

Office of the Public Service Commissioner

Tō'ou reo, kia 'akarongo' ia, ei puapinga nō'ou

Your Voice Should be Heard, Your Voice is Important

Health & Wellbeing Survey of the Public Sector

2022

The *Tō'ou reo, kia 'akarongo' ia, ei puapinga nō'ou, Your Voice Should be Heard, Your Voice is important* survey is the 2022 Cook Islands Public Sector's employee engagement survey focusing on the Health & Wellbeing of Public Sector employees and was launched on Tuesday 7th June. The survey was open to all employees from 28 Public Sector Agencies for two weeks, closing at 12am on Monday 20th June. The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey and was made available to all Public Sector employees through an email link.

It is envisioned that the individual Agency results and information provided from this survey can be used to drive policy change, make improvements to workplace culture and give Public Sector leaders a better understanding of the health & wellbeing of their employees. The survey results provide agencies with a snapshot of how employees see their workplaces, including views on: Employee engagement and job satisfaction, Public Sector ethics and culture, Communication, Inclusion, Workload and Motivation, Fairness and respect and Job demands, Resources and support.

This is a 'new look' survey and was redeveloped to be more user friendly, more focused, shorter and to encourage participation across the sector. Participation rates in previous years in the Employee Engagement Survey have been consistently low compared to the number of employees. After some research, and in consultation with a statistician it was determined that there were a number of changes that could be made to help increase participation numbers and provide the sector with a more concentrated set of data and reporting mechanism. The first change was eliminating a large number of questions required to be answered and focus on one area, and for this survey "Health & Wellbeing" was selected, unlike the previous survey that had a number of areas that it covered. This shortened the survey significantly and in turn the time it took to complete. Another change was to improve the level of confidentiality in the survey, so many of the 'identifier' questions were removed, leaving only the Agency an employee worked for, which improved the level of privacy and confidentiality significantly. Finally, another consideration was the reporting of the data collected. With the previous surveys, reports were downloaded straight from the survey platform website, Survey Monkey, and were very large and not very user friendly due to the amount of questions and the limited formatting options available. It was very time consuming to provide any kind of analytical report but with a more focused approach it allows for a report to be produced that is more succinct and should assist management to easily identify issues.

The lack of 'identifiers' means that demographic information is not able to be produced for this report. It is recognised that it is important for agencies to understand the demographics of their employees and this information will be available in the individual agency survey reports and under development is a sector wide demographic dashboard that will be launched on the OPSC website in August and updated at regular intervals.

A total of 412 employees participated in the survey. Of those who participated, 41 did not select which Agency they were employed with. The 412 respondents number does not include the 59 employees from the Pa Enea who participated in a shorter, mobile friendly version of the survey in an effort to make the survey more accessible. A separate report will be produced for the Pa Enea results. Work is underway at OPSC to develop a second survey which will seek feedback from employees on the management and leadership of the Public Sector. This is due to be launched in October 2022 and will contribute towards the Mid Year Review process for the 14 Government Ministry's. The response rates were too low overall to infer the result to the entire Public Sector population and is a snapshot of the opinions of the 412 that responded. In order to get a more accurate picture of the realities of working in the Public Sector and be able to track trends over time a higher participation rate is needed for future surveys.

In our endeavours to be more transparent for the purposes of improving performance, accountability and the service delivery to the public this report is available to all Public Sector employees.

About the Report

The *Tō'ou reo, kia 'akarongo' ia, ei puapinga nō'ou, Your Voice Should be Heard, Your Voice is important* survey has been designed to support Public Sector agencies to build positive workplace cultures with integrity and that reflect the Public Sector values of Honesty, Impartiality, Service, Transparency, Accountability, Respect, Effectiveness and Efficiency.

The survey results provide agencies with a snap-shot of how employees see their workplaces, including views on:

- Employee engagement and job satisfaction
- Employee wellbeing
- Public Sector ethics and culture
- Communication
- Diversity and inclusion
- Workload and Motivation
- Fairness and respect

Agencies can use the results to determine how to improve the workplace for their employees.

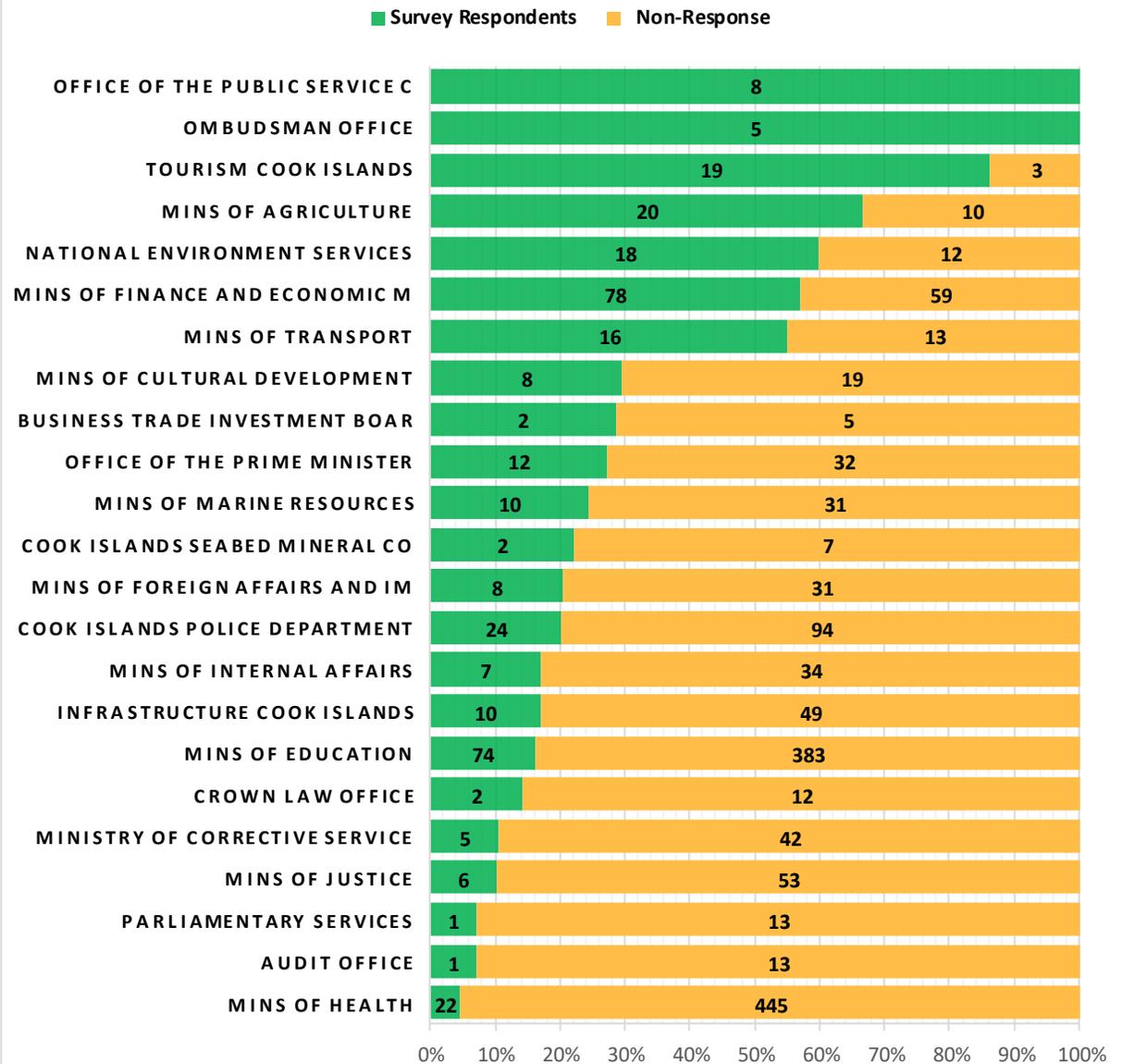
Each report contains a summary of the data results and a summary of the participants comments. If the report contains no summary of comments it is because no comments were given.

This year you will see:

Public release of the 'Snapshot' from all This year you will also see:

- Public release of the 'Survey Snapshot Report', which provides data results from all of the agency employees who participated.
- Demographic and survey information made available on the OPSC website, and
- A second employment engagement survey launched in October focusing on leadership and management.

PROPORTION OF AGENCY RESPONDENTS



As a place of employment I would recommend my workplace to close friends or family

Summary of Results and Recommendations

An excellent result, with 88% of employees selecting Always or Frequently. This shows a high level of engagement from staff. Whether an employee will give recommendations to friends and family to apply for a role in an organisation is a good gauge of organisational, team, and work engagement levels.

Summary of Comments

Comments reflected that OPSC was a good place to learn about how government ministries work and learn about HR and policies.

In my workplace all people are treated fairly

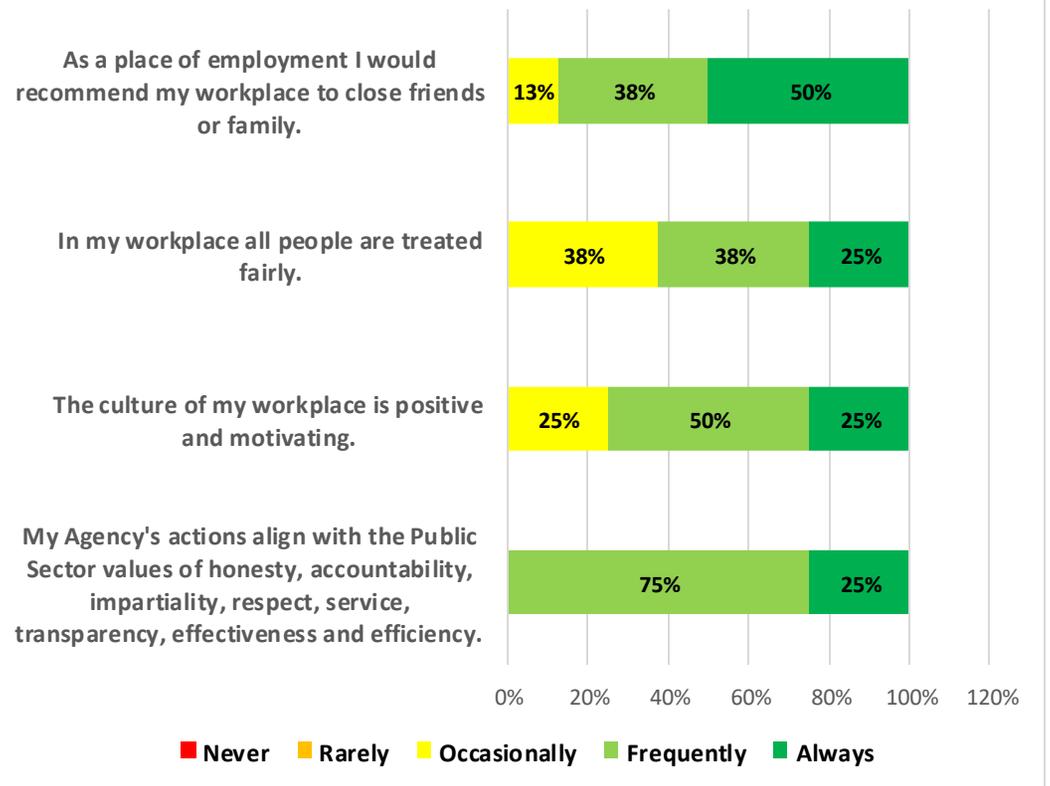
Summary of Results and Recommendations

Another good result but with 38% indicating that people being treated fairly only happened Occasionally, this would warrant further investigation, particularly in such a small team. Observing workplace dynamics can provide valuable insights in to the different employee interactions and how people are being treated. One-to-one meetings with employees where they can express or communicate any concerns or issues they may be experiencing can also help management identify issues and how to resolve them.

Summary of Comments

There were indications that some employees felt they were not treated the same as other employees when it came to consequences of actions or disciplinary matters. Other commentary expressed that they felt that fairness was part of the culture of OPSC.

Ethics and Culture



The culture of my workplace is positive and motivating

Summary of Results and Recommendations

75% of employees agreed with this statement and felt that is either Always or Frequently part of the culture. 25% felt the culture was only Occasionally positive and motivating. Like the previous statement results, management may want to look at this.

Summary of Comments

Comments reflected that staff are productive and believe in OPSC's function and their roles within that.

My Agency's actions align with the Public Sector values of honesty, accountability, impartiality, respect, service, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency

Summary of Results and Recommendations

A very positive result as 100% thought that OPSC models the values of the Public Sector either Always or Frequently.

Summary of Comments

Comments reflect the data results with staff feeling that the vision and values are a part of the office culture.

I feel that my achievements at work are acknowledged

Summary of Results and Recommendations

63% selected Always or Frequently which is a good result. It would be the 38% that management should focus on as they indicated that they were only Occasionally acknowledged. Staff meetings are often a good place for management to take the time to celebrate successes of employees.

In my workplace, I can voice my opinion even if my ideas are different from others

Summary of Results and Recommendations

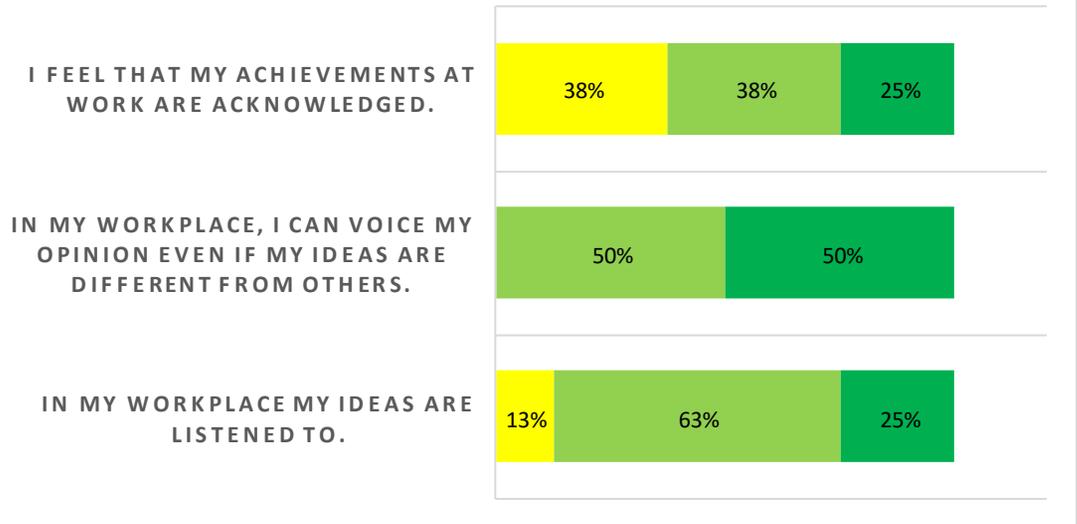
A great result with 100% of participants selecting either Always or Frequently. This would indicate a work culture that is open to the sharing of ideas and opinions without fear of repercussions.

Summary of Comments

Respondents commented that they felt free to voice their opinions regardless of the situation and it was always received in a non-judgmental environment.

COMMUNICATIONS

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Frequently ■ Always



In my workplace my ideas are listened to

Summary of Results and Recommendations

This is an excellent result with 88% selecting Always or Frequently. This result mirrors that of the previous question in that it shows a workplace where sharing is valued and encouraged.

Summary of Comments

Employees comments reflected the results in that they felt listened to in a respectful manner. Some however felt that this was not always the case.

I am able to carry out my role while maintaining a healthy work/life balance

Summary of Results and Recommendations

A good result, 76% selecting Always or Frequently and the remaining 25% selecting Occasionally. A small team is often more exposed to fluctuations in staffing levels and unexpected events leading to staff having to 'step in or up' more than in larger Agencies where they can be absorbed more easily and with less disruption for staff.

Summary of Comments

Respondents comments reflected on the need to manage their workloads to allow them to take breaks during the day, but also that while overtime was sometimes requested it was not normal practice.

I look forward to coming into work each day

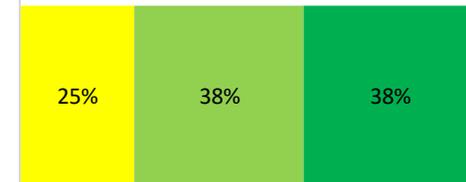
Summary of Results and Recommendations

Again another excellent result with 88% looking forward to coming to work each day either Always or Frequently. Only a small percent, 13%, indicated that they only felt this Occasionally. There were no comments left so no reasons were given as to why that was.

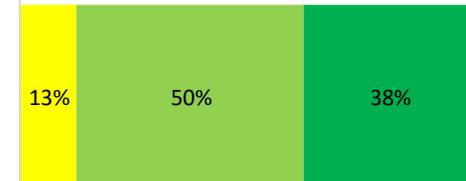
MOTIVATION AND WORKLOAD

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Frequently ■ Always

I AM ABLE TO CARRY OUT MY ROLE WHILE MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WORK/LIFE BALANCE.



I LOOK FORWARD TO COMING INTO WORK EACH DAY.



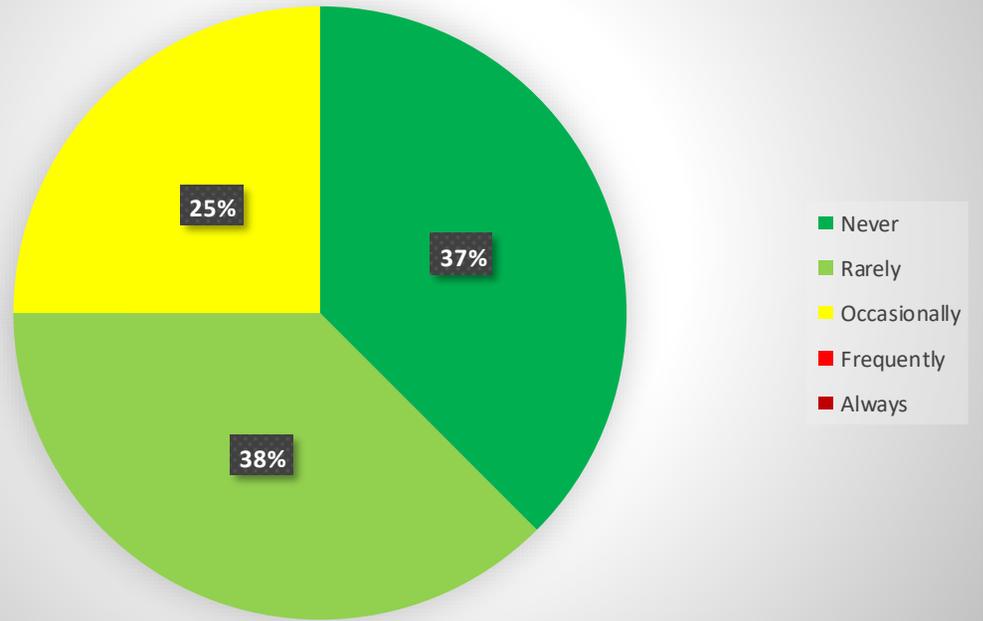
In the last 12 months I have thought about leaving

Summary of Results and Recommendations

Once again a good result with 85% combined selecting Never or Rarely. With the remaining 25% selecting Occasionally. This result could be interpreted that employees are committed to their roles and feel engaged and satisfied for the most part in working at OPSC.

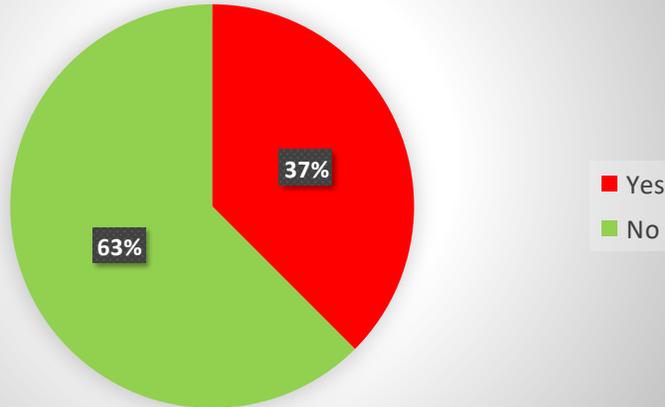
Again there were no comments to provide any indication of why employees have thought about leaving even if it is only occasionally.

In the last 12 months, I have thought about leaving my workplace.

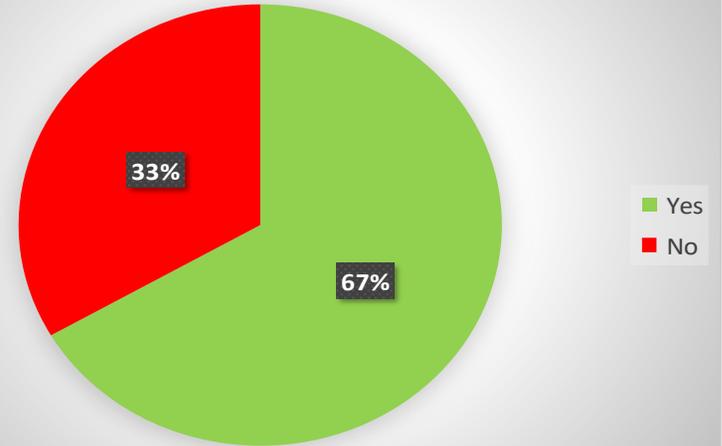


Disputes and Conflicts

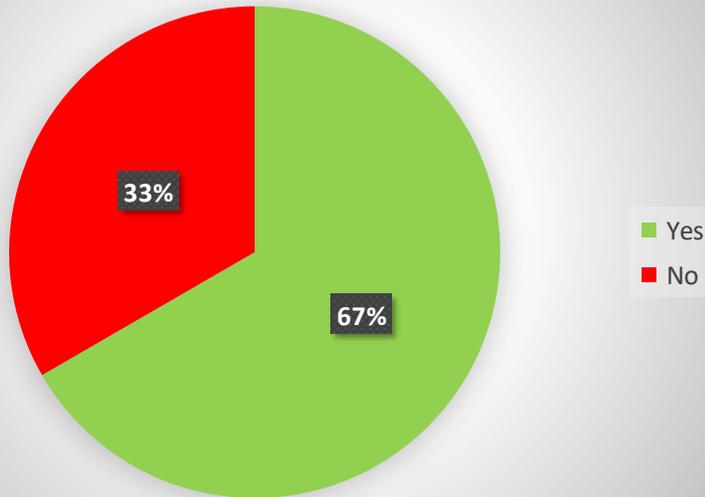
In the last 12 months have you experienced a dispute or conflict in your workplace



Was your dispute or conflict resolved fairly?



Was your dispute or conflict resolved fairly?



Summary of Results and Recommendations

A result that shows that less than 40% of employees have experienced a dispute or conflict at work. All disputes or conflicts were resolved within one month and 67% felt that it had been resolved fairly. The average number of dispute or conflicts employees had experienced was 2.6. Comments concerning fairness were repeated here as they have been mentioned previously in the report so management may want to look at the processes for dealing with disputes and conflicts and how staff are being treated within the workplace.

Summary of Comments

Comments showed that conflicts or disputes were resolved by management through consultation and team meetings. There were comments that indicated a level of unfairness in how disputes and conflicts were resolved.

Conclusion

A very good report with results showing a high level of engagement from staff.

Participation rates were high with 8 employees participating in the survey. This is an excellent response rate and all the statements ranked between 63% and 100% of employees selecting Always or Frequently.

This is a report with definite successes and some high results, particularly in the responses covering, a workplace they would recommend to friends and family, a positive and motivating work environment and one that reflects the values of the Public Service. A place where employees can voice their opinions and feel listened to also showed strong, positive results and most employees looked forward to coming to work each day. There are two areas where work from the management team could help to improve the overall level of employee engagement and they were around acknowledgement of employees work and fairness in how employees are treated, particularly in regard to expectations and disciplinary actions. These results already highlighted in the report should be considered as 'points of action' and where management work together to identify how and what can be done to increase the number of employees selecting Always or Frequently in the future.

Improving the wellbeing of employees leads to higher level of engagement and productivity, which again leads to better health, wellbeing and satisfaction with work.

Research suggests that employees who report high levels of wellbeing are more likely to:

- Be more creative
- Be more productive
- Provide better customer service
- Report more positive interactions with their managers
- Be more confident to speak up
- Be more satisfied with their job, career development and work-life balance
- Be more engaged.

Training Resources

Coursera is an online learning website that partners with more than 200 leading universities and companies to bring flexible, affordable, job-relevant online learning to individuals and organizations worldwide. They offer a range of learning opportunities—from hands-on projects and courses to job-ready certificates and degree programs. Coursera offers free online training courses as well as those with a fee. Coursera for Business provides courses for transformative skill development solutions for empowering teams with the high-impact skills that drive innovation, competitiveness, and growth. They also offer Coursera for Government which helps governments and organizations provide in-demand skills and learning paths to new jobs for the entire workforce, and implements national-scale learning programs. <https://www.coursera.org/>

edX Open Courses offers online learning from world-class academic institutions and corporate partners, self-paced individual courses or multi-course programs to earn a certificate and typically take 2 to 6 weeks to complete. They are low cost, so organisations can affordably provision learning for teams or the entire organisation. <https://www.edx.org/>

Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute offer two NZ Certificates in Business and Management. www.citti.edu.ck/courses/