



Maori women doing business internationally

International Keynote Speaker Rachel Te Rau E Wha Petero (nee Taka)
Nga Whetu Hei Whai Conference – Charting Pathways for Maori Business Industries
August 25 to 26 2014, Claudelands Conference Centre, Hamilton, New Zealand

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Pepeha (Traditional Maori Introduction)

“E nga reo, e nga mana, e nga karangaranga maha, huri noa, huri noa, nau mai haere mai.” - To all the languages (gathered here), to all the dignitaries and to the multitudinal networks that that have brought us here, welcome, welcome.

Waikato te awa – Waikato is the river

Taupiri te maunga – Taupiri is the mountain

Ko Te Wherowhero te tangata – Te Wherowhero is the man

Tainui te waka – We descend from our ancestors of the Tainui canoe

Ngaati Tamaoho te hapu – Tamaoho is my sub-tribe

Maungaroa te maunga – Maungaroa is my mountain

Mangatangi Pa te marae – Mangatangi Pa is my meeting place to stand and belong

Rachel Te Rau E Wha Petero taku ingoa – Rachel Petero is my name

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa – Greetings, greetings to one and all

Keynote Introduction in English

It is a great honor and privilege to be here today. My thanks to Richard Jefferies, Chairman of Te Putea Whakatau Trust and board members for bringing me home for this important conference. My thanks also go out to Karleen Everitt the organiser of this important hui (gathering) as we celebrate the success of 35 scholarship award winners in 2014.

To be amongst such great Maori business leaders and see the future of Maori enterprise and industries in the hands of our rangatahi (youth) it brings a favorite quote to my mind. “When you do a job you love, you will never work a day in your life”.

My journey back to Aotearoa (New Zealand) has been an emotional one and returning home after 14 years living and working abroad to share my experience is my absolute honor. I have my mother here with me today, which makes me very proud and also my sister and my niece. And on my husband’s Pasifika side from Tonga, Cook Islands and Niue I acknowledge my mother-in-law, sister-in-law and aunt Doreen for making the trip from Auckland to Hamilton to be here with me today.

Today I would like to share with you my global perspective on Maori women doing business internationally so in the next 20 minutes I will share my journey, the current state of macro female entrepreneurship, Maori leadership values and how I continue to bring my cultural values into a corporate setting, my five top tips for Maori women entrepreneurs and finally what I call Your Female GPS a tool that brings together the emotional and rationale abilities to navigate through life in line with your personal and cultural value set. (Links to Prezi slide)



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My journey (links to Prezi images of 2 year old Rachel, School photo at Rosebank Primary and picture of Rachel's parents)

Who would have thought that 2 year old girl would be standing here today? I was bought up in West Auckland, Avondale with my sister and my parents were young, they had me at the young age of 17. As young parents my mother worked at our primary school as the caretaker. My sister and I worked part-time jobs at an early age and earned our pocket money. We cleaned in the school holidays at Rosebank Primary and did weekend work as a cashier at 3 guys. My mother was a strong role model in our lives and she returned to Auckland University to pursue her Bachelor of Education and graduated at the age of 40. My father was also our role model and he showed us the importance of being humble whilst our mother taught us the importance of going for what we want in life and standing up for what we believe in. The balance of both our parents had a big impact on our lives.

Responsibility, Work Ethic, Financial Independence, Social Skills (links to Prezi slide) Throughout our childhood we learnt the importance of being responsible for our choices in life, I became financially independent and through role model behaviors of our parents work ethic and social skills were learnt and developed.

We also had strong links back to our marae Mangatangi Pa and the balance of Maori culture and urban lifestyles ensured we had a strong sense of belonging, identity and whanaungatanga (extended family). Female role models were strong and present throughout with our two grandmother's equally as dominant in our lives. Both were respected and revered Merenuitana Taka (nee Paki) and Shirley Marshall (nee Flavell).

Throughout the 30 years I spent in New Zealand I continued to be inspired by female leaders with the late Dame Te Ataairangikaahu reigning over our people and Helen Clark took on the nation's top job as New Zealand Prime Minister. I was honored to host Helen in Qatar in 2012 as she attended the COP18 conference in Qatar. She would make an amazing UN Secretary-General. I have the utmost respect for Helen as UNDP Administrator driving the global economic empowerment of women in Developing countries (links to images of Dame Te Ata and Helen Clark).

In my professional career in NZ's design and advertising industry men were my mentors. I spent 11 years on Ponsonby Road working my way up the career ladder being supported by men. In those days there were no female CEO's or leaders to aspire to be. However this didn't stop me from achieving my goals. Men helped me to develop new skills and through their belief in me I acquired a whole new set of skills that I use to this day. Sales, Networking, Self-confidence and the art of Asking the right question (Links to Prezi slide). So at the age of 30 I had acquired two sets to life skills in my personal and professional life that helped chart my own pathway to where I am today.



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London was calling (Links to Prezi slide GB flag) and for the next 8 years I worked in Sales, Online recruitment and eventually found myself in HR. My first role in HR came to me from a man who believed that I would be the perfect person to head up an in-house resourcing team. Working across multiple industry sectors I started to form my passion for HR and in particular leadership development for women. The research on gender equality at a leadership and board level was becoming more evident and I found my passion in developing and designing global leadership programmes for Women.

Macro entrepreneurship (Links to Prezi slide)

As a woman I joined a global movement of female entrepreneurs when I decided to embark on the journey of turning my passion into a business. In Sept 2013 the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report shows that 224 million female entrepreneurs are impacting the global economy today however this only represents 67 of 188 countries recognised by the World Bank.

The 2013 Harvard Business Review published that globally women control 20 Trillion of the annual consumer spending. Furthermore, The International Monetary Fund (IMF) headed by CEO Christine Lagarde reported that the “Global economy has missed out on 27 percent of GDP growth per capita due to the gender gap in the labor market”. So what does this mean to us as budding entrepreneurs? OPPORTUNITY!

You are part of a global movement of female entrepreneurs and it reminds me of another favorite quote "If you don't build your dream someone will hire you to build theirs". I believe that when you find your passion, build on your strengths that everything is possible... (Links to Prezi slide)

Let's look at examples of women who have taken their passion, key strengths and turned this into a business. Oprah has turned chatting on a couch into a global empire. Her passion and core strength is her ability to communicate. She is believable, because she does what she is good at and her empire is built around her. Closer to home here are three Maori women I have had the pleasure of connecting with and represent the new world of Maori women in business. Stacey Daniels-Morrison continues to amaze me with her growing whanau and media career. Her newest venture Whanau Living really brought together her core strengths of bringing modern Maori whanau (family) living with a busy working mum's career and the importance of work-life balance. Ria Hall continues to go from strength to strength with 10's of 1'000's followers via social media as she has taken her core strength of kapa haka performance to launch and establish herself as a world class performer. Her music is aligned to her culture and values and she doesn't compromise on either. Finally Rhonda Kite is our media and technology wahine toa (female warrior) who has a global technology platform that is winning awards globally. (Links to images of Oprah, Stacey, Ria and Rhonda).

I have also built my own business GENVIVA in the same way by building on my passion and key strengths. The business model started out as serving female talent through the delivery of leadership development



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programmes. Now the business model serves a broader audience and we talk about Life Working solutions for Global Talent. Through experience, continuous improvement and real-life trial and error my value proposition is further defined as “Enabling and inspiring indigenous leaders through development and entrepreneurship solutions”. Women and Youth are my target audience (Links to GENVIVA logo image).

This brings me to my host country of Qatar in the Middle East. Flying 20 hours to be here today from Doha through Melbourne has given me time to reflect on my 14 year journey of living and working abroad. Today I find myself in one of the fastest growing emerging nations doing what I love “Enabling and inspiring indigenous leaders”. This is no coincidence. For a year I worked with only Qatari women to develop Women Leading Change Qatar and was recognised by TIAW (The International Alliance for Women) as one of 100 World of Difference award winners in 2013. A humbling experience to be the only New Zealander and also the only Maori woman to receive this award. I now hold the prestigious honor of TIAW Global Ambassador as we prepare to nominate worthy global recipients for their relentless work to drive women’s economic development.

My message for today to our 35 Scholarship students is to be Global Maori Ambassadors in everything you do and you will stand out from the crowd! In my time abroad travelling through Europe, the States, Asia and Middle East every person I have met who knew little or nothing about our culture has wanted to know more. Every conversation about Maori culture I have had has been a positive cultural exchange. Every opportunity I have to share our unique traditions, language and beliefs I embrace with both hands.

In my research as I prepared to move to Qatar in December 2011 I read the Qatar National Vision 2030. A beautifully crafted strategy document aligning the Nations people, industries and economy to one vision. Social, human, economic and environmental pillars form the foundations of Qatar’s strategy. Building a capable and motivated workforce of Qatari inclusive of women leaders in business and society created alignment of my cultural value set, business and life’s passion to “Enable and inspire indigenous leaders”. Living and working in a Muslim country has made me culturally richer as I now have a better understanding and appreciation for Islam. Whether I agree or not I am able to bring context to the situations I find myself. I am welcomed into the homes of my Qatari friend’s, regularly attend weddings and henna and often spend hours in their tents discussing world issues. As an HR professional I can say that my role in developing Qatari talent is one of the most dynamic roles I have had. This experience has led me to develop innovate new models that take into account the cultural value set of my host country. Cultural leadership and development models take into account societal norms, religious preferences and multi-dimensional change solutions. I feel and see the tribal tendencies and can link this back to my own culture. For example Tino Rangatiratanga is reinforced in Qatar through the projection of sovereignty, autonomy, control, self-determination and independence. The notion of Tino Rangatiratanga asserts and reinforces Māori to control their own culture, aspirations and destiny. This comes with it’s own challenges in a cross cultural environment such as Qatar striving to lead global change in healthcare, science and research, sport and human development. And on the other hand hold true to their rich culture and strong Muslim traditions. My personal and professional experience has only been positive in my



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host country. Having worked with the forthright Women of Qatar and now Gen-Y Nationals I can say that this nation is paving a unique pathway to a knowledge economy full of global opportunities. For as long as I can serve the people of Qatar and am treated with mutual respect I am passionate about continuing my work with Qatari for Qatar. My dream project would be to develop a global leadership academy for the top 1% Qatari leaders to work with global brands and learn from global leaders under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza. I truly believe that if you can see it, you can make it happen.

The following italicized extracts were not covered in keynote due to time restrictions:-

Maori Leadership Values are innate values we as Maori bring to global organisations. Collaboration in corporations through a shared vision where everyone moves as one towards a goal, whilst caring and providing emotional support to all throughout this journey of change is summed up in 3 Maori principles.

Whanaungatanga – Bringing a collective versus a silo mentality to an organisation’s way of working is inherent in Maori culture as we work together as extended families and tribal affiliates. Manakitanga - Maori believe in and practice the emotional support of iwi (our people) and as organisations the concept of taking care of our employees as our most important resource is often talked about and only practiced where courageous leaders are present. Kotahitanga or feeling of unity, of belonging and operating as one together happens in organisations who provide a psychological contract of physical and emotional security in a learning and coaching environment. I truly believe as young Maori leaders embarking on your careers in corporate organisations and as budding young entrepreneurs that your unique selling point is being Maori. I have had many conversations with CEO’s, CFO’s and senior leaders and being from NZ + Being Maori is a conversation only you can have. It’s a key differentiator. People want to know about NZ and when you add the Maori dynamic to the equation the conversation takes on a new dimension. I remember the first time a CEO of a global bank said to me “Are you Maori?” I confidently replied “Yes I am, it’s your lucky day”. I continue to say those empowering words whenever I have the opportunity.

My 5 top tips are 1) Be a super connector – connect on a global scale with a diverse audience of like-minded aspirational positive people 2) Be an authentic leader – serve others first and foremost, everything else will follow 3) Be a mentor to other women and girls – Madeline Allbright once said “There is a special place in hell for women who don’t support other women” our role as women is to support each other 4) Launch and iterate – don’t wait for everything to be perfect 80/20 rule works for me 5) Create a life worthy of you – Embrace your awesomeness, one of our biggest fears is realising full potential as human beings.

Your Female GPS is an emotive navigation tool that combines intuition, trust and leadership. It brings emotional well-being and clarity to our lives. At first we often don’t pay attention to that reassuring voice that says go for it, take a chance or simply you can do it! As women we often listen to the voice of self-doubt which says you might fail, maybe next time, what will people say... So it’s time to turn off the voice of self-doubt and turn up the volume of Your Female GPS in order to navigate our way towards our goals and milestones in life. I have learnt that my female GPS is personal to me and is based on a cultural value set that is unique as a Maori



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woman. The more I trust my female GPS the more confident I become. The more confident I become the easier it is to make important life decisions. The better life decisions I make the more clarity I have about my future and the path I will follow. I am currently working on a book about the concept and practical tools of Your Female GPS and another one on Being an authentic leader of which one will be ready by this time next year. Watch this space...

Mauri ora.

Connect with Rachel for international keynote speaker engagements:-



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