

Notes for NZ Institute of Intelligence Professionals Panel Discussion

1. How do you maximise an intelligence team's effectiveness?

Capability: Ensure you have the right skills and experience in the team. Avoid putting SMEs, without a desire or the aptitude to be good people leaders, into people leadership roles. Ensure there are other pathways for SME leadership and progression

Focus on great leaders who prioritise management and leadership

Mission: We know our people are driven by the mission of protecting NZ and NZers. It one of the key drivers that attracts people to our agencies, so it's critical to ensure that when in the agency staff can always see the connection between the work they do and the mission.

Enabled: Ensure teams have what they need to successfully delivery, not just resources but time and learning and development opportunities.

Remove Barriers for Success: Work with your people to understand what they are and resolve what you can.

Or, allow space for your team to innovate and come up with solutions to the gnarly problems/barriers.

Create inclusive and respectful teams where people can bring their full selves to work. When people can see they're valued, respected, and able to be themselves, that's when you'll get the most from them, including discretionary effort that you wouldn't others get.

Culture – what is the culture you need to maximise effectiveness. What attributes do you value? Instil these in the team including through your selection process.

Collaboration

2. What perspectives create the most robust intelligence outputs?

The widest perspectives.

However, teams need to be respectful and open to different perspectives.

We need to be prepared to listen, consider, and challenge current thinking.

Avoid being dismissive or discounting peoples idea's because they differ from our own, or because they come from less experienced members of the team.

3. How have intelligence teams evolved in recent times to meet your challenges?

Growth – we have been fortunate to have received government investment in building our capability and workforce over multiple years.

Different progression pathways – Providing progression frameworks for SME leadership and people leadership

Significant focus on Recruitment and Retention of staff. A strong focus on what's working, what's not working for our people through engagement with them, using insights for their experiences to inform where we place our efforts.

Changing workforce demographic. Increased diversity, and diversity of thought. Different work and life experiences from different environments to draw on.

Increase **Collaboration** across agency, and between agencies where it makes sense.

4. What techniques have you used to create innovation in the workplace?

Various methodologies: Lean Six Sigma, Agile to name a couple

Time and Space: Self initiation – let the team identify problems they want to tackle and provide the time, space, and resources to solve them. Identify the innovators and enable them. Not everyone is an innovator. Enable innovation when operational demands/opportunities arise.

5. What policies have you seen advance the intelligence discipline most significantly?

We have significantly professionalised our approach to people leadership and workforce, which has advanced the agencies. This has resulted in policies and priorities that focus on:

- Greater **diversity**, and creation of a more inclusive and positive workplace culture.
- Greater **engagement** with our people. Strong desire to hear from them what's working, what's not and using the inputs from our people to focus our priorities and resources aimed at our focus on recruitment and retention
- **Growth and building of capability** (including career pathways)
- **Strengthened leadership**
- Increased focus on **learning and development**
- **Flexible working** - huge demand. Might not be able to do work from home full time, but enable as many other flexible work arrangements as you can helping people to balance both work and life.

6. How have you seen efforts to foster workplace innovation flounder?

Getting too wrapped up and focused on methodology. Opportunity can pass you by. Trying to make people who are not your innovators, innovate.

You know the people who are your innovative, solution focused people. Identify them and give them the time and space to innovate.

7. What advice would you have for intelligence leaders and aspiring leaders for the coming years?

Prioritise people leadership – good people leadership takes effort, time, and commitment. Realise that if you're a people leader you need to prioritise it. You should be spending at least 50% of your time on it.

Take a genuine interest in your people. Be approachable, be available, ask them what they think/need and listen.

Adapt – be prepared to adapt to meet the needs of your people. Don't insist on leading individual members in the way "you like to be managed".

Create a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community we serve AND ensure you and your teams provides a truly inclusive workplace where everyone is respected, able to bring their full selves to your work, because then you will truly get the best from your people, including discretionary effort that might otherwise be withheld.

Lead by example – ensure you understand the agencies, your teams, priorities, values, cultural expectations and you walk the talk every day – your people are looking to you to lead the way, set the example.

Connection to the Mission: Ensure that what was on the tin is experienced by your people. Ensure they maintain line of sight always between what they do and the mission.

Challenge the status quo – in your own thinking, thinking of others, and ways of working. Not only allow, but encourage others to do the same. What works today, might not work in the future so always look ahead and ask what does that mean for how we do our work?

Create different pathways for progression and development and make sure you're setting people up for success. SME leadership and people leadership.