pacific leadership styles have that foundation, which is based on environmental protection.

For example, Carter writes that Pacific leaders that represent low lying atoll nations such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands, have long been advocating the need for immediate climate change action, as their people suffer the frontline affects (Carter, 2015).

Within these constructs, is the idea of leadership identity being tied to land and place. For many Pacific people, the custodial ties to the land and ocean, are deeply connected to their genealogical history. This not only shapes their personal identity but provides a pathway to serve and to access leadership titles (Matapo, 2017).

Community leadership experience

Roughan's (2019) literature overview of unpaid work demonstrated that Pacific people in Aotearoa are more likely to engage in unpaid work, than the rest of the population.

This is seen, as Pacific people relate undertaking unpaid work, to a sense of duty and service to their communities (Roughan, 2019).

What often is overlooked however, is the connection between unpaid work and leadership skills. As many Pacific people who undertake unpaid work, develop skills that prepare them for leadership. Faleutulu's (2017) research recognises these pathways as often coming from being encouraged and nurtured in to roles within communities, churches and student groups. Which allow Pacific people to enact leadership in a space that is supported and carved out by their own communities.

This form of leadership, while frequent within Pacific communities, is often overlooked by both employers and by Pacific people who are looking to apply in various occupations.

There is much that can be learnt about how Pacific people are supported within community settings to undertake specific roles. Often, young Pacific people attribute encouragement and mentorship as making a difference to their confidence in applying for leadership opportunities (Faleutulu, 2017).

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Leadership Talanoa: A Cook Islands Māori Perspective

Teremoana Maua Hodges

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Teacher and examiner for Te Reo Māori Kūki Airani (Cook Islands Māori Language)

Developer of the Tivaevae Model for Pacific Language Retention and Pacific Pedagogy

Carrier of Te Akono 'anga e te reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani

Concepts of leadership

Leadership exists within the context of the community

Over the 70's and 80's I was teaching at a local intermediate in Porirua East.

The area was predominately Pacific, however there was nothing for Pacific children to express their cultures. Within this area, our children were dealing with schools based on colonial structures that blocked and imprisoned them. They were using experiences and teaching tools which did not align with the experiences of the students and the world they knew.

Pacific children were being blamed for a lack of understanding. Our education system and our society were not looking at the varied backgrounds of the children and the strengths they could bring.

Eventually I began a Polynesian cultural club at the school I was teaching at. This club was a space where students could gather and express their cultures. It also included the involvement of parents and wider family members within the community.

As a teacher at the school, I naturally fell in to organising the group and became the facilitator.

So, in this way, I was a leader. Many of the students' parents also supported the group. They would bring material for performances and share their cultural expertise with the students. In that way, the parents were also leaders.

Our Polynesian cultural club started off with a group of 20 students, this grew to a group of 300.

We had Pacific students from all over the region wanting to join.

The emphasis of this narrative, is that within our culture, leadership is about looking for gaps within the community. It is about community needs and contributing to the collective.

Fluidity of leadership

Leadership is about being able to recognise the strengths of everyone in the collective

Within our cultural view of leadership, it is important to note that our leaders are not isolated but connected in shared communal contexts. Leadership is not something that is actively worked towards nor is it about achieving a position of authority. Those who lead, do so as a way of stepping up and contributing towards their families and communities, holding the shared vision of the group.

In our collective world view, we recognise the value of everyone within the group and the unique strengths each person brings. For that reason, leadership positions are also not tightly held on to, but shared. They are appointed from a place of need.

Within our communities, we know the strengths of the person who can contribute what is needed at that time, and so they are selected to lead for that purpose.

Importance of nurturing leadership

Leadership is weaving together generational wisdom and future aspirations

Leaders are developed differently for us, then in the Papa'a (NZ European) world. We recognise that success is achieved when one can collaborate and utilise the strengths of the group.

For that reason, it is never too early to begin mentoring our young people. We rely on our elders for firm guidance, however we give a lot of responsibility to our youth to practice their skills and lead activities.

A good example of this in our community, is the annual Cook Islands day celebrations. Many of the leadership roles are given to our youth to organise performances. But ultimately it is our elders who give firm direction and oversight. This is our idea of leadership – it exists within an intergenerational context. It acknowledges the insight and wisdom of our elders and recognises the importance of our young people, who are our future.

A pathway to leadership

Contributing towards community

Tivaevae is a practice which has been passed through generations, it is rooted in deep cultural tradition and is an act of bringing together the collective.

Our leadership journeys are like Tivaevae – when learning the skill of making Tivaevae you begin as an apprentice, then progress to an expert, before you become a leader “*Tivaevae Tau'nga*”.

You learn the skills from your elders. And it is a quiet recognition from the group, of your skill that enables the progression from one position to the next.

Similarly, in community leadership roles, we also look at the skills of the person and their contribution to the collective. At the core of good leaders, is their participation in the community and ability to demonstrate our collective values.

These values aren't often appraised in Papa'a leadership models but are core to our collective world view. They are:

The practice of *Kauraro*, the act of humbling oneself

The practice of *Akangateitei*, to honour and respect others, especially elders

The practice of *Akamoe'au*, to keep the peace and harmony in the collective group

Within our culture it is always important to know the people who you interact with and keep in mind the importance each person holds to the collective group.

Leadership Talanoa: A Samoan Perspective

Faumuina Lalau Siuomatautu Auvele-Tapelu

With support of the extended Tapelu Family

Matautu Lefaga, Gagaifo Lefaga, Falealili, Saaanapu Safata

Registered Nurse for over twenty years within Pacific communities in Samoa and Aotearoa

Holder Tulafale and Alii Matai titles from the villages of Matautu Lefaga and Falealili

Carrier of Fa'asamoa ma Gagana Samoa

The journey to leadership

Serving others prepares you to lead

In our traditional view of leadership, leadership is not about leaders. It is about the people.

We consider ourselves as a part of a collective group and so we always strive to serve our people, in honour of the many existing connections we share.

There is a common proverb in our culture which says:

“O le ala ile pule o le tautua lea” translated it means; the pathway to leadership is through service.

The significance of this, is that service is essential, as it prepares you for leadership roles.

The skills you develop from serving others ensures you are equipped to lead and uphold our collective values. Because leadership is not a top down practice, its roots are your family, your village and your community.

Those who have leadership roles within our communities, have the requirement of continuing to serve, and doing this as a part of the collective. Nurturing and walking alongside them, with the goal and vision to uplift the whole group.

An example of this, is our orators. The expectation of our orators is that they must be deeply knowledgeable about their village and all who reside there. This knowledge maintains sacred connections between the many lineages present. Which ties to the responsibility to carry our traditions and ensure we work together as a cohesive. Those who take up oratory titles, learn how to develop these skills through service. They are connected to our communities and are eager students of our culture. This is their journey to leadership.

Ideas of leadership

Leadership roles are visible and modelled

From my own leadership *malaga* (journey), leading was something that was modelled to me. My Grandmother (who is our family's matriarch) and parents taught me how to lead, not only within our family, but within our community. As each of them hold important responsibilities and matai (chief) titles within our villages.

It is through my family that I was prepared for village leadership roles. Their guidance and demonstration of leadership, gave me the tools to serve my community.

When the time was right, I was honoured to be asked to take up the responsibility of carrying titles, because I had role-models who showed me how to be a good leader. This aligns with our *Fa'asamoa* (cultural ways of doing).

From a Western perspective, one might actively pursue a leadership role. But from our traditional and cultural world view, positions are gifted from and through your family and village.

They are not asked for, they are granted in recognition of service. They are a formal way of saying you have been seen and you are ready for the responsibility of upholding the reputation of your family and your village.

Contexts of leadership

Leadership is grounded in consultation

Within our culture, we have many who we consider to be leaders. Consultation with those leaders and experts is an essential part of how we live. Consultation is present within the systems of families, village councils and local and central government. The process is essential for leaders. It supports them in making decisions that are informed, collaborative and supported by the community.

While one person may have paramountcy in their leadership role, it is important to know that there always must be a consensus from the community, in the decisions that are made. This is reflected in the shape of our Fale Fono (traditional meeting houses) which are open and round, to represent transparency, inclusiveness and equality.

Environmental considerations in leadership

There is a saying in our culture, that to set upon a successful journey, you must consult the mountain top, the forest and the waters. Similarly, we consider the environment and its resources within village leadership.

The mountain top can be compared to *Alii* who are paramount chiefs and look from an overarching view of the village. *Aualuma* are those look from the sky and the forests. While *Aumaga* go to the ocean. All three; *Alii*, *Aualuma* and *Aumaga*, are essential in informing about the main resources and give knowledgeable insight that is key to the prosperity of the village.

Underpinning leadership

The responsibility to uphold cultural values

When you are a leader, you are a reflection of your family, village and district. Therefore, it is important to uphold your reputation and walk with the values which are grounded in maintaining collaborative and respectful relationships.

These key values honour and nurture the vā (space between yourself and others). They are:

Ava Fatafata – To respect and honour others

Faatuatuaina – To have faith in others

Alofa – To show unconditional love

Fa'amaoni – To act with honesty and integrity

Leadership Talanoa: A Tongan Perspective

Siesina Manoa Latu

Nukunuku, ‘Ohonua, ‘Eua

Youth Justice Social Worker

Tongan Society South Canterbury Co-Founder, Former President and Current General Manager

Pacific Advisory Member of ARA Institute of Canterbury, Timaru Boys High School Board

Member and Aoraki Multicultural Council Board Member

Hou’eiki (Church Leader) of Timaru Free Wesleyan Church

Carrier of Lea faka-Tonga

A legacy of leadership

The inheritance of leadership

Growing up in Tonga, leadership was visible all around me.

Within our village, my Grandfather served as a chief and my Mother served as a leader also.

While on my father’s side my Grandparents were Church Ministers. Being surrounded by their examples of leadership, meant that early on I learnt of the *fua fatongia* – obligations, roles and responsibilities that came with leading. These obligations were to serve the community, village and church. As my parent’s eldest daughter, I too have the obligation to follow the footsteps of my *fāмили* (family). Serving our people and continuing this legacy of leadership. In this way, leadership is a *tofi’a*, an inheritance. It’s why we are exposed so young.

Because it is not something that can be taught, it is a way of life. It is the passing down of generational and cultural knowledge. This is very different to leadership in New Zealand.

Within a New Zealand perspective, many seek leadership roles for personal gain. For our Tongan people, leadership is an obligation founded on serving others and serving the interests of our collective.

Leadership and life philosophy

Leadership is about giving warmth and honouring connections

In our Tongan world view there is the tangible and intangible. One of the key concepts of the intangible and how we navigate life, is the understanding that there is *vā*, space that exists between yourself and others. This space cannot be seen, but it is felt.

Vā is personal and personalised. It can vary based on the person/s, the relationship and its dynamics. As a Tongan, and importantly as a leader, your actions are to make sure that the space is not separated or absent, but instead connected.

For those who are leaders in our communities, they are especially skilled at *Tauhi Vā Māfana* – nurturing the *vā* and giving it warmth (*māfana*). To give the space warmth, means that it is comfortable. This warmth, stems from an internal place of ‘ofa (love) for the other person and the communities they carry with them.

It is also reciprocal, felt on both sides and by all parties. In this sense, once a relationship has been established, you must touch base with them always, going back and forth to maintain and honour the *vā*.

Leadership within the family context

The role of family in shaping a leadership identity

Within our Tongan view of leadership there are specific roles. These leadership roles exist, as a part of our customary ways of being. Emphasizing the importance of fāмили, to shape our identity and impart collective values.

An example of this, is the special status appointed to certain women within the fāмили. The *Fahu* (father's oldest sister) is given a unique position in the fāмили, as her service is to oversee and guide her siblings and the children in the wider family unit. She acts as a matriarch.

Positions within fāмили, such as fahu, are key to us understanding ourselves and how we interact with others. They remind us that we are connected as a group and that this group is made up of many people that bring strength to the collective. Strength that you can always tap in to.

This is the foundation of a good leader. Someone who is grounded in the context of their fāмили first. Because before anything else, we belong to fāмили. And fāмили belongs to us. This is our collective world view.

Contexts of community leadership

Leadership is appointed out of need

For all Pacific people, leadership takes on many forms, depending on the environment. There is leadership in the Islands, leadership in big urban regions like Auckland - where we are many in number. Then, there is leadership in regions like South Canterbury, where we are minority groups. The context of the region matters, because each community differs. What is needed in one region, may be different from the next. While the how and when leadership is identified, can be based on the needs of that particular community, at that time.

Therefore, leadership is fluid. The roles I take on as a leader in my town, may look different elsewhere. They also may not be available to me elsewhere and that's ok.

Contributions and service to others

“Do everything in Love” (1 Corinthians 16:14) – a reminder of the responsibilities of leadership

Serving my community has given me the opportunity to step in to leadership roles. It also has been the approach to how I lead, with my service focusing on community needs. Such as the need for our people to be connected to each other and to build spaces where we can all gather and celebrate our Tongan culture.

By bridging the gaps in our community, we are empowering ourselves and showing others that we are capable of identifying our needs and producing solutions that work for us culturally.

While our leadership style is very action oriented, we keep core values at the heart of everything we do. These act to guide the way we tauhi vā māfana.

Our values are:

‘Ofa - Love, compassion, care

Faka’apa’apa – Respect

Feveitoka’aki – Reciprocal respect

Mamahi’i me’a - Loyalty and passion

Anga fakatokilalo / Loto to - Humility

Aspirations for the future: recommendations from the tau'nga

As a concluding question during talanoa, all three tau'nga were asked “*how do Pacific people want their leadership practices to be supported within their places of work?*”

The conversations sparked suggestions that organisations can apply, to help improve career opportunities and advancement for Pacific peoples.

The suggestions are not a comprehensive list but serve as a starting point for supporting Pacific leadership. Suggestions discovered during talanoa, have been unpacked further, using the Public Service Commission's (PSC) *Recruitment Guidance Principles for removing gender bias during recruitment processes*. PSC's framework offers practical ways for removing gender-based bias in the workplace and are also useful in the context of mitigating ethnic bias.

Suggestions to create better pathways for Pacific leadership

- **Review job descriptions through a gender and ethnic lens, to ensure jobs are relatable and inclusive of a diverse applicant pool**

Avoid creating job descriptions that align to a specific stereotype of someone in the role.

Consider instead, what components are needed for the role, instead of being fixated on specific accomplishments or job titles.

- **Be aware of your organisations bias in the recruitment of roles, to make sure the process is inclusive and accessible for Pacific candidates**

Consider the language used in advertising leadership positions - to appeal to a diverse population, utilise Pacific staff in interview panels and facilitate contact directly and face to face when possible.

- **Develop practices to support Pacific growth and advancement which align with our cultural values and ways of doing**

Nurture the growth and development of existing Pacific staff members.

Consider mentoring programmes, targeted development opportunities and funding / supporting existing Pacific networks.

- **Apply an alternative measure to recognise leadership qualities that fit with our collective and strengths-based world views**

By measuring us by the same standards, you miss out on the value we can bring to the role. Consider the unique approach we bring to leading and identify strengths such as: consultation skills, collective reasoning, holistic values and approaches, community-based insight, consideration for environmental impacts and other relationship centred practices.

- **Recognise and value the diversity of skill we cultivate through caring, voluntary and community work**

Consider the skills we acquire from undertaking unpaid roles within family, church and community. Ensure that there are not barriers for those who are returning to paid work after a long absence.

- **When advertising roles, expand your promotion to reach a broader range of candidates**

Consider actively reaching out to a diverse range of people and utilise networks where Pacific people are, such as tertiary institutions, pacific committees, radio stations and women's networks.

- **Create an environment of inclusivity, which celebrates diversity**

The best way to attract Pacific people to roles, is to retain a diverse and inclusive workforce. Ensure organisational practice aligns with respecting and uplifting Pacific people, Tangata Whenua and other ethnic groups - and that this is reflected in workplace culture, policy and procedures.