

# ACCELERATE

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OUR NEWSLETTER FOR GROWING BUSINESSES



While lockdown wrapped up in June, the impact on the labour market, the workplace, and relationships within it, is far from over. It's still a confusing and challenging time for many business owners and staff. Whatever you're experiencing, we hope you'll draw inspiration from our stories of business innovation, take on board our mental health tips, and consider bringing on a business mentor to help you achieve your goals.

## Five ways to boost mental wellbeing at work

If you're a business owner or manager, there's a lot you can do to support your staff to maintain positive mental health and in turn, keep your business profitable. Studies say 'happy employees are more likely to be productive employees' (Kaplan et al., 2009) and 'employees who believe their employers care about their wellbeing have been shown to be more engaged at work than others.' (Rhodes, L. et al., 2002).

Here are five ways you can help build a supportive work environment for your team:

1. **Pick up the perks:** Offer regular health benefits to staff such as monthly massages, gym memberships or counselling sessions. Remember, you'll need to pay fringe benefit tax on any non-cash benefits to staff unless it meets one of the exemptions such as being provided on site or falling under the \$300 per employee/per quarter exemption. If you'd like more information on FBT, give us a call.
2. **Staff still working from home?** Make sure to check in on their personal situation, not just their KPIs - isolation is still a real issue for many.
3. **Spread the word about 1737.** Let your team know about the free, professional counselling that's available 24/7 by calling or texting 1737.
4. **Lead by example.** If you're the boss, remaining calm and demonstrating understanding, empathy and compassion to your staff will work wonders.
5. **Write a policy.** Looking after your staff, no matter what they're going through, is really important. Put together a mental health and wellbeing policy that outlines how you will support employees who experience mental health challenges, and outline that they will always be treated fairly. For tips on how to put a policy together, read the Working Well Guide at [www.mentalhealth.org.nz](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz).

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# When life gives you lemons, pivot.



The world of work has been transformed this year and the only way forward is to adapt. Here are two businesses who rejigged their offering to keep the invoices rolling and experienced great success.



## Metal Art finds silver lining during lockdown

When the pandemic hit, engineering company Metal Art from Wellington carved out new opportunities. The interior and exterior furniture specialists designed and produced more than 1,000 hand sanitiser stands for Progressive supermarkets nationwide and Initial Hygiene.

"Around 50% of our regular business dropped away so we knew we had to change our focus fast," says Managing Director Carl Longstaff. "We developed a new product line of hand sanitiser stands and manufactured and supplied gel. Thankfully we have managed to maintain full employment for our 35 staff and I'm confident these products will continue to see strong demand by companies, government departments and organisations dealing with the public face-to-face."

He says COVID-19 emphasised the importance of supporting local businesses where possible.

"Our steel is produced less than 50 metres down the road from us and we outsource where we can - be it powder from Dulux or sandblasting from Seaview Blasting. We try to get things as close to home as we can because at the end of the day we want to deal with locals and with people we trust."

## Bringing home the bacon

Pop-up restaurant founder Stacey Jones from Mount Maunganui describes time in lockdown as a 'tale of two halves' for her business Kitchen Takeover.

"It was hard because my seven events sold out in 24 hours before lockdown and they all had to be cancelled. But this was good because it forced me to pivot and move really quickly into something new, which would never have happened if I hadn't had my hand forced."

Stacey decided to package up her pop-up restaurant night into a dinner party box - a fine-dining experience delivered to your door.

"One of the challenges of the pop-up restaurant is that I spend months developing menus with chef Shane Yardley and experiences that are completely unique," she explains. "The boxes are great because they allowed me to scale up and get the edible experiences into more people's hands."

Stacey is a big believer in the 'innovate or die' saying and views each one of her business ideas as a big prototype.

"You're always moving forward and changing things to get a better end result. We're in the very early stages of Kitchen Takeover - At Home, but it's going really well. We sold out of all our boxes in the first and second round so I think that's a good sign of market validation."

Top businesswoman Theresa Gattung, who was involved in the conception of My Food Bag, is a fan, and one diner described it as "having a five star restaurant in your home".

Kitchen Takeover pop-up restaurants are now back in full force in the Bay of Plenty. Stacey's future plans include a physical food innovation space and a food festival to celebrate local producers. "Not sure when I'll sleep..." she laughs. "It's overrated anyway!"





# Why mentors are worth their weight in gold

Looking to improve your business? Gaining a fresh perspective from someone who's lived and breathed business challenges could be the ticket. We talk to Chief Executive of Business Mentors New Zealand, Sarah Trotman, ONZM, about why having a mentor to listen and provide support and guidance can be invaluable for SMEs.

## **How did the interest in Business Mentors change this year?**

The interest in Business Mentors New Zealand increased dramatically over the COVID-19 period. From the week before Level 4 commencing, to the first full week of Level 4 lockdown, we received an increase of 278% in registrations from business owners needing the support of a mentor. We monitored a steady increase, peaking during Level 3, week commencing 4 May 2020, where we received a further increase of 166% in new registrations being submitted. The number of mentors who offered their assistance over this time also increased.

## **What are the main challenges mentors have been able to help with?**

Business owners have needed help in bringing their business online, re-adapting brands, determining changes in consumer buying behaviour and planning for the future. Other challenges have been cash flow management, supply chain issues, and decision making.

## **Why is having a business mentor following one of our most disruptive business years on record, so important?**

Friends and family can be a support, but it's a mentor who has lived experience and challenges businesses are facing. Business Mentors New Zealand matches mentors with business owners carefully, ensuring sector experience and/or competency match.

## **What are the main benefits of having a mentor?**

Mentors have experience and empathy for small businesses. They are there to provide one-on-one support to business owners, who are wanting to grow or need help solving specific business challenges. Mentors can offer guidance, act as a sounding board, challenge thinking, and provide business owners with an independent and fresh perspective.

## **Isolation was a big issue during COVID-19 and business owners still face it. Is this something mentors help with?**

Research from Business Mentors New Zealand in 2018 found 80% of business owners surveyed had felt a sense of isolation. Self-isolation due to COVID-19 may have added to business owners' sense of being alone. Our mentors were able to remotely support owners using video technology and by phone with any business challenges. They acted as an empathetic ear and critical sounding board for those who needed it.

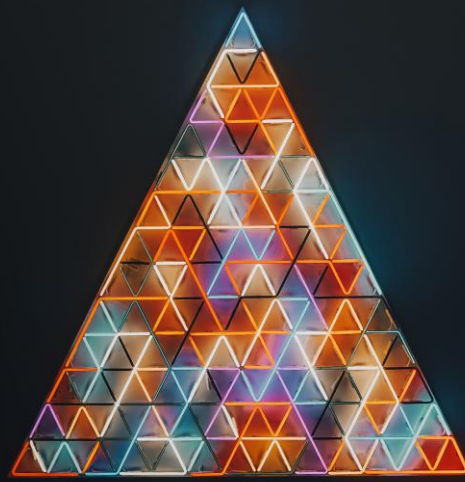
**For more information or to be matched with a mentor, visit [www.businessmentors.org.nz](http://www.businessmentors.org.nz)**





## Business health check

1. Having a hard time working through staff disputes? [Employment NZ's mediators](#) offer a range of high quality mediation and case management services to help work through disputes and employment relationship breakdowns.
2. Considering redundancies? Make sure you follow the workplace change process to reduce the risk of a personal grievance. Redundancy should only happen after all redeployment options have been exhausted. Head to [Employment NZ](#) or [Wolters Kluwer HR resources](#) for more information.
3. Workers on call? Remember zero-hour contracts no longer exist. If you plan to have staff on call, you must:
  - give them at least some guaranteed hours of work
  - specify the notice period that applies to cancellation of a shift, and
  - provide reasonable compensation for time on call or when a shift is cancelled outside the notice period.



## Personal grievances where employment relationship is triangular: Recent changes

A triangular employment relationship is when you are employed by one entity, but your work is actually under the control or direction of another entity. For example, under the labour for hire model or via a recruitment agency.

The changes: Up until mid-2020, employees could only bring a personal grievance against their employer (e.g. the labour hire company), and the third party they worked for couldn't be added to the claim. Now, under changes made by the Employment Relations (Triangular Employment) Amendment Act 2019, the "controlling third party" can be added to the claim against the employer, and potentially be responsible for providing remedies to the employee.

If you contract labour through triangular employment relationships, be aware of the implications for your business and employment practices where you might have third party responsibilities.

## KEY TAX DATES – AUGUST 2020

Date	Category	Description
5 August	PAYE	Large employers' payment due. File employment information within two working days after payday.
20 August	PAYE	Small and large employers' payment due. File employment information within two working days after payday.
20 August	RWT	RWT return and payment due for deductions from dividends and deductions of \$500 or more from interest paid during July.
20 August	NRWT / Approved Issuer Levy	Payment and return for July.
28 August	GST	Payment and return for July.
28 August	Provisional Tax	Instalment due for March balance date taxpayers.

*Note: the provisional tax due dates apply to those clients who have a March balance date. Different dates will apply for those clients who have different balance dates.*

**Disclaimer:** This publication has been carefully prepared, but it has been written in general terms only. The publication should not be relied upon to provide specific information without also obtaining appropriate professional advice after detailed examination of your particular situation.