



New Zealand  
Payroll Practitioners  
Association

Developing and Supporting  
Payroll Professionals

[www.nzppa.co.nz](http://www.nzppa.co.nz)

# Effective Payroll Leadership

NZPPA 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Payroll Leaders Summit 2025



# Effective Payroll Leadership

*In line with the summit theme, I wanted to talk about three areas of payroll leadership that I see (good and bad) from my position in NZPPA.*

*To start with, I will cover off a definition (of sorts) on what is “**Effective Payroll Leadership**”*

- **Effective Payroll Leadership** refers to the ability to lead, manage, and oversee payroll functions within an organisation in a way that ensures compliance, efficiency, and alignment with broader business goals.
- It goes beyond just processing payroll—it involves leadership, strategy, communication, and continuous improvement.



# *Three Key Components of Effective Payroll Leadership*

There are several key components of effective payroll leadership, but for this presentation, I will focus on only three:

1. Leadership & Team Management
2. Payroll Process Improvement
3. Compliance & Risk Management



# Leadership & Team Management

1. Leading and developing a payroll team (Leading from the front).
2. Using the best payroll performer to train other team members.



# Leading from the front

*Being ex-military, I believed leadership was leading from the front, which meant to me being physically out in the front of my team.*

***David's lonely at the front example...***

*What does leading from the front really mean for payroll?*

*"Leading from the front" means demonstrating leadership through action and example, rather than just giving instructions. It involves being actively involved in the work, setting a positive example, and showing commitment to the team's goals.*

**"Leading from the front" can only be successful if the payroll leader is fully involved and includes their team.**



# Use the best performers to train other team members!

If you want to transfer the best behaviours, skills and knowledge of your best performer to a new team member, get them involved in the training of new team members:

- This should be seen as part of their professional development.
- Support them with basic training or coaching skills; it is a skill every future leader should have.
- Any training provided should be formally assessed and documented.



## 2. Payroll Process Improvement

### Streamlining workflows for efficiency

*Get the team involved, not just the Payroll Leader:*

1. *Create a payroll work environment where a team member owns their part of the process and they are tasked to review it to determine its efficiency.*
2. *Provide a documented process that the team member has to complete, and they have to provide evidence on their results (process is efficient or not, and why).*
3. *Get other team members involved in “**peer review**” of each other's assessment of processes*

### **Shortcuts in payroll:**

*If a process can be completed using a shortcut and still meets all business and legislative requirements, it should be changed; if a shortcut breaks business rules or legislative requirements, it must be stopped.*



## 3. Compliance & Risk Management

### Ensuring payroll processes are audit-ready

A payroll audit should not be the last step before the cliff; payroll should be audit-ready at any time.

- Identify the high-risk areas of compliance in your payroll.
  - ***For example:***
  - How a week and a day is defined for employees working variable hours, does the present setting in payroll reflect their actual week or day?
- Create ongoing checks for this area, a basic pay period check, quarterly, six monthly, and annually. It must be easy to do and based on the same methodology that any team member can apply and understand the results.
- The result must be in a usable format or plain language that can be provided to a stakeholder (internal or external, if needed).





# NZPPA Certification - Become a Certified Payroll Professional

## NZPPA CERTIFICATION

Become a certified payroll professional

Be assessed at one of the five levels to fit your skills, knowledge and experience.

Be annually reassessed and complete CPD hours to maintain your certification level so you are always current with the latest payroll developments.

For employers, have full confidence (while also minimising risk to the business) in the person running your payroll as it is a business-critical activity.

Become a certified payroll professional today.



To find out more go to  
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**NZPPA CPT**  
Certified Payroll  
Technician (Level 1)



**NZPPA CPP**  
Certified Payroll  
Practitioner (Level 2)



**NZPPA CPS**  
Certified Payroll  
Specialist (Level 3)



**NZPPA CPC**  
Certified Payroll  
Consultant (Level 4)



**NZPPA CPL**  
Certified Payroll  
Leader (Level 5)

*Certification is a core aim of NZPPA. For that reason, we are backing certification as an investment in the development and recognition of payroll as a profession in New Zealand, and to ensure that employers have certified professionals running their payroll.*



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# Upcoming Events:

***4<sup>th</sup> Annual Payroll Technology Showcase 2025 – 11 September 2025 FREE***



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**NZPPA**  
**4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL PAYROLL  
TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE 2025**  
USING TECHNOLOGY TO MOVE PAYROLL FORWARD  
VIRTUAL PAYROLL EVENT – FREE TO NZPPA MEMBERS  
11 SEPTEMBER 2025 (9AM TO 12.30PM)

[www.nzppa.co.nz](http://www.nzppa.co.nz)

***NZPPA 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Payroll Conference – 4-5 December 2025 (Auckland)***



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**The Payroll Pulse:  
Insights, Innovation, and Impact**

NZPPA 18th Annual Payroll Conference,  
4-5 December 2025, Auckland

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**If you have any feedback on this  
year's summit, please email me:**

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