

Leadership characteristics for New Zealand Defence Force programmes

The unique value of leaders at Lead Systems

- **Runs an entire system**
Autonomy and the control to make decisions and changes to ensure the unit performs in line with strategic objectives. The lead systems leader must turn strategy into action on the ground. They have the authority to make choices about competing activities and remain focussed on strategic priorities. Champion changes to systems, structure or technology based on a systems thinking perspective. Ensures that barriers to successful change are removed.
- **Explains the why as well as the what**
Lead system leaders have access to the broader organisation objectives and the thinking behind them. Turning this strategy and reasoning into concepts and ideas others can grasp is vital: the lead systems leader provides the why as well as the what.
- **Work the system**
At this level leaders are expected to build and develop wide networks of influence, and to use them to ensure the smooth working of the organisations. Knowing who to speak with, and sustaining positive working relationships is essential.
- **Grow leaders**
This level is key in the growth and development of leaders and the lead systems leader should ensure a sound succession plan is in place. Coaches others to take calculated risks and change their approach or behaviour to achieve superior results. Guidance and mentoring based on your knowledge and experience is important; good lead system leaders create a pool of highly capable leaders ready to assume more senior roles.

The unique value of leaders at Lead Integrated Capability

- **Implements the strategic agenda**
Lead integrated capability leaders ensure a full understanding of the Government's priorities among their organisational staff. They prioritise activities against strategic goals to ensure organisational sustainability and trade off competing demands and initiatives based on agreed priorities. Lead integrated capability leaders champion changes to priorities, systems, structure or technology and ensure that barriers to successful change are removed.
- **Develops leaders**
Lead integrated capability leaders provide guidance to other leaders and encourage them to constantly improve in all aspects of their role. They identify challenging developmental activities and assign these accordingly. They also encourage futuristic thinking in others, provide the mandate to take calculated risks and change their approach or behaviour to achieve superior results. By doing this they create a pool of highly capable leaders that are ready to assume more senior roles.

- **Promotes excellence**
Lead integrated capability leaders strive for excellence in all aspects of their role, tapping wells of inspiration for the organisation. They constantly seek out examples of excellence and apply these to their own activities. They reward high standards and discourage mediocrity or undesirable activities. They also use their organisations internal systems to encourage excellence among staff.
- **Promotes strategic collaboration**
Lead integrated capability leaders act as the ‘face’ of their organisation in external forums and initiatives and identify opportunities for collaboration between their organisation and other agencies. They seek to understand frames of reference, and develop relationships, to influence external agencies. They confront direction if it is not consistent with their organisation’s ethos and values. They encourage upward communication; staff input; and remove systemic barriers that impede strategic collaboration.