

## Horse whisperer reveals communication secrets to HR leaders

HR leaders learned the 'seven secrets of the horse whisperer' at the recent HRINZ annual conference Big Day Out. A group of 55 delegates visited Sudbury Fields stables near Te Horo on the Kapiti Coast to witness a new form of leadership and communication training and discover how working with horses can give them the edge in communication and influence.

Horse whisperer Andrew Froggatt, a director of Talkinghorses, relies on body language to communicate with horses and motivate them to want to work for him. In a 40-minute demonstration with his horse Rock, he showed the HRINZ delegates how using non-verbal language can build strong teams, develop leadership and unleash people's potential.

"Horses see straight through the external veneer of a character and feel the heart and intent of a person. The horse will expose you and react to who you really are," says Froggatt.

He has worked with teams from Transpower, NZ Post, ASB Bank and Icebreaker to reveal the secrets he has learned working with horses. "They are innately designed to read body language messages—you can't fool them," he said. "Such is the honesty of a horse's reaction and instant feedback that you very quickly become hyper-sensitive to every message you communicate, consciously or unconsciously."

Froggatt explained how every gesture you make gets interpreted instantly by a horse and how his reaction will expose exactly what you are really communicating, not what you intend to communicate. For example, if your gestures and energy communicate 'bully', the horse will constantly back away. If your gestures communicate 'softy', the horse will dismiss you. "Horses give you immediate and unfiltered honest feedback, that's why they are such an effective training tool."



*New Zealand Post project manager Ise Sheehan talks horse sense.*

New Zealand Post project manager Ise Sheehan told delegates how the Talkinghorses leadership course turned the organisation's Manawatu management team into the best performing team from all regions. "We measured everything before and we've measured everything after. We've spoken to all the leaders involved and this project stands out as by far the most successful, in every sense," she said.

Talkinghorses runs both leadership and teambuilding courses at Sudbury Fields. They are giving away a free CD of the Secrets of the Horse Whisperer. If you would like one, email: [info@talkinghorses.co.nz](mailto:info@talkinghorses.co.nz).