



**The
Policy
Project**

Responsive today,
shaping tomorrow



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

Development Pathways Tool

Leading level skills



Publication details

Development Pathways Tool: Leading level skills was published in July 2024 by the Policy Project. It collects the Practising level profiles for all 20 skills of the Policy Skills Framework.

Developing level skills and Practising level skills are also available.

See the Development Pathways Tool page for more information and the online Tool.

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How the Tool supports the Policy Skills Framework

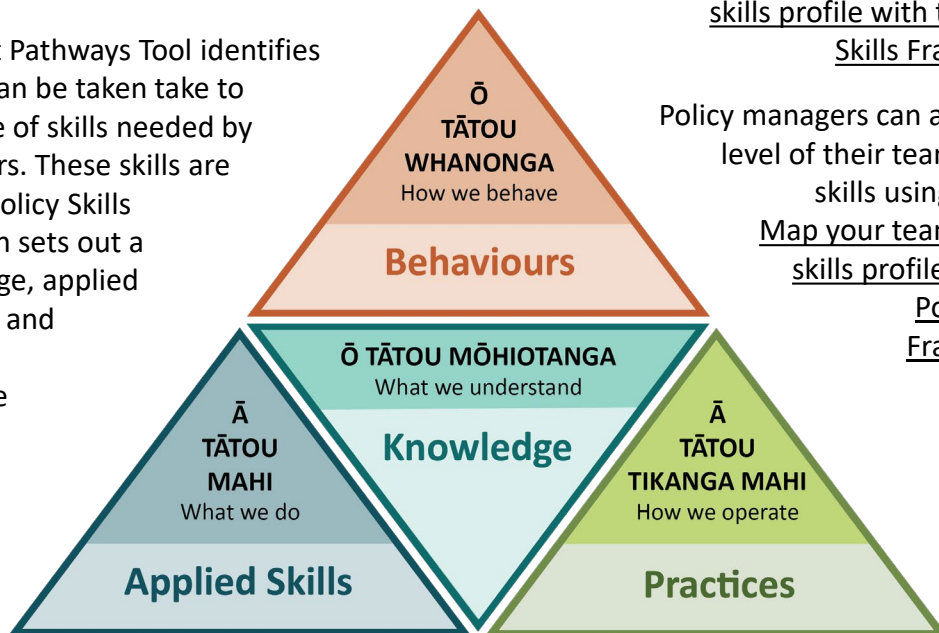
This publication collects the 20 Leading level checklists of actions from the Development Pathways Tool.

The Development Pathways Tool identifies the actions that can be taken to develop the range of skills needed by policy practitioners. These skills are identified in the Policy Skills Framework, which sets out a range of knowledge, applied skills, behaviours, and practices that are described at three levels:

- Developing
- Practising
- Leading.

Policy practitioners can also identify the current level of their individual policy skills using the tool [Map your policy skills profile with the Policy Skills Framework](#).

Policy managers can assess the level of their team's policy skills using the tool [Map your team's policy skills profile with the Policy Skills Framework](#).



The Policy Skills Framework

The skills that sit within these elements are as follows.



- Constitutional and Government Systems and Processes
- Te Ao Māori, Treaty, and Māori Crown Relationships
- Political Context and Priorities
- Domain Knowledge



- Policy Analysis
- Evidence and Insights
- Strategic and Futures Thinking
- Systems Awareness
- Advice and Influence
- Monitoring and Evaluation



- Integrity and Political Savvy
- Stewardship
- Responsive and Adaptive
- Self Aware and Inclusive
- Continuous Learning




- Plan and Manage Work
- Engage and Sustain Relationships
- Design for Implementation
- Improvement and Innovation
- Communication

Using the Development Pathways Tool profiles


The actions in the checklists are organised into three ways of learning:

- on-the-job learning
- learning from others
- formal training.



DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS TOOL

Constitutional and Government Systems and Processes



Leading

Understands how the constitutional roles of the three branches of government operate, and policy, legislative, and parliamentary processes.

- Understands and leads others in the effective processes of policy proposals, including on large-scale, complex cross government programmes through:
 - relevant budgetary cycle and funding arrangements
 - Cabinet Committee processes
 - legislative and Parliamentary processes.

70% on-the-job learning

Lead and guide agency input on sensitive issues including navigating government processes and dealing with extraordinary situations.

Integrate and implement system-wide requirements (e.g. Impact Analysis Requirements) into agency policy processes.

Provide departmental expert advice to ministers, select committees, Cabinet committees etc.

Establish yourself as an expert on government systems and processes.

Participate in internal leadership groups on particular issues such as governance boards, monitoring of crown entities and other machinery of government issues.

Mentor others about processes and people associated with specific policy products (e.g. clerks of select committees, Parliamentary Counsel Office).

Ensure quality systems are followed when developing different policy products (e.g. legislation and regulatory processes, select committee and Cabinet papers, ministerial briefings).

Lead or participate in training to staff on government systems and processes.

20% learning from others

Where relevant, use guidance from central agencies to help others with systems and processes (e.g. the budget cycle and funding arrangements – Performance and Financial Management Cycle).

Seek feedback from your manager and peers on how you have led policy projects and navigated government processes.

10% formal training

Take courses aimed at leading complex policy projects (e.g. planning, resourcing, skills, people). For example:

- Towards Strategic Leadership (ANZSOG residential programme) or equivalent.

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- 1 Each profile begins with the description of that skill, taken directly from the Policy Skills Framework (sample page below).

Constitutional and Government Systems and Processes

Understands how the constitutional roles of the three branches of Government operate, and policy, legislative, and parliamentary processes.

DEVELOPING

Has a basic understanding of the constitutional roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government, including the role of the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary.

Understands the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services, including the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services, including the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services.

PRACTISING

Has a good level of understanding of the constitutional roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government, including the role of the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary.

Understands the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services, including the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services.

LEADING

Understands and leads others in effective policy processes, including on large-scale, complex cross government programmes through navigating with others.

Understands the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services, including the role of the Public Service in the delivery of government services.

For guidance on developing these skills at each level, see the Development Pathways Tool

- 2 A summary of the content from the Framework is also provided.
- 3 Around 70% of the actions suggested for developing this skill at this level are likely to come from on-the-job learning.
- 4 Learning from others – including colleagues – is recommended to make up around 20% of the development actions.
- 5 Formal training, such as courses, workshops, and qualifications, could make up around 10% of the actions.



For a publication that collects the Developing level actions, see [Development Pathways Tool: Developing level skills](#)



For a publication that collects the Practising level actions, see [Development Pathways Tool: Practising level skills](#)

O TĀTOU MŌHIOTANGA

What we understand



Our Knowledge

Knowledge and understanding needed to do the policy job well

Constitutional and Government Systems and Processes

Te Ao Māori, Treaty, and Māori Crown Relationships

Political Context and Priorities

Domain Knowledge



The Policy Project



Leading

Understands how the constitutional roles of the three branches of government operate, and policy, legislative, and parliamentary processes.

- Understands and leads others in the effective processes of policy proposals, including on large-scale, complex cross government programmes through:
 - relevant budgetary cycle and funding arrangements
 - Cabinet Committee processes
 - legislative and Parliamentary processes.

70% on-the-job learning

- Lead and guide agency input on sensitive issues including navigating government processes and dealing with extraordinary situations.
- Provide departmental expert advice to ministers, select committees, Cabinet committees etc.

Participate in internal leadership groups on particular issues such as governance boards, monitoring of crown entities and other machinery of government issues.

Ensure quality systems are followed when developing different policy products (e.g. legislation and regulatory processes, select committee and Cabinet papers, ministerial briefings).
- Integrate and implement system-wide requirements (e.g. Impact Analysis Requirements) into agency policy processes.
- Establish yourself as an expert on government systems and processes.
- Mentor others about processes and people associated with specific policy products (e.g. clerks of select committees, Parliamentary Counsel Office).
- Lead or participate in training to staff on government systems and processes.

20% learning from others

Where relevant, use guidance from central agencies to help others with systems and processes (e.g. the budget cycle and funding arrangements – Performance and Financial Management Cycle).

Seek feedback from your manager and peers on how you have led policy projects and navigated government processes.

10% formal training

- Take courses aimed at leading complex policy projects (e.g. planning, resourcing, skills, people). For example:
 - Towards Strategic Leadership (ANZSOG residential programme) or equivalent.



Te Ao Māori, Treaty, and Māori Crown Relationships

Leading

Knowledge and understanding needed to incorporate Te Ao Māori, the Treaty of Waitangi, and Māori Crown relationships in policy making.

- Use a Te Ao Māori lens and Treaty frameworks across all aspects of policy making, incorporating Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori into policy systems.
- Guide and lead others to identify diverse Māori rights and interests, and enhances Māori Crown relationships.
- Applies detailed knowledge of kaupapa Māori methodologies, leading early and effective engagement.
- Observes tikanga and converses in te reo Māori.

70% on-the-job learning

- Lead complex projects that require an understanding of the relationship between Māori and the Crown and consultation with Māori groups.
- Maintain strong relationships with Māori groups and individuals with an interest in your subject area.
- Read historical accounts related to Treaty settlement legislation or deeds of settlement to help understand the context for Treaty before meeting members of specific iwi who have a Treaty settlement.

20% learning from others

- Seek collaboration opportunities with iwi, across sectors and agencies to improve policy methods.
 - Establish and drive strong networks within your domain areas, across sectors and with interested external groups, particularly Māori and iwi organisations.
 - Engage with and seek critique from Māori thought leaders and experts.
- Draw on the experience of senior leaders to better understand how to position Treaty analysis in policy papers.
- Work with experienced colleagues to develop a proposed approach to an engagement with iwi and Māori groups.

10% formal training

- Take a Māori engagement course (e.g. Te Arawhiti's 101 and 102 Engagement courses).



Leading

Understands the Government's priorities and the relevant political context that shapes decision making.

- Is highly skilled at gaining clarity from ministers and senior leaders on desired outcome, scope and appetite for risk related to new, curbed or redirected spending – in order to shape new policy directions and programmes.
- Scans, anticipates and responds to changes in government priorities and pressures throughout the Parliamentary and election cycle, and to trends or significant shifts in context.
- Shares information and insights to ensure colleagues are well-informed about issues affecting the agency, government and wider policy eco-system.
- Thoroughly understands the obligations of the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi and expectation of Māori in their work domain.

70% on-the-job learning

Apply your commissioning skills and expert subject knowledge of political context and priorities to clarify desired outcomes for new policy work, including risks and spending constraints.

Lead and guide other colleagues in complex policy projects that require working across multiple agencies and with multiple ministers.

Lead work that is central to the Parliamentary and election cycle (e.g. briefings for incoming ministers).

Consider a secondment to the minister's office, so you can better see how the political context and priorities impact on the work programme.

Share your knowledge with other colleagues about budget and legislative processes and how to make bids.

Build and draw on well-established relationships with officials and advisors in the minister's office, across agencies and networks, to anticipate risks and the need for advice.

Lead complex projects that require an understanding of the relationship between Māori and the Crown and consultation with Māori groups.

Maintain strong relationships with Māori groups and individuals with an interest in your subject area.

Share lessons and insights with other colleagues on government directions and pressures through in-house training and coaching or mentoring.

20% learning from others

Seek critique from other colleagues who have considerable experience in interacting with ministers and Parliamentary processes.

Build relationships with representatives of central agencies (Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission, the Treasury, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) to get their perspective on government priorities.

10% formal training

Talk to your manager about any formal learning opportunities available to you.



Domain Knowledge

Leading

Understands the specialist policy subject matter relevant to the agency and sector.

- Is a subject leader for the agency in the domain.
- Is recognised as a thought leader in a field of knowledge and builds agency credibility by:
 - contributing to the knowledge base
 - sharing, synthesising and influencing thinking
 - forging links with the academic community.
- Helps build Māori Crown relationships relevant to the domain, and ensures relevant Treaty settlement commitments are incorporated in policy advice.

70% on-the-job learning

Lead and guide discussions on policy projects, challenges and outcomes that draw on your specialist subject matter expertise.

Shape a culture of generously giving and receiving knowledge within and across sectors.

Build and share a knowledge base of the domain's strategic context, including regional and international considerations.

Mentor less experienced policy practitioners and lead in-house training in your specialist subject matter expertise.

Monitor complex agency issues, which have broader strategic impact.

Maintain oversight of contemporary domestic and international approaches, and contribute to the knowledge base in the domain.

Position yourself as a leader for professional policy making in your subject matter expertise.

Seek out projects or tasks where issues break new ground or establish precedents.

Take up secondment opportunities or acting roles that broaden your subject matter expertise.

Contribute to, access, and assess the following in your subject area: research; evidence; case studies; and lessons learned.

20% learning from others

Establish and drive strong networks within your domain areas, across sectors and with interested external groups, particularly Māori and iwi organisations.

Seek out opportunities for discussion and sharing with others in your subject area.

Present papers at conferences, submit papers to journals, and seek critique amongst external experts.

Engage with and seek critique from thought leaders and experts (including academics, Māori).

Advance professional practice by testing, adapting and sharing theoretical approaches, kaupapa Māori methodologies and frameworks, models and techniques and by seeking critique and sharing lessons.

Consider applying for an award or fellowship.

Seek collaboration opportunities with iwi, across sectors and agencies to improve policy methods.

10% formal training

Attend courses, conferences and seminars that will extend your networks and knowledge in your areas of expertise.

Take courses aimed at leading complex policy.

Ō TĀTOU WHANONGA

How we behave



Our Behaviours

Behaviours to support carrying out the policy role effectively

Integrity and Political Savvy

Stewardship

Responsive and Adaptive

Self Aware and Inclusive

Continuous Learning



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Integrity and Political Savvy

Leading

Exhibits and navigates the principles and values required of public servants, including while working with sensitivity to the political context.

- Sustains trust-based relationship with ministers, other decision makers and key stakeholders. Can have respectful and sometimes ‘uncomfortable’ conversations without damaging those relationships.
- Highly adept at building alignment and alliances between competing interests and agendas.
- Helps shape the authorising environment by being able to influence the thinking and behaviour of others.
- Anticipates and times advice for when it can have the most influence and impact.

70% on-the-job learning

Be sensitive to who you need to engage with in your organisation and externally to influence decisions and deliver outcomes. This includes political and communications advisors in your minister’s office.

Lead discussions with the minister on your projects and areas of expertise.

Lead advice to your agency’s executive leadership team.

Lead expert advice to Cabinet committees or select committees on policy projects that require clear and persuasive advice.

Be the lead advisor to a select committee on draft legislation or an inquiry and present the departmental report.

Lead commissioning discussions for policy work.

Coach policy staff on matters such as:

- the delivery of free and frank advice and boundaries for engaging with ministers
- the positions and commitments of the Government and political parties, and how these relate to your agency’s work.

Share insights with colleagues on the minister’s style and preferences.

Coach policy staff on how to present to the minister (e.g. role plays).

Seek opportunities to attend meetings of Cabinet committees or ministerial groups to understand how your minister interacts with other ministers.

20% learning from others

Seek feedback from peers and senior colleagues on your interaction with ministers and stakeholders, including how you manage tricky conversations or sensitive issues.

Role play with senior colleagues how to deliver difficult messages, or take part in ‘uncomfortable’ conversations.

10% formal training

Consider courses aimed at the skills needed by a principal to navigate issues, relationships and situations with sensitivity to the political context.



Stewardship

Leading

Works collaboratively to steward policy systems that can provide advice for the benefit of current and future generations and Māori Crown relationships.

- Guides others on stewardship matters and constructively challenges short-term thinking in policy making.
- Adept at putting current government priorities in context in relation to the Public Service's stewardship responsibilities.
- Works with others to monitor systems relevant to their agency or sector, and can advise on necessary changes to that system.
- Maintains their own knowledge, skills, and futures thinking capability, and promotes use of the Policy Capability Framework.

70% on-the-job learning

- Read the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment's Handbook for Regulatory System Governance. The Handbook takes system leaders through the core essentials for building enduring system governance, and is available on request through the [Regulatory system governance page](#).
- Read the Stewardship component of the [Policy Capability Framework review tool](#) and consider undertaking a review of your policy team's maturity with support from senior leaders.
- Lead the development of a Long-term Insights Briefing for your agency.
- Sit as a panel member on your agency's policy quality review panel.

20% learning from others

- Join one of the regulatory stewardship [Communities of Practice](#) co-convened by G-REG and the Treasury.
- Understand the systems and stewardship processes operating within your agency and the levers that influence change within those systems.
- Read more about international examples of the application of stewardship and foresight (e.g. [Foresight for Governance in Singapore](#), a summary of Aaron Maniam's talk about the experience in Singapore at a leaders' roundtable hosted by the Policy Project in May 2019).

10% formal training

- Undertake a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Management with a focus on regulatory policy (e.g. Victoria University of Wellington's [PGCertPM for regulatory practitioners](#)).
- Take a course in futures thinking and strategic foresight.



Responsive and Adaptive

Leading

Responsive to the Government of the day and works with agility in uncertain situations to improve the lives of people in New Zealand.

- Is a proven and respected consultant and supports others in the face of complex and challenging change.
- Is 'strategically opportunistic' – can seize opportunities, integrate new content, collaborate and draw connections that will support policy objectives.
- Is able to manage and prioritise conflicting demands – leads the way in adjusting priorities, redeploying resources and recovering from setbacks.
- Has a detailed understanding of Māori and non-Māori world views and can apply them in a holistic way across a variety of subject areas.

70% on-the-job learning

Lead complex projects with competing demands. Identify sticking points and develop strategies for resolution.

Find opportunities in situations where you need to adapt or change direction. Role model a positive attitude to this.

Experiment with new ideas to solve policy problems.

Make time to critically reflect on your experiences and what you learned.

Use your influence to involve diverse groups and new ideas in your policy projects.

Share lessons with your colleagues on 'wicked problems', hurdles, and how you got traction on solutions.

Support colleagues to develop resilience and learn to live with inevitable delays and obstacles in the policy development process.

20% learning from others

Seek feedback from networks and peers on how to approach difficult situations and competing demands.

10% formal training

Take one-on-one coaching in how to be resilient and change behaviour.

Take Harvard's Project Implicit Association Test to gain greater awareness of your own biases, preferences and beliefs.



Self Aware and Inclusive

Leading

Aware of your own identity, values, and culture, and how they differ from others. Acts inclusively in a diverse society.

- Sets an example in addressing unconscious bias, as well as challenging inequity, racism, and discrimination in policy work.
- Leads others to incorporate cultural concepts and inclusive practices relating to their work.
- Find practical ways to resolve any barriers to including people from diverse cultures, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences in policy making.
- Is balanced, inclusive, respectful, and fair in their behaviour and language, and guides others to work transparently and inclusively.

70% on-the-job learning

- Role model inclusive leadership through everyday actions, by reviewing guidance on [Inclusive leadership](#) from the Public Service Commission.

Use [Leadership Development Centre](#) tools and resources to support the development of your inclusive leadership practice.

Read the [Leadership Success Profile](#) which outlines leadership expectations for people leaders in the Public Service.

20% learning from others

Lead others to design, plan, and manage a policy project that carries out impact analysis, drawing on a range of population impact tools.

Work with Statistics New Zealand and data and research teams to commission a wide range of population datasets for use in a policy project.

Work with colleagues to lead an inclusive engagement process following guidance in the [Guide to Inclusive Community Engagement](#).

10% formal training

Take Harvard's [Project Implicit](#) Association Test to gain greater awareness of your own biases, preferences, and beliefs.



Continuous Learning

Leading

Takes initiative to develop the policy skills of yourself and others. Learns from colleagues, training opportunities, and on-the-job experience.

- Models effective ways of giving and receiving feedback and challenge.
- Can have courageous and difficult conversations on quality, performance, and ways of working.
- Creates learning opportunities for other staff, and upskills colleagues.
- Cultivates a culture of celebrating achievements and learning from mistakes.
- Finds new ways to build their professional development, and takes active steps to build their policy and leadership skills.

70% on-the-job learning

Think about how you exchange knowledge and practice with others.

Share your experiences and reflect on how you might have approached things differently.

Consider developing some 'show and tell' sessions where you critically deconstruct your work.

Lead policy training in your organisation or across the Public Service.

Coach less experienced colleagues, or enter into formal mentoring agreements.

Critically appraise work of your peers in a constructive and encouraging manner.

Lead or participate in your agency's quality assurance panels (e.g. for Cabinet papers, select committee material and Regulatory impact statements).

Use the Development Pathways Tool to help mentor less experienced staff on ways to develop their range of policy skills, and use Map your team's policy skills profile with the Policy Skills Framework to identify areas in which your team needs to develop.

20% learning from others

Seek review on your ideas from peers in other agencies.

Find a mentor or coach to work with on specific goals.

Participate in an expert review panel to learn from others (or allow them to learn from you).

10% formal training

Take a coaching or mentoring course (e.g. Feedback Made Easy by New Zealand Coaching and Mentoring Centre).

Take a course in inspiring, influencing and motivating others.

A TĀTOU MAHI

What we do



Our Applied Skills

Applied skills needed to
develop quality policy advice

Policy Analysis

Evidence and Insights

Strategic and Futures Thinking

Systems Awareness

Advice and Influence

Monitoring and Evaluation



The Policy Project



Policy Analysis

Leading

Applies analytical frameworks and methods to make sense of evidence and inform policy advice.

- Can thoughtfully apply new and emerging methods of analysis and problem solving (e.g. design thinking, behavioural analysis), articulate their advantages and disadvantages, and lead the adaption or development of common frameworks, principles, methodologies, tools and techniques.
- Coaches others in standard and emerging methods of analysis.
- Able to translate complex evidence into insightful analysis that supports advice by:
 - testing underlying assumptions/bias
 - asking questions that encourage critical thinking
 - testing feasibility of policy options and likely benefits, costs and risks.
- Employs deep critical thinking skills and uses breakthrough methods to find solutions to challenging problems.

70% on-the-job learning

Lead complex cross-agency policy projects using a variety of analytical tools, and consider how these tools can be improved to be more relevant to these issues.

Lead others in the development of a Regulatory impact statement.

Share and test tools and techniques from different disciplines to apply critical thinking to the issues and problems.

Challenge current thinking and introduce new perspectives.

Foster discussion networks on new and emerging analytical approaches, techniques and tools.

Keep up to date with international and domestic developments in your areas of expertise.

Design and contribute to policy projects and analytical processes at an 'expert' level (e.g. establishing analytical practice standards).

Coach or mentor less experienced analysts on how to choose and apply the 'best fit for purpose' analytical frameworks for policy problems.

Recommend and discuss examples of good briefings and Cabinet papers with less experienced analysts, and disseminate best practice examples and lessons learned.

Design, establish and lead quality assurance processes (e.g. regulatory impact analysis panels and Cabinet paper committees).

Position yourself as a leader for professional policy making.

20% learning from others

Discuss analytical frameworks with peers across agencies. Talk about improvements to both the analytical frameworks and methods, and to the application of them.

Build relationships with experts in methods and tools from different disciplines that can be used in policy analysis.

Discuss with peers the underlying assumptions of a policy problem you are working on, how you have identified the risks, benefits and feasibility of different options, and the impact of the problem on the wider system.

10% formal training

Consider taking Victoria University of Wellington's more advanced short courses including policy courses and degrees.

Consider advanced courses on analysis in the policy development process.



Evidence and Insights

Leading

Draws on a range of evidence and insights to support analysis that informs each stage of the policy process. Aware of the reliability of the evidence.

- Applies expert knowledge to lead others in developing strong evidence-informed policy.
- Develops and guides others on the right lines of enquiry.
- Draws on the right capabilities to mine data and use 'big data' for insights that can enable better decisions and create value.
- Can commission and execute monitoring and evaluations, and build findings into policy development, at early and subsequent stages in the policy cycle.

70% on-the-job learning

Engage with decision makers to illustrate how the research, information and data generated by you and your colleagues can help achieve policy goals.

Consider how regular data flows can provide alerts about emerging patterns and potential issues.

Understand predictive analytic models and methods for improving insights, and their limitations.

Use multiple sources of data to get a better picture of situations and issues.

Have a rich understanding of the characteristics of the people affected by your subject area and advise others on useful ways to demonstrate potential impacts of different decisions.

Regularly scan relevant research and evaluation findings and interpret them for policy insights.

Build opportunities into your projects to revisit policy assumptions based on the evidence base.

Identify with specialists which policy interventions need evaluation, and institute an appropriate methodology.

Identify data and other evidence gaps for your agency, and lead work on future data needs and building the policy evidence base.

Share and present your evaluation findings from specific projects and discuss lessons learned.

Mentor and coach others in how to develop strong evidence-informed policy.

20% learning from others

Co-design data requirements with specialists and incorporate them in policy projects for analysis.

Engage with academics to foster research interest in long running policy issues to generate research insights.

Engage with non-specialists and other agencies to illustrate how the research, information and data you hold will help them achieve their goals.

Develop a collaborative relationship between policy makers, analysts and data specialists.

Incorporate data specialists in project teams (either as direct or virtual team members).

Cultivate a working relationship with any chief science advisors in your organisation to support your policy development and practice.

10% formal training

Take an online course on how to work with data strategically (e.g. Strategic Data Skills from the Open Data Institute).

Consider more advanced courses on statistical analysis and econometrics.



Analyses possible future states, and supports the development of strategic objectives and policy proposals that inform the direction of policy advice.

- Leads activities related to setting vision and strategic direction.
- Tests, updates, replaces, or reframes different perspectives.
- Can develop a theory of change that identifies the barriers and drivers.
- Scans the system to understand the nature of trends in their domain.
- Can confidently design, lead, or commission the development of futures-focused and strategic policy.

70% on-the-job learning

- Lead at an agency or sector level a project that contributes to vision setting, strategic direction, and longer-term outcomes.
- Design the foresight component of policy projects. Select the optimal combination of tools for each part of the project (scanning, uncovering assumptions, exploration of possible future states, exploration of responses, identifying preferences). Design futures-informed policy responses.
- Coach and mentor others in systems thinking and futures thinking.
- Lead scanning activities that identify future trends and their strategic implications, and discuss within your agency and sector to the implications for policy direction.
- Identify your team's capability for strategic and futures thinking – the skill sets, data sets, organisational processes, and culture needed to support high quality policy advice.
- Facilitate workshops to test new ideas and approaches for systems thinking and futures thinking.

20% learning from others

- Stay updated on the new tools and techniques others are using to support their strategic and futures thinking.
- Join the [Association of Professional Futurists](#).
- Join the [Strategic Futures Group](#) – Interagency Community of Practice on Futures Thinking and contribute to leadership of the system.
- Test strategic and futures thinking with other experienced colleagues, within and across agencies.
- Read articles on emerging futures practice from one or more of the academic futures journals, such as [Journal of Futures Studies](#).

10% formal training

- Attend courses that help you understand how futures thinking can support you in designing better operating policies and guide effective change from a strategic perspective.
- Take a futures thinking course.



Systems Awareness

Leading

Applies tools for making sense of systems and their behaviour. Advises on changes to system settings to improve policy proposals.

- Leads the use of appropriate sensemaking tools and approaches when developing policy advice on system transformation, and actively advocates for use of systems awareness in policy development.
- Supports others in their organisation and sector to make sense of the system (sensemaking).
- Guides others in taking system action.
- Uses systems awareness strategically when communicating with senior leaders and ministers, to gain agreement on taking emergent opportunities for positive system changes.

70% on-the-job learning

- Lead complex cross-sectoral projects that will benefit from a systems awareness approach.
- Contribute a systems awareness perspective to vision setting, strategic direction and longer-term outcomes at agency and sector level.
- Undertake analysis of policy issues and options that clearly identifies the implications of the dynamic system, the behaviours that exist in them, and the constraints that may be causing them, and where best to intervene.
- Design the systems component of policy projects, selecting the optimal combination of tools for each part of the project (sensemaking and taking systems action), and designing systems-informed policy responses.
- Lead system scanning activities that identify emergent behaviours and practices and their strategic implications, and alert your agency and sector to the implications for policy direction.
- Lead the selection and application of systems awareness tools and techniques to the outputs of your sensemaking work, to explore possible system shifts and develop future informed policy responses.
- Consider using narrative techniques to help explore emergence in the system when talking about system behaviour.
- Lead and advise on appropriate system actions that could be taken (particularly in complex situations) that can support changing system behaviour to a more positive state, and on how other systems may be impacting the problems you're trying to solve.
- Identify and give advice as to when best practice, good practice, and emergent practice can be used, and the role experts may play in supporting the spread and use of these practices.
- Lead a systems aware approach that incorporates a mātauranga Māori examination of the system and its actors to bring a valid and different way of seeing the interrelatedness and interrelationships between people and elements in the system.
- Identify the skill sets, data sets, organisational processes, and culture needed for building systems awareness capability, and capacity across your organisation. Advocate for the resources needed to invest in them.
- Facilitate workshops to test new ideas and approaches for systems awareness and explaining that all systems are part of an ecosystem that creates challenges when trying to use linear management approaches.
- Coach and mentor others in systems awareness.



20% learning from others

- Keep up to date with new tools, techniques and thinking that others are using to support building their systems awareness capability.
- Connect with other experienced colleagues, within and across agencies to build an ongoing community of systems awareness practise.
- Seek out colleagues in your agency, or others, who have identified expertise in mātauranga Māori and learn from them as to how it can be used as part of a systems aware approach for your organisation.
- Delve more deeply into systems awareness by building your knowledge in complex systems theory and practice, including sensemaking and constraints. This can be started by reading blogs and viewing videos such as:
 - the [Centre for Systems Awareness](#)
 - the Cynefin Company blog page: [Our thinking](#)
 - [System Design Framework](#) – the Design Council project on merging design and systems thinking.

10% formal training

- Attend courses that help you understand complexity, systems features, constraints and will support developing better policies, and guide effective change from a systems perspective. For example:
 - The Complexability Group in Australia run courses and workshops on complex systems and [Cynefin](#) approaches and uses.
 - LDC and ANZSOG are beginning to add some elements of systems awareness into some of their courses and it's worthwhile checking in to see what is available.
 - Building ongoing knowledge and understanding about Mātauranga Māori by attending courses where possible.



Advice and Influence

Leading

Delivers advice that is robust, free and frank, and compelling. Can use appropriate levers of influence to successfully effect change.

- Has credibility and a reputation as a ‘trusted’ advisor. This means they are able to:
 - offer proactive free and frank advice to decision makers, even when it has not been requested
 - frame advice in the context of sector and collective priorities (beyond institutional boundaries)
 - anticipate and time provision of advice to have the greatest influence
 - influence others, shape policy debates, and build ‘coalitions of the willing’ to ensure decisions are implemented effectively.

70% on-the-job learning

Lead the development and delivery of free and frank advice to decision-makers on complex cross-agency projects that meets all the Policy Quality Framework criteria.

Anticipate the need for advice.

Identify who needs to be influenced and how best to do this so that the right decisions are made and implemented.

Lead discussions in which you need to be persuasive with the minister, select committees, Cabinet committees, across agencies and with stakeholders.

Lead and guide discussions on how to improve the way analysis is delivered to ministers.

Develop case studies for peer learning on what works, and to practice how advice is presented and understood.

Present your work in your capacity as a compelling and influential subject matter expert.

Share with others your knowledge on how to advise and influence.

20% learning from others

Shadow senior managers in the development of relationships with key decision makers.

Work with colleagues in other agencies to identify common objectives, including how policy issues in one area can influence and affect the achievement of objectives in another.

Join peer networks within your agency or across the public service, where you can share ideas and experiences of presenting advice and influencing decision makers.

10% formal training

Consider taking a leadership course (e.g. Leadership by Communicate).



Monitoring and Evaluation

Leading

Develops and applies fit-for-purpose measures and indicators to monitor policy outcomes. Builds results of evaluation into policy making.

- Promotes the benefits of using high quality evaluation to create a shared understanding of the policy objectives and outcomes.
- Commissions fit-for-purpose monitoring and evaluations, with a focus on working with stakeholders to ensure the findings are credible and useful.
- Understands the value of investing in data collection and measuring, and uses the results of monitoring and evaluation to inform policy advice.
- Can effectively engage with and communicate the key findings, messages, and lessons from monitoring and evaluation to different audiences.
- Builds relationships with evaluation experts to help assess the results.
- Embeds an evaluation culture across the team and agency.

70% on-the-job learning

Attend events run by the Chief Science Advisors forum on policy evaluation.

Regularly scan relevant research and evaluation findings and interpret them for policy insights.

Work with specialists on policy interventions needing evaluation, and institute an appropriate methodology.

Share and present your evaluation findings from specific projects and discuss lessons learned with junior colleagues.

Read the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association and Superu [Evaluation Standards for Aotearoa New Zealand ANZEA](#) (the full evaluation standards and a summary version of the standards are available).

Read the United Kingdom's Treasury's Magenta Book on [Central government guidance on evaluation](#).

20% learning from others

Work with an evaluation specialist to plan, design, oversee the evaluation of a policy project.

Lead a policy project with a more senior colleague and use methods and approaches to evaluation such as those set out by BetterEvaluation (see [What is evaluation?](#)).

10% formal training

Attend a course on evaluation in public policy such as University of Auckland's [Programme Evaluation: Supporting evidence-informed practice](#).

Attend a course run by the [Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association](#).

Ā TĀTOU TIKANGA MAHI

How we operate

Our Practices

Practices and methods to support good policy processes and the delivery of policy advice



Plan and Manage Work

Engage and Sustain Relationships

Design for Implementation

Improvement and Innovation

Communication



The Policy Project



Plan and Manage Work

Leading

Delivers quality advice on time and within budget using the right mix of resources and project management methods.

- Can translate strategies, priorities and issues into policy projects with clear intent and direction of travel, scope, and level of resources.
- Takes a leadership role in the policy or programme team (including cross-agency), ensuring the right skills and experience are available when required.
- Can establish and manage clear and meaningful governance and decision-making arrangements (managing information flows effectively), reconciling them with line management accountabilities.
- Can apply 'right touch' project management principles to ensure desired outcomes are delivered on time and to the right level of quality, by:
 - adapting the principles agilely in response to uncertainty and change
 - using stakeholder management plans and risk registers appropriately
 - working with stakeholders and functional groups and across related work to ensure plans are realistic, workable and joined up.

70% on-the-job learning

Initiate and lead complex policy projects, ensuring that the right skills are available and applied at the right time to produce desired deliverables within specified timelines.

Look at new project management approaches and techniques that can be adapted to policy environments, and which accommodate iterative methodologies.

Advise others on the timeframes and stages required to properly engage with Māori.

Share people and resources to enable joint ownership and delivery of a project.

Establish and manage governance arrangements and the flows of information in all directions.

For complex projects, develop and maintain risk registers that identify the likely consequences of risks, strategies for mitigating them, and their likely effectiveness.

Design stakeholder management plans that identify key stakeholders, their level of interest and influence, and how they will participate in projects.

Work with managers to scope, develop, prioritise and adjust the work programme as necessary.

Coach or mentor less experienced analysts in project planning and management.

Present to colleagues on lessons learned from managing big or complex policy projects.

20% learning from others

Seek feedback from colleagues in your own and other agencies in your sector on draft project plans, risk registers and stakeholder plans.

10% formal training

Consider taking a course that focuses on personal and professional effectiveness (e.g. Managing Yourself for Success by Auckland University).

Consider taking an advanced project management course (e.g. Agile Policy Management, PRINCE 2).



Uses early, inclusive and genuine engagement during policy making that builds sustainable relationships.

- Builds and draws on relationship capital.
- Determines what needs to be managed across agencies or the system and can skilfully design the process.
- Encourages and enables a customer-centric ethos – reflecting the diverse needs and views of current and future New Zealanders.

70% on-the-job learning

Work collaboratively with stakeholders across your agency, across government and externally.

Lead and guide others in developing engagement strategies and consultation and other engagement documents.

Draw on your experience in the Māori Crown Relations [Engagement Framework](#) and [Engagement Guidelines](#), when advising other colleagues.

Apply guidance on collaboration and engagement with local government – see [Guide for central government engagement with local government](#).

Lead a policy team to apply the [Community Engagement Design Tool](#) in the Policy Methods Toolbox when designing a community engagement approach on a policy project you're working on.

Apply expert knowledge of issues when communicating with knowledge leaders and stakeholders.

Maintain the confidence of policy leaders by updating them on stakeholder issues management, recommendations and next steps.

Arrange a short secondment to a key stakeholder agency.

Predict and manage complex relationships. Maintain engagement and involvement of key influencers in key policy projects you are leading.

Use your existing stakeholder networks to find new partnerships – who do your stakeholders work with that you don't?

Engage with new partners, identifying to them the benefits of working with you.

Use participatory approaches to design, develop, test and implement policy projects that involve affected parties, users and other members of the public directly.

Use a range of research methods to obtain insights about people affected by policy issues and initiatives (questionnaires, in-depth interviews, workshops, ethnographic observation).

Regularly test, revalidate, and identify new citizen needs throughout the development and delivery of advice.

Ensure that appropriate tikanga for engagements is followed, and identify when additional cultural support is required.

Make sure your meetings are accessible to all people.



20% learning from others

Work with specialists in user experience to develop engagement processes that are human-centred.

Discuss with others their experience with approaches to engagement with Māori. What worked well, what could have been done better, and what were the outcomes?

Contact Te Arawhiti – the Office for Māori Crown Relations to discuss your proposed approach to engagement.

Contact other agencies that can provide assistance with engagement with specific groups (e.g. the Office for Disability Issues on engagement with disabled people).

10% formal training

Pursue advanced facilitation, building coalitions, conflict management and resolution training.

Take a course on building collaborative networks, inclusive community engagement design, or approaches to engaging to develop collectively agreed solutions (e.g. Engagement Evaluation and Engaging with Influence by International Association for Public Participation).

Take a Māori Crown Relations engagement course (e.g. Masterclass Engagement Training by Te Arawhiti).

Take a course in negotiating and influencing skills.

Take a relationship management course (e.g. Relationship management by Communicate).



Design for Implementation

Leading

Focuses policy advice on 'end to end' aspects of implementation, including the use of digital technologies.

- Leads decisions on the choice of policy instruments using rigorous criteria and proven design frameworks so that options are feasible. This means being able to:
 - constructively challenge traditional delivery mechanisms and actively examine alternative mechanisms (e.g. via new technologies, non-regulatory levers, new partnerships)
 - systematically identify and address internal and external issues, challenges and risks that could affect implementation
 - build relationships with potential delivery partners, inside and outside government, to test option viability, resolve problems and identify efficiencies
 - develop robust delivery roadmaps that are collaborative, assign accountabilities and enable adjustment if circumstances change.

70% on-the-job learning

Confidently apply new formal iterative methodologies and techniques that can contribute to design options.

Regularly use iterative project management methodologies to test a number of different approaches.

Design tests and experiments to evaluate prototypes through large-scale randomised tests or randomised control trials.

Assess which research methods (e.g. in-depth interviews, questionnaires, workshops, ethnographic observation) are best used to gain insights about users and how they are likely to respond to different policy options.

Identify ways that new user needs can be tested and re-validated throughout development and delivery.

Develop and maintain a register of project risks and how to mitigate them.

Use participatory approaches to design, develop, test and implement projects that involve users directly.

Coach less experienced staff in how to develop prototypes that can be used with users to test feasibility and explore the ability to scale up.

Coach or mentor less experienced staff on how to ensure policy proposals are workable.

Share with colleagues your knowledge of applying different policy instruments (e.g. regulation, financial incentives, behavioural nudges) to policy problems, and lessons learned.

Share your insights on design for implementation at in-house policy training and seminars.

Understand the Digital product lifecycle and how to manage risk when replacing legacy systems (see [Strategy and planning](#) and [Legacy system guidance](#)).

Understand how Cloud capabilities can/should be used to support the work of government (see [Cloud services](#) and Application programming interfaces).

Consider the [Digital Service Design Standard](#) and how it applies to your work.

Understand which data and digital standards may apply to your work (see [Government Digital Standards Catalogue](#)).



20% learning from others

Engage with academics, service providers and key users to iteratively co-design policy processes.

Engage with a community of practice that applies new methods and approaches to testing policy frameworks.

Work with other experts to adapt, design and lead training on how such approaches can be used in cross-sector and in-house policy projects.

Engage with specialists in behavioural science to use psychological and sociological techniques to deliver policy outcomes (e.g. 'nudge' interventions).

10% formal training

Attend courses or seminars on new 'design thinking' methods including Agile and Lean project approaches.

Attend courses on influencing human behaviour as part of policy development.

Attend courses that aim to help understanding complexity, design better operating policies, and guide effective change from a systems thinking perspective (e.g. Systems Thinking by Wellington Uni Professional).



Works innovatively and collaboratively to identify ways to 'do things better' and 'do better things' in policy practice.

- Seeks opportunities to add value. Uses evaluation and lessons learned to improve future performance and provide fresh perspectives.
- Can lead the 'idea-to-innovation' process. Promotes a culture of being receptive to diverse thinking, insights and new information.
- Fosters experimentation and positive risk-taking. Guides others in deploying innovation and continuous improvement methodologies.

70% on-the-job learning

Challenge the status quo and don't accept the way things have always been done.

Identify existing boundaries and find ways to overcome or work around them.

Provide opportunities with colleagues to do new things and support them to overcome the fear of failure.

Borrow from different approaches that encourage iterative and continuous improvement.

Use large-scale methods such as crowd sourcing and text mining to gain insights.

Use tools such as vignettes and personas to understand how different people think about a situation.

Use challenges and awards to encourage people to think differently.

Explore the Australian Government's Agile Policy Playbook and consider whether you can use Agile policy methods in your work.

Forge alliances among both internal and external partners that can support change. Think about working with unusual partners who can assist in identifying different approaches.

Reflect on what lessons you have learned and use that to question your assumptions and practices.

Be open to 'unlearning' what you have previously learned, if ways of thinking are no longer relevant.

Share new ideas, innovations, and lessons with your colleagues.

Mentor and coach less experienced colleagues in thinking outside the box.

20% learning from others

Facilitate creative workshops to explore new ideas and approaches.

Ask people to peer review your approaches and identify alternative options based on their practice.

Analyse the approaches of people and organisations from different sectors.

Build international networks in your field, so you can exchange ideas.

10% formal training

Attend courses that build your understanding of how service design can encourage innovations.



Communication

Leading

Delivers clear, compelling, and fit-for-purpose messages, using the most effective communication vehicle for the audience.

- Produces eloquent written communication that persuades and inspires.
- Mentors and develops the communication skills of others.
- Reduces confusion in commissioning.
- Presents information in a variety of settings and in a way that captures and inspires audiences.
- Is persuasive and compelling in both internal and external interactions.
- Can reliably represent the interests of their agency, even in uncertain territory.

70% on-the-job learning

Present to external agencies and stakeholders on your area of expertise in a compelling way.

Lead the agency's contributions to deliver communication in different settings and for different products, such as for select and Cabinet committees, public consultations or collaboration, and expert groups.

Consider how using a 'storytelling' approach helps build support and engage people.

Consider designing workshops for your group on how to draft briefings, ministerials, and official information responses.

Use interactive tools and methods to help audiences navigate the 'story' and focus on relevant parts. Enable audiences and users to contribute or reflect their own content or stories.

Tell stories of actual users to enhance the message with a 'real voice'.

Think about using a range of methods to communicate, such as blogs and social media.

Act as a mentor or coach to colleagues, using lessons from your experience to help them.

Lead and guide discussions on how to improve the quality of written and verbal interactions using the learning that happens with the team, including how to deal with different and extraordinary situations.

Share best practice in verbal and written communication with different audiences, including select committees, ministers, stakeholders and public engagement communication tools.

20% learning from others

- Use ministerial, select committee and Parliamentary counsel staff to help shape and customise communications.

Seek feedback from peers or experienced colleagues on your communication and presentation style.

Work with private secretaries and ministerial advisors to create feedback loops and adapt to ministerial preferences.

10% formal training

Complete a Digital Accessibility micro-credential (i.e. [Fundamentals of the government's digital design and web standards](#)).

Take a course on effective stakeholder engagement (e.g. [Engaging Effectively with Your Stakeholders](#) by Wellington Uni Professional).

- Take a presentation skills course. For example:
 - [Presentation Skills](#) by Write Limited
 - [Confident and Creative Presentation Skills](#) by Wellington Uni Professional.

Take an effective writing course.

Take facilitation training.