

# Book Review

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## **Wayfinding leadership: Groundbreaking wisdom for developing leaders**

**Spiller, C., Barclay-Kerr, H., & Panoho, J. (2015) Huia Publishing.**

I believe that everything happens for a reason, and upon returning to work after the holiday season, I was asked to review *Wayfinding Leadership: Groundbreaking wisdom for developing leaders*. I found it relevant and timely as my career took a new direction to support the Mental Health Foundation to provide leadership in its responsiveness to Māori.

*Wayfinding Leadership* is named for the great wayfinding tradition of the Polynesian navigators who explored the Pacific Ocean, which included my tupuna (ancestors) from the Kurahaupo and Mamaru waka, and navigated their way from Hawaiki to Aotearoa. This book challenged my 25 years of middle-management experiences and skills. Wayfinding Leadership provided me with a framework and reasoning as to why I, as a Maori woman, thought and acted differently compared to my non-Maori colleagues in similar roles. Each chapter provides practical exercises based on its content and challenges your thinking and current practices to consider the traditional wayfinding philosophy, values and principles; thus enhancing your leadership skills and attributes within a contemporary context.

### **Be still with moving parts**

As I considered my role within the Mental Health Foundation, this book taught me to keep the destination (vision) in my mind and to not aim for it in a straight line, but instead to read the signs and adjust myself to be still, while still calibrated to a moving world. As a leader, your role is to inspire others and to weave the group together into a unified whole. Leading in a mana-enhancing way cultivates personal sovereignty of each person. Finally, if we want to be transformational and create true wellbeing, as well as to respond to a fast-changing environment, we need a dynamic strategic approach. Eventually the destination comes to you.

I will now continue my journey as a leader, equipped with wayfinding knowledge, helping me traverse through uncharted waters.

This book has given me the theory, wisdom and foundation of some of my practices, which are innate as a Maori leader. I challenge my colleagues to take up the wayfinding experience. It has been a personal journey of enlightenment, providing me with a deepened understanding that resonates with my values and beliefs, which I will continue to reference for the rest of my career. I must give credit to the authors for developing such a valuable resource and the taonga (gifts) they have given are not only for me but for my family and generations to come.

Nga mihi mahana nga rangatira ma. Tena koutou Tena koutou Tena koutou katoa.

**Reviewed by Ellen Norman, Director Maori Development at the Mental Health Foundation.**

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