

## Principles and guidelines for engagement with Māori

Adapted from Harmsworth, G. (2005) Good practice guidelines for working with tangata whenua and Māori organisations: Consolidating our learning. Landcare Research Report: [LC0405/091](#)



Principle	Why engagement matters	Putting engagement into practice	Applied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>1. Kanohi ki te kanohi</b> 'Face to face'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a cultural preference for Māori to meet face-to-face</li> <li>• This reflects the oral and often local tradition</li> <li>• Trust is built by personal contact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet in person, wherever possible. This does not mean you should never use the phone or email, but significant issues are best discussed face-to-face</li> <li>• Discuss and seek agreement on where to meet</li> <li>• Be prepared to go out to Māori communities – meet people on their own ground, place.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Rangatira ki te Rangatira</b> 'Chief to chief'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Māori have confidence in the people they are dealing /collaborating/consulting with</li> <li>• People should have the mana (status) at the other side of the table at the beginning (this is largely to do with tikanga process) and starts with 'Chief to Chief' and then progresses down to more junior staff or membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve the right people</li> <li>• Involve people at an equal level</li> <li>• Involve the decision-makers/those who can answer the questions then and there</li> <li>• Then progress to wider collaboration/engagement.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Nā te kakano</b> 'From the seed'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This reflects the Māori life cycle: from seed to plant to flower</li> <li>• Early involvement shapes the final result</li> <li>• Māori have a different world view and different view of time, issues, and priorities. Your priority and timelines may not be the same as the Māori community's.</li> <li>• Your issue or research agenda may also be new to Māori, who need time to absorb the issue, seek knowledge, form their opinion, and identify and develop their position and response (e.g., water quality, NPS limits, resource allocation, genetic modification).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve Māori from the start</li> <li>• Be genuine, honest, and respectful</li> <li>• Be prepared for a slow process based on tikanga and consensus</li> <li>• Clarify the kaupapa and objectives from the start - what do you want to achieve?</li> <li>• Don't expect Māori to slot into your agenda or within limited time frames</li> <li>• Many Māori have jobs in addition to their community responsibilities</li> <li>• Māori representatives are likely to need time to consult with their communities too: many Māori organisations only meet once a month</li> <li>• Be guided by Memoranda of Understanding or other agreements if these exist.</li> </ul>	

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4.	<b>Kei mōumou taima</b> Open and meaningful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This phrase literally means 'waste of time'</li> <li>It's important not to waste people's time – Māori are seeking meaningful engagement and desired goals and outcomes from collaboration</li> <li>What meaningful things will come out of the collaborative exercise?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate/consult with a clear purpose</li> <li>Create a caring and trusting environment</li> <li>Don't use collaboration just to tell Māori what is happening – think about what you can get from their involvement and what its value could be</li> <li>Don't waste the Māori community's time – explain why you are there and what collectively you hope to achieve (clarify the kaupapa). Sometimes Māori are not interested in collaborating with you.</li> <li>Don't have a predetermined outcome</li> <li>Ask Māori if they wish to discuss a specific issue rather than assuming or expecting they do.</li> </ul>	
5.	<b>Ki tai wiwi, ki tai wawa</b> Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This phrase refers to moving from side to side to change direction in your waka when you become stuck or are heading the wrong way and need to change direction. You need to be open to different pathways or prepared to achieve different objectives on your way to the bigger objective or outcome.</li> <li>The Māori community has its own processes and structures, which need to be taken into account.</li> <li>They also have to juggle lots of issues and responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During collaboration, be prepared to discuss several times, as many times as required, often at different levels.</li> <li>Allow for an organic or iterative process to emerge and proceed.</li> <li>There is a need for balance and a two-way relationship and trust to develop.</li> <li>Involve Māori and seek agreement on key topics/ discussion areas, decisions, etc. e.g. when, where, what, how, who's involved etc.</li> </ul>	
6.	<b>Tikanga Māori</b> The correct Māori way of doing things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Māori have their own protocols, customs and ways of doing things</li> <li>Recognising these is a sign of respect towards and acknowledgement of the people you are meeting – they are willing to go with your process, and this is a two-way relationship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise, respect and use Māori protocols, customs and ways of doing things (tikanga)</li> <li>Use the language (terms) and te reo Māori in the right way</li> <li>Respect and understand mātauranga Māori and other Te Ao Māori views</li> <li>Within a collaborative environment sharing and co-learning is important</li> <li>Tikanga or customary Māori hui/training sessions may be useful.</li> </ul>	

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7.	<b>Ko te tūmanako</b> Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literally means 'good faith', 'good will' or 'good heart', i.e. not hiding anything.</li> <li>It is important for Māori to know who is involved.</li> <li>They need to know they have been invited in good faith.</li> <li>Also if they are unable to attend an event, they will know who else can represent their views.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be open and honest about who's been invited to participate, who the participants/audience are, and how they all fit in.</li> <li>Explain at the start what the agenda, purpose, or kaupapa is?</li> <li>Determine early what the right or appropriate membership should be? Who should be at the table?</li> <li>Determine the right process to be used for the collaboration (e.g. number of hui, time-frame, speakers).</li> <li>How will information be used and is IP considered?</li> <li>Who is leading discussions? Making decisions, and what is their level of authority in the process?</li> <li>Don't have a hidden agenda – be upfront.</li> <li>Explain your collaborative process well to others – include regard/recognition for mātauranga Māori and Te Ao Māori.</li> <li>How will you collaboratively achieve collective desired outcomes and decisions?</li> </ul>	
8.	<b>Mahia te whare</b> Foster capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literally 'build the house'.</li> <li>Good consultation should help foster Māori capacity and capability, rather than building from scratch every time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Māori have the capacity, resource, interest, and desire to participate.</li> <li>You may not necessarily remunerate individuals, but it should not cost people anything to participate, so you should at least cover costs (e.g. venue, food, key individuals) and include a koha.</li> <li>Most Māori organisations don't have paid staff – and some don't have any staff.</li> <li>Budget/resourcing for Māori participation in the collaborative practice should be considered.</li> </ul>	
9.	<b>Whakatika te he</b> Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literally 'right the wrongs', or 'find the right way through the confusion'.</li> <li>Māori believe we should learn from the past and look to the future.</li> <li>This means not continuing past mistakes and injustices, taking responsibility for our actions, keeping our promises and listening to and valuing what Māori say.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whoever is leading the hui or kaupapa, be accountable and take responsibility.</li> <li>Feed-back what Māori have told you before (e.g. provide and be generous with previous collaboration hui results).</li> <li>Feed-back what was decided and why? – close the loop and show what the outcome was..</li> <li>Do some research – you may be able to get a sense of Māori perspectives/views of an issue from Māori or other priorities they wish to discuss – be prepared to go off tangent sometimes.</li> </ul>	

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10.	<b>Kia tika te reo</b> Use appropriate language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use clear and appropriate communication and language to ensure Māori understand and can engage with the consultation issue and process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of language and terminology</li> <li>Think about communication</li> <li>Basic lessons/understanding of te reo Māori may be useful within collaborative environments</li> <li>Learn Māori pronunciation</li> <li>Change the language and terms you use depending on the situation and audience – make it easy and embracing to understand</li> <li>Don't use terms of words people don't understand such as highly technical or too many science terms – try to retain a balance of terminology</li> <li>Explain terminology and technical language in plain language</li> <li>Try not to use unexplained acronyms.</li> </ul>	