

**Trust and understanding
are at the heart of any
good manager/employee
relationship.**

Michelle Poulton

COO, AlphaCert Labs

Elevate (Leadership Essentials)

As a new manager, people-focused training and the opportunity to build a strong network were essential gaps to fill for Michelle. IMNZ delivered this for her with the Elevate (Leadership Essentials) Programme.

What challenges were you facing that led you to IMNZ?

Michelle's main challenge was finding new ways to connect with her team, discover what her new role entailed and how she was to operate in it. Having already worked alongside her colleagues as a team member, moving into the next level of management required a significant adjustment and some new skills.

"There were a lot of challenges that came with that role and trying to actually bed down what it was supposed to be," Michelle claims.

"Even though I'd been elevated into this role and now had a lot of new challenges to face, I was still working with a group of people I'd worked with for a five-year period," explains Michelle. "It didn't somehow mean those relationships weren't important, if anything they were more important."

"I realized my first step was to knock down any barriers I was inadvertently putting up in my [team's] way."

What impact has IMNZ had on you as a new manager?

The course highlighted for Michelle how her people skills could be used in her new managerial role.

"The course didn't specifically talk about how to navigate the change in role from peer to a manager. What it did teach is that through it all you're still dealing with humans," says Michelle. "You're still dealing on a people-level so you still have the same issues of feedback and engagement and authentic listening. All of that still applies."

"One of the biggest impacts of having done the course was how it enabled me to engage with our clients," she says. "Not only navigating how to talk to my team and motivate them for change, but also applying that to my clients and authentically listening to them. What were their issues? What were their constraints? What are the challenges they're facing and then what could we do as an organisation to address that?"

After the course, Michelle realized it wasn't enough to say she trusted her team unless she actioned and demonstrated that trust. Once she understood that and learned to prioritize that, Michelle saw her team step up which alleviated a lot of her stress as a manager.

Ready to step up in management?

Michelle particularly enjoyed the structure of the three Elevate modules and the opportunity to practice the skills between modules. Because of this, she is quick to recommend the IMNZ course to her colleagues.

"There were a lot of tools that we were learning that can actually be used on an everyday basis with teams and workshops and meetings," says Michelle. "I like studying with IMNZ. They are a great team of people to work with."