

FACILITATOR: **ANDREW**EMPLOYER: **GENESIS ENERGY**YEAR COMPLETED: **2019 (COMPLETED THE ITL3 PROGRAMME, STARTING IN JULY 2018 WITH GROUP 18-5C (HAMILTON))**

“LearningWorks gave me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and have confidence to speak my mind and get out there.”

For Talya Awheto, the LearningWorks course was the first step in a journey to finding her voice: “The best thing, as soon as I walked into the course was my facilitator, he spoke Māori, and he started off with a Karakia which I thought was amazing and that automatically gave me that sense of belonging into the course.

I think it was this course that gave me confidence to speak up. I speak up now in meetings, where normally I would just sit in the background and not say anything at all.

There was a lot that I had to put in personally - manage my own life, plus work, plus study. What I’ve learned in the last year is about taking chances and just going with it. **LearningWorks gave me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and have confidence to speak my mind and get out there.”**

Talya has been recognised by Genesis & Energy Online, to now represent the companies as a Polynesian Leader. **Being recognised by my employer Genesis & Energy Online to represent the companies as a Polynesian Leader, working to improve cultural diversity is amazing - Before doing ITL I didn’t even know what diversity meant!”**

The learning journey wasn’t without its challenges, and Talya did think about giving up: “**A couple of times I considered just giving up, but I had come so far out of my shell that I was so committed to going for it the whole way.**

I felt like every time I kept pushing myself, I kept being given more opportunities to do other things to help me grow so I just felt like, keep going, don’t stop

It started with LearningWorks, then I progressed as a team leader, the move, getting the chance to do all of this with work projects and now representing Genesis and Energy Online as a Pasifika Leader. If I hadn’t been pushed at the start, I think I’d still be upstairs just as a normal rep.”

Talya found a voice and is using that voice to educate and develop people in her team, and all around her. Her message for anyone considering taking the next step is to take the opportunity and give it a go.

