



NEW ZEALAND  
IMMIGRATION

A guide for  
newcomers to  
New Zealand

# Settling into New Zealand and the Kiwi workplace

**“Kiwi workplaces are different. I was quite surprised, especially as I come from an English speaking country. My workmates are very friendly but I soon realised that I had a fair bit to learn about how things are done around here.”**



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT  
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

[immigration.govt.nz](https://immigration.govt.nz)

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## ***Tips and Information***

*- Key tips and information in each section of this booklet are highlighted using the symbols below.*

### **TIP**

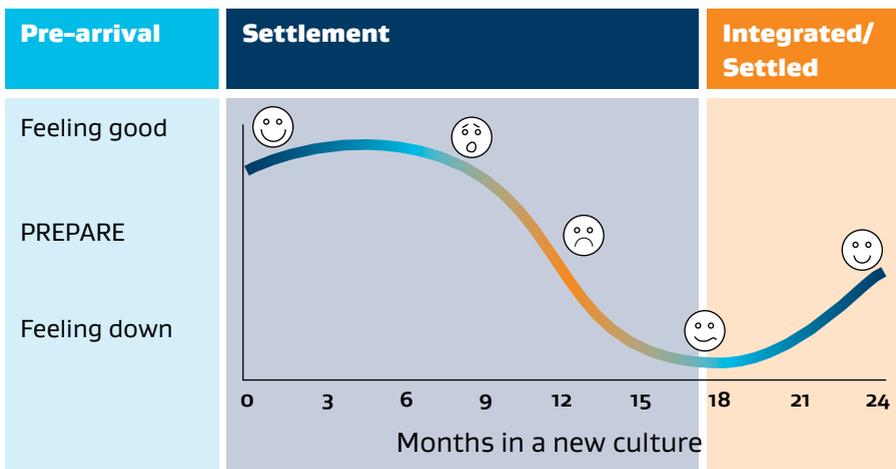


### **Contact information**

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# Is it easy to settle in a new country?

All migrants go through a number of stages as they get used to their new life in a new country. It can take up to two years.



- ☺ **ON ARRIVAL** in New Zealand, you feel excitement. Everything is so different and new. **It's FUN!**
- 😱 Then a bad experience may give you a **FRIGHT**. Living in another country is not as easy as you thought.
- ☹ You may **FEEL DOWN** (in a low mood) and feel very homesick.
- ☺ This is the time when you **FACE UP** to the challenges of a new country and get support to help you achieve your goals.
- ☺ You will then more easily **FIT** into living here.

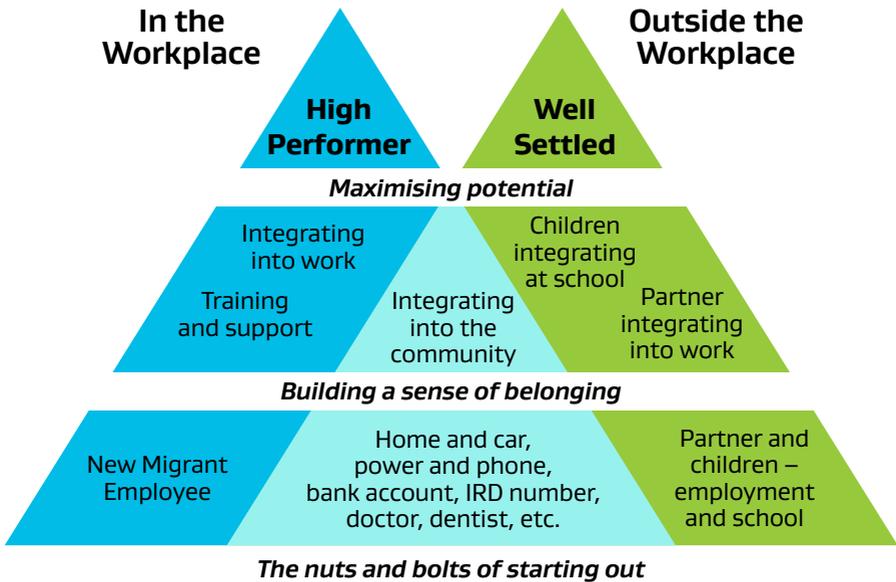
**BEFORE YOU ARRIVE** in your country, start to **PREPARE** for living and working in New Zealand. Make sure your hopes and plans are realistic!

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# Can my employer help with settlement?

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## The Workplace Settlement Model

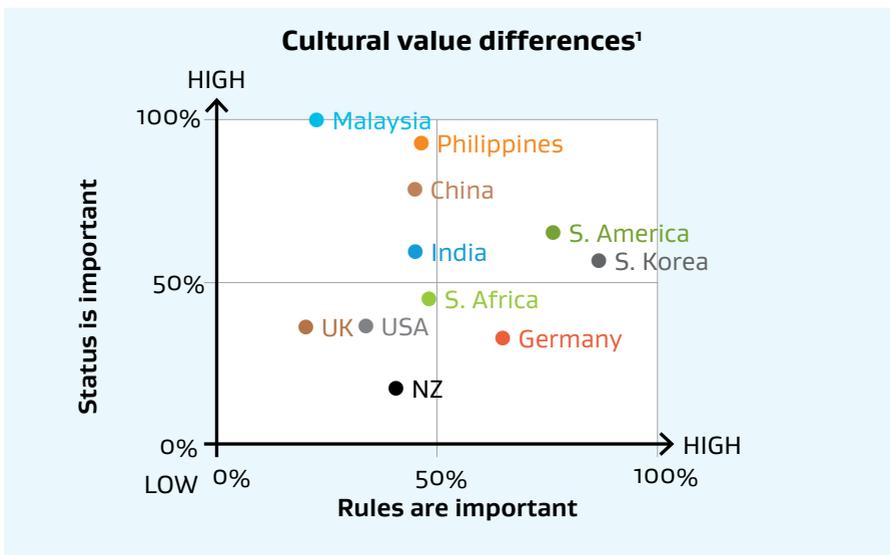


Your employer should be aware that many newcomers have partners and families and will need time to organise the nuts and bolts of their new life in New Zealand when they arrive. Discuss this with them before starting your new job.

Talk to your employer, your 'buddy' or your new colleagues about groups or clubs that you, your partner or your family can join. Use their local knowledge and advice to help you integrate into your new community.

# How will I fit into the Kiwi workplace?

Different people value different things. These values affect how people think and act in the workplace. Everyone in the workplace can benefit from knowing a little about these differences so they can work better together.



Note that Kiwis place the lowest value on status compared to people from the top 12 countries<sup>2</sup> that provide migrants to New Zealand.

What are the implications of this for you in the Kiwi workplace?

This research makes big generalisations so it's important to note that not all people from one culture are the same.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Geert Hofstede

<sup>2</sup> Fiji and Sri Lanka are also in the top 12 but no data is available for these countries

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# Things employees from different cultures say about the way they work

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**What would you say about how you work?**

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# How different cultures like to be managed

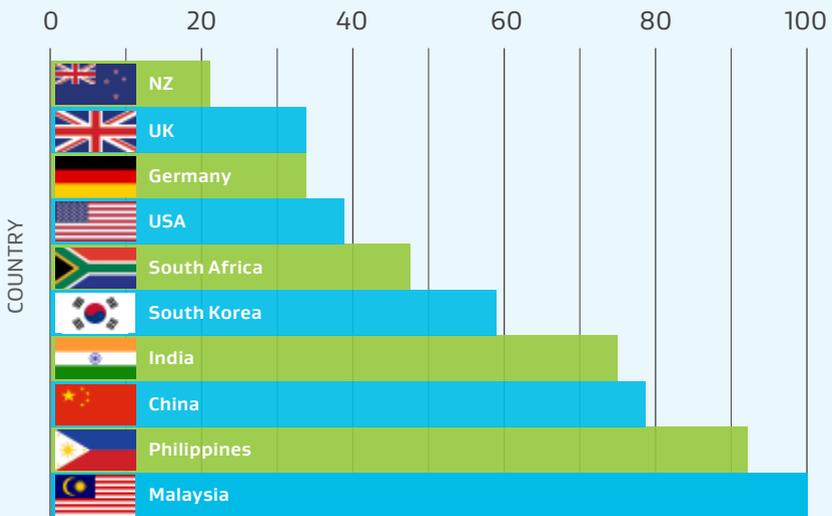
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Knowing about the different work styles of Kiwis and other cultures can help new migrants when they first arrive.

## Cultural difference in management-style preferences

0 = LIKE TO BE LEFT TO GET ON WITH THE JOB

100 = LIKE TO BE TOLD EXACTLY WHAT TO DO



ADAPTED FROM GEERT HOFSTEDE



**I noticed that Kiwis like to have a chat before starting work. My workmates like to talk about sport – I've learnt a lot about rugby, and netball, since I got here!**



**Kiwis don't like people who brag so I've learnt to be careful how I talk about any successes and I always acknowledge the contribution my colleagues have made.**



**In my company they often have drinks after work on Fridays. I don't drink alcohol but I still go. It's a good way to get to know my colleagues better and they always have orange juice!**

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# What are Kiwis like at work?

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Compared to migrant employees from other parts of the world:

- › Kiwis like to work on their own without being closely supervised
- › Kiwis expect everyone to be treated the same
- › Kiwis respect the boss but usually speak to him or her in an informal way
- › Kiwis are willing to take on various tasks, not just those they were hired to do

## What are you like compared to Kiwis?

# What about my English language skills?

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## Listening

Kiwis have an unusual accent and speak very fast. They often use informal language and a lot of slang.

Ask them to slow down and explain any words you don't understand. You will soon find it much easier to follow what they are saying.

## Speaking

If you have an unfamiliar accent when you speak English your new colleagues may find it difficult to understand you to begin with. If you speak fast, slow down and pause between sentences.

## English Language Skills

If you don't feel confident when you speak English, or your reading and writing English skills need improvement, talk to your employer about any help available or visit [www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/learnEnglish](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/learnEnglish) for more information.

### TIP

- › Look for opportunities to speak English – at work and outside work. The more you speak English the easier it will be for others to understand you.



**We enrolled in cooking classes one evening a week. We improved our English and made lots of new Kiwi friends!**

### TIP

- › Volunteering and local community classes are a good way to meet others, and to practise your English.

## TIP

- › Gather as much information as you can about your new job, New Zealand and the settlement process before you migrate. If you are coming with others, show them the settlement curve picture on page 1. Talk about it together.



## TIP

- › Talk to colleagues and friends and seek support for you and your family during the low period – it can make all the difference.

