# **1. Executive Summary**

This paper aims to help Kiwi Minerals Limited (KML), in providing the qualities needed to be a competent Project Director (PD) needed for their upcoming $5 million mineral exploration project located in Hawke’s Bay. The ideal PD hired for this project needs to have proficient qualities in three areas: The Māori cultural values and operating principles, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and activities, and the competencies of the PD itself.

KML is a New Zealand Company with its head office located in Wellington. They primarily focus in exploring valuable metals such as Gold and Silver. KML has been tasked by the government with completing an exploration project within a 9–12-month period. To complete this, the Project Director (PD) must possess the experience and expertise to anticipate risks and develop effective solutions. The involvement of the local Iwi, who are in control of majority of the land in question, is essential and should be involved through thoughtful cross-cultural communication. The Iwi’s participation alongside the management of diverse stakeholders, is crucial to the project’s success. A vital part of this process is integrating Māori values, such as Kaitiakitanga, which underscores the importance of environmental stewardship and sustainable practices within the Māori community. Additionally, this paper also aims to address potential Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) issues, including environmental concerns related to mineral exploration and cultural sensitivity, given the project’s location is in a Māori populated area.

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# **2. Introduction**

In addressing the recruitment of a Project Director (PD), this paper seeks to provide guidance to the Board of Directors of Kiwi Minerals Limited (KML) with respect to the forthcoming mineral exploration initiative. The mineral exploration project on the peninsula of Mahia, predominantly in the ownership of local Iwi and the Department of Conservation (DoC), has been granted to KML by the New Zealand government. KML's first step is prospecting, which is essentially the initial study of an area prior to mining (*Prospecting*, 2017). This paper evaluates the necessary management capabilities for the PD position regarding utilizing relevant Māori values that will be needed for the work. For the project, the use of Māori values will matter because most of the project area is owned by local Iwi.

It also contains a discussion of possible CSR issues under the project, highlighting the need for strategic planning and cross-cultural communication skills of the PD role. Included are the Māori values of Kaitiakitanga, Manaakitanga, Tapu and Noa, which are emphasized for the successful completion of the project. Discussed in this paper are also the recommendations for resolving CSR challenges ensuring that KML meets its economic goals while also upholding cultural sensitivity and environmental responsibility.

**3. Management Capabilities for a Project Director**

Currently the active engagement of a PD in conceiving a very big gold and silver project in the Mahia Peninsula is expected to exert considerable impact on the success of the project. The success of any project depends largely on the ability of the PD to lead. When related to a project, such instances will be about coordinating all those concerned and ensuring that they keep track of their accountability for finishing all parts of the project on time, within scope, and with high quality. PD is the main person who connects project goals with the collective efforts of their team by overcoming obstacles to guide the project to their destination. A PD must have team leadership to inspire and motivate, excellent verbal and written communication to convey objectives to all stakeholders, problem solving skills to be able to respond to project shifts and unforeseen challenges, use critical thinking to analyse problems and devise solutions, and have organizational skills to balance multiple tasks and priorities (*What Is a Project Manager? Responsibilities and Best Practices Explained*, n.d.).

The following paper recommends-the appointment of a PD for Hawke's Bay mineral exploration: Management capabilities that would be necessary for that new appointment would include collaboration and leadership. Collaboration refers to one of the competencies resident in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework (*The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework*, n.d.), while leadership indicated here as a management competency is from EFQM model (*What Is the EFQM Model?*, 2024). The two capabilities will be elaborated on further below, enumerating the arguments why these two are crucial for the success of this project.

## **3.1 Collaboration**

Collaboration consists of working together in some effort while trying to achieve the intended task objective. Effective collaboration often relates to building relationships, communication, decision-making, and leadership. A PD possessing collaboration ability is that team member or leader having influential input. Collaboration is much more than simply collaborating on a particular project. In this case, effective collaboration would be being able to foster relationships with the team, knowing how to handle conflict while inevitably arising, and developing an open and respectful environment (Kaplan, 2023). This will help PDs work well with various stakeholders, a capability that has many aspects that can be showcased in the project.

The first aspect is joint venture with other groups and institutions. One of the many goals of mineral exploration is identifying many prospects or mineral exploration potential areas. The more prospects examined, the greater the chance of profit (Singer & Kouda, 1999). Similar scenario of this was central to the successful exploration and discovery of the Middle Tennessee zin deposit at Elmwood (Callahan, 1977; as cited in Singer & Kouda, 1999). The PD, together with a team of prospectors and other professionals, can implement this by joint ventures along with the local Iwi, and DoC since they are more familiar with the land, which in turn can turn in more prospects potentially. However, it is important to note that even with large resources for joint ventures, at some point, expenses for joint ventures can exceed the value of the project or the allowed budget; thus, there are limits to this method (Singer & Kouda, 1999). Another example for the first aspect is by increasing success probabilities, looking for prospects that are easier to find can increase the probability of success per trial, where trial refers to the examination of a prospect or a deposit that might be economic. For example, some deposits that contain sediments and rhyolitic rocks have higher chance of containing valuable minerals (Singer & Kouda, 1999). The PD can implement this by collaborating with a team of geologists and other professionals and including them in joint ventures with the local Iwi and the DoC.

The second aspect is group discussions with other groups and institutions. In agile teams, there is an activity called ROAM that is done during quarterly planning meetings, it is an acronym that stands for Resolve, Own, Accept, and Mitigate, four potential actions for how to handle a potential risk. The goal of the ROAM risk management approach is to help organizations make sure all potential risks are being dealt with appropriately (Peterson, 2020). As for the PD, to make sure all stakeholders are present and all possible perspectives are considered, the PD, together with a team of geologists and other professionals, the local Iwi, and the DoC, can have a group discussion regarding ROAM to analyse future risks and hopefully prevent it. An example of it is one study where a group discussion was held with five community representatives from one of the soums (towns) close to the Bayan Khundii exploration project, members of the group were concerned to about the development of a mine within the region and wanted to ensure their perspective was heard and considered (Fraser et al., 2019).

PD that possesses great collaboration culture allows teams to unleash their full potential and achieve remarkable results, including improved retention and reduced turnover, proactive and thoughtful problem solving, workforce feels more “connected” with each other, and greater cohesion between cross-departmental teams (Miroslavov, 2023). The KML itself could miss out on these results, which in turn could be detrimental to the project’s success and cause a negative image on the company.

## **3.2** **Leadership**

Leadership is the ability of a PD or manager in influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2006).

This capability will assist PDs in guiding the mineral exploration project. This paper will focus on two aspects to showcase leadership capability in the project.

First aspect is adaptability of process through change management. Strong leadership is critical to an organization’s competitiveness because it drives change and innovation. The best leaders keep an eye on changing directions in their industry, promote new ideas from within their company or team and bring in innovative thinkers (Barney & Pratt, 2023). There are many ways to affect the project through change management. One is through identifying opportunities. The PD can monitor technologies in other industries to see if applicable technologies exist, and then conducting proof of concept studies on these technologies. An example of this is in one study, one colleague attended a conference in the food industry, and found one technology that identifies rotten food. The colleague went back and tested the technology in mining for proof of concept (Kashan et al., 2022).

Second aspect is ethical leadership. Ethical leadership involves PDs and managers making decisions based on the right thing to do for the common good, not just based on what is best for themselves or for the company. While profits are important, ethical leaders take into consideration the needs of the customers, communities, and employees in addition to company growth and revenue when making business decisions (Kirk, 2024). The PD should be responsible for making the project be profitable but should not engage in illegal behaviours as that will cause reputation loss. When there is an expectation to make profits, there are people who come to offer the metal at reduced rate, which is illegal. An ethical PD must be able to withstand that temptation (Nkosi, 2014).

# **4. Significance of Māori Values to the KML project**

The mineral exploration project will be located in the Mahia Peninsula and the land in the subject of mineral exploration is owned by the Māori. With the instigation of the Treaty of Waitangi, public bodies must give consideration to the Treaty when dealing with Maori, Such principles have included notions of active protection, partnership, good faith, the duty to consult, the right to development and self-regulation. A key mechanism has been the 1991 Resource Management Act, which requires to take account of the principles of the Treaty as well as acknowledging the relationship of Maori to their ancestral lands, sites, and wahi tapu (sacred sites) as a matter of national importance (Ruckstuhl et al., 2014). As KML begins their project ceremony for the mineral exploration project, it is important that the PD is proficient in these Māori values.

## **4.1 Manaakitanga**

Manaakitanga (kinship) encompasses the quality of caring practices, of hospitality, and showing respect and support to others as connected collective selves. This means there is a need for reciprocity of kindness, respect, and humanity. As such, manaakitanga is integral to the Maori worldview and is said to secure the strength of whanau (families) and communities as protection (Pavlovich & Roche, 2024). This is crucial to the mineral exploration project as this means connecting with the local Iwi and environment as a whole. Finally, by having this partnership with the community, the requirements to obtain Social License to Operate (SLO) is fulfilled (Prno & Scott Slocombe, 2012).

Manaakitanga also involves showing care for workers and their well-being, and respect for all involved in the work process. This principle aligns with the concept of psychological safety and underscores the importance of recognizing the dignity and worth of every worker (Harvey et al 2019; as cited in Knobel, 2024). When consulting with workers on health and safety matters, acknowledging and valuing their skills, knowledge, and experience is crucial (Knobel, 2024). As a PD in KML, the PD can incorporate this by first, communicating or asking for feedback from the employees on how the PD can make their well-being better in the workplace. Second, acknowledging what the local Iwi knows about the Mahia Peninsula and trusting their knowledge and skills will be crucial for this project. Third, recruit skilled workers that resides at Mahia Peninsula to capitalise on their knowledge.

When KML incorporates the spirit of Manaakitanga, it develops trust within the Iwi members and could mitigate any ill thoughts against the project. This value helps with other perspectives in project management since it considers the needs and interests of others and therefore, applying an ethic of social and other responsibilities, such as accounting for financial and strategic future (Kawharu & Tapsell, 2019). In regard to the SLO, it reduces risks and helps allow operations to continue without community conflict (Prno & Scott Slocombe, 2012). Therefore, implementing Manaakitanga in KML’s project vision not only makes more business returns in the long run, but also makes the project more sustainable while still valuing Māori cultural beliefs and principles.

## **4.2 Kaitiakitanga**

Kaitiakitanga is one of the Māori values that focuses on protecting and preserving the environment. Kaititakitanga means guardianship, protection, preservation or sheltering. It is a way of managing the environment, based on the traditional Māori world view. A kaitiaki is a person or group that is recognised as a guardian by the tangata whenua (tribal group with authority in a particular area). For instance, a hapu (sub-tribe) may be the kaitiaki for a lake or forest. Kaitiakitanga today express traditional ideas in a time of cultural and environmental renewal. Iwi tribes are seeking to restore ecosystems and culture at the same time (Royal, 2007). Implementing the kaitiakitanga values in the KML project will need to collaborate with the kaitiaki with regards to environmental preservation and protection.

Kaitaikitanga can be applied to many of the activities that organisations carry out, but it can be seen that it has a particularly natural fit with conservation and collection care (Nolan, 2022). As a PD of KML, the PD can incorporate this by collaborating with the kaitiaki of the land in question and the local community, and discuss conservation activities such as following: planning to minimize environmental damage to the Mahia Peninsula, reforestation initiatives to restore the environmental damage, preservation of wildlife living in Mahia Peninsula, risk management in relation to mineral exploration (Royal, 2007).

When KML incorporates the spirit of Kaitiakitanga, it gains positive reputation as it reduces environmental risks associated with the project. By drawing out the philosophical underpinnings of Kaitiakitanga, it will advocate for and enhance the well-being of both tangata(people) and taiao(the environment) (Walker et al., 2019). Therefore, implementing Kaitiakitanga in KML’s project vision not only reduces risks, but also makes the project more social and environmentally sustainable while still honouring Māori cultural beliefs and principles.

## **4.3 Tapu and Noa**

Tapu generally means "sacred," but also includes meanings like "prohibited," "forbidden," "special," "not ordinary," and "set apart." Everything is considered to have tapu, which can be temporary (like a rahui, a ban on resource use) or permanent (like a burial ground or a hazardous geyser). Tapu also governs behavior and protocol, such as prohibiting eating at burial sites or requiring handwashing after visiting a cemetery, to maintain respect and safety (Ataria et al., 2016).

Noa is the opposite of tapu, referring to a state where a place, resource, or activity is considered ordinary, safe, and not subject to restrictions (Ataria et al., 2016).

The PD can incorporate this by training the team for different protocols and restrictions when entering or exploring Tapu sites so as not to dishonor Maori traditions (Ataria et al., 2016). This is in respect to DoC as they have the responsibility to advocate for the conservation of natural and historic resources, both on and off land or waters managed by DoC (*National RMA and EEZA Advocacy Strategy*, n.d.).

# **5. Corporate Social Responsibility Issues**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) involves a company's contributions to societal well-being through environmental and social actions. CSR shapes public perception and is key for the PD to understand, as companies that prioritize CSR signal long-term value to investors and partners. (Reckmann, 2024).

## **5.1 Environmental Impact**

The mineral exploration project, like other industries, produces waste that have negative impacts on the environment. To maintain the license-to-operate, companies must consider and address social issues and environmental concerns throughout the life cycle of the project (Chopard et al., 2019). To resolve the concerns, the KML should initiate programs with the local community that benefit the community and local Iwi, such as community gardening, tree planting, and the conservation of soil, water, and green spaces (Krasny and Tidball 2012; Connoly et al., 2014; Krasny et al., 2015; as cited in (Bennett et al., 2018)).

The KML also must coordinate with the DoC in terms of bird’s preservation (Robertson et al., 2021). The KML also must start initiatives in protecting and conservation of the environment, which includes replanting trees, restoring degraded areas, converting to more sustainable use and management of resources (Bennett et al., 2018).

## **5.2 Stakeholder Collaborations and Partnerships**

Stakeholder collaboration and partnership involves working with a range of people to achieve a certain goal. Whether the company wants to increase exposure, implement new systems or drive revenue growth, the company will need the support and input of the stakeholders to make it happen (Hughes, 2023). The mineral exploration project in the Mahia Peninsula will affect the local community, DoC, and the local Iwi. As such, these makes them the stakeholders to the KML project. For the project to be successful, KML must collaborate with the stakeholders to ensure all the stakeholders benefit in the project. According to Rowe et al., the Hawke’s Bay Regional Economic Development needs to focus on the creation of an environment for growth that will lead to sustainable employment using the currently unemployed or under-employed resources of the Region, attracting new talent, increasing the local population and exploring new growth opportunities (Rowe et al., 2015). With the stakeholders in mind, the KML can coordinate with Regional Economic Development to provide sustainable employment for the local Iwi residing in Mahia Peninsula.

# **6. Conclusion**

The mineral exploration project of KML depends on PD’s capabilities, Maori values, and CSR practices. The PD must have strong collaboration and leadership skills to work closely with the local community, local Iwi, and the DoC and handle the demands and decision-making in respect to the local community. The Maori values Kaitiakitanga, Manaakitanga, Tapu and Noa are significant in terms of building trust that the local Iwi and the environment will be taken into account. In terms of CSR practices, by considering the environmental impact of the project and by partnering with the local Iwi, local community, and the DoC, it would make it sustainable and keep the stakeholders engaged in the project. Understanding all these concepts are vital to the success of the project while gaining positive support from every stakeholder involved in the project.

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