

Ngā Pou | Principles Conversation Guide

Facilitator Guide for People Leaders



Preparation

The purpose of this guide is to support a conversation about Ngā pou | principles, and how they apply to us as public servants.

We encourage people leaders to facilitate an informal conversation in small groups or teams using the discussion questions and prompts provided in this guide. While we recommended a team leader facilitates the conversation, you may also wish to have someone who knows about internal integrity policies present to direct participants .

This guide isn't exhaustive – it's simply a resource to get you started. You are best placed to know your agency's context and how to make sure these key messages land for your people.

Delivery

It's recommended that you allow at least 20 minutes for the conversation. This learning could be included as a part of a regular team meeting, or as a one-off session to learn more about Ngā pou | principles. We recommend you have a safe and quiet space to support open discussion within the group.

What you need:

- Use the powerpoint guide to support the conversation. This is particularly useful if delivering the conversation online.
- Familiarise yourself with the questions and prompts on page 3 and 4 of the guide.
- It is a good idea to have the Ngā Pou | Principles Guidance handy, as well your own agency information about internal processes and practices.



Context and scene setting

As public servants, we are all connected by a similar goal, to serve the people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ngā pou | principles are outlined in the Public Service Act 2020. No matter what role, agency or where you are in your journey, these principles guide how we work.

Ngā pou | principles

These are the fundamental principles that guide our actions and how we work.

- Te noho taiapa | Political neutrality
- Tohutohu hāngai | Free and frank advice
- Kopounga whai-painga | Merit-based appointments
- Kāwanatanga tuwhera | Open government
- Kaitiakitanga | Stewardship

Conversation Prompt: (whiteboard, brainstorm or general conversation)

Ask participants about their initial thoughts regarding the five principles.

- In plain terms what do these principles mean to you?
- What is the importance of upholding the principles?
- What are the consequences if we don't?

Discussion questions

1. What does it mean to be politically neutral and why is it such a fundamental principle within the Public Service?

Prompt: Political neutrality is a fundamental principle within our Public Service. It is about the way we act as a public service to support the government of the day to develop and implement their policies.

It is important because:

- we serve current and future governments.
- we maintain the trust and confidence of ministers and the government.
- we build and maintain the trust and confidence of the public.

2. What impact do you think open government has on New Zealanders?

Prompt: Open government strengthens our democracy by ensuring citizens can contribute and influence what the government does and how it does it. The impact of open government is a public service that is transparent, so people can understand the actions of government, and where decisions can be held to account. It also increases the ability for anybody to participate and influence what the government does or how it does it.

Open government is important to us as public servants because it ensures:

- We raise public understanding of how government works.
- We promote participation.
- We demonstrate our accountability to the public.

3. How do the principles show up in your role and day to day work?

Prompt: Support the group to think about some of the ways the principles show up in their work. It could be things like:

- Assisting ministerial processes by responding to OIA requests.
- Holding hui and workshops with different groups across my community for their input into services that impact them most.
- Helping clients navigate services so they know what assistance they can receive.
- Showing stewardship by passing on knowledge and resources to others, meaning we can support our communities now and into the future.

Additional resources

- Check out He Aratohu | A Guide on Integrity and Conduct. [He Aratohu | A Guide on Integrity and Conduct.](#)