



## “Getting nude” helps with attitude

With 49 location across Australia and New Zealand, NHP Electrical are specialists in electrical and automation products, systems and solutions with an annual turnover of \$400 million. In New Zealand, Customer Service Manager Mike Hoek oversees nine customer service staff across three locations – Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.



**DIVERSE TEAM:** Mike Hoek (centre front) with his Auckland team.

Mike, who has been in his role with NHP for eight years, says one of challenges has been keeping his diverse team on the same page, with the age range from a “very lively” person in their 20s to “highly experienced” person in their 70s. Another major challenge has been changing the culture from what Mike terms a “me, me” culture, to customers first.

“There used to be a lot of finger pointing, but today we work on what I call “getting nude”, which means there’s nothing to hide. It’s a no blame culture, we just get on with it, and there’s a real team spirit.”

Any issues (we call opportunities) are logged and dealt with quickly, if mistakes are made it’s treated as a learning experience, says Mike.

“Companies spend moonbeams on technical training and often don’t have anything around soft skills, the basic things in life. Not everyone is about technical training; people also need to hone soft skills.” Like empathy, learning to listen, asking questions etc

Mike needed a platform that allowed his staff to learn anytime, anywhere, anyhow and spent six months looking for the right fit until he “stumbled across” LearningPlanet by phoning CourierPost for an insight into their customer service training.

“The manager gave me access to the LearningPlanet site and it was no brainer. It was just what I was looking for. We bought licenses for New Zealand and Australia and away we went. It didn’t come without a battle though, as getting people to buy into self-paced learning can be a challenge.”

Mike introduced his team to LearningPlanet in January 2016 and is now using Learning Pathways which gives a structured approach and works for both experienced and newer staff members.

*“I can’t fathom why companies invest so heavily in classroom training when they can have a tool like this. You’ve got nothing to lose and everything to gain.”*

“For the first 12 months we went from module to module – then we started to use the new tailored pathways which some other customers had requested. That’s what I love about LearningPlanet, they’re so responsive and engaged.”



# LearningPlanet

Team members are given allocated time off during a work day to complete their learning, but due to the flexibility of online learning, some choose to do it at home, some come in earlier to work, while others stay later. Mike does the training in parallel with each staff member so there is a chance to discuss things as required.

"It's so flexible, it allows the older staff to help the younger staff. We have a full review as each module is completed. Lots of opportunities come out of it because the whole team is learning it together and they hold each other accountable. Where they might not otherwise discuss how they've handled a call or process, they now freely challenge each other.

LearningPlanet has been one of five top tools Mike's used to help bring about cultural change within the company, as the content aligns closely with the company's guiding principles: accountability, team spirit, make a difference, empower the customer, flexible discipline and enjoyment.

"When I started there was a lot of noise about things not being done very well. There's very little noise now. LearningPlanet has been an effective tool in demonstrating to the team, not only our guiding principles, but how different techniques - like call control, attitude, dealing with difficult customers - have an impact with both our internal and external customers."

*"That's what I love about LearningPlanet, they're so responsive and engaged."*

Mike says he shares the benefits of LearningPlanet with anyone and everyone.

"I've seen similar leaning platforms, but the way the LearningPlanet team works is very responsive. So many other companies seem hesitant to invest in training, I don't know why. From just \$10 per person per month you can get full access to their site. This is just the basic access to the LearningPlanet platform. There are more levels depending on how you want to manage training with your staff I can't fathom why companies invest so heavily sending out individuals to training when they can have a tool like this. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain.

"I can't say more about them, they're brilliant. I'm going to keep pushing till I get LearningPlanet fully integrated"

