



## Will&Able

### IMPACT

### WINNER



Knowing that people with disabilities are three times less likely to have a job than those without, Will&Able has created a safe environment for members of this disadvantaged group to develop skills and contribute to society through employment.

The social enterprise start-up produces a range of eco-friendly cleaning products that are sold in Countdown, Pricewise and some New World supermarkets, via its website and via OfficeMax and NXP to corporates such as Fletchers. It has factories in Papatoetoe in Auckland and Christchurch. But Will&Able's main purpose is to create employment for people with, primarily intellectual, disabilities and mental health challenges who struggle to find work.

“People with intellectual disabilities are amazing workers and people. They do however have lower productivity levels,” says Marketing Executive Maya Jaros. “Our challenge is to create work suitable for their skills and abilities while still remaining profitable and efficient.”

While other companies in the FMCG sector have embraced more automation, Will&Able has retained the repetitive, manual tasks which people with disabilities excel at and are comfortable doing as part of its production process. It's an approach it believes will create a model that's scalable and will create work for more people with disabilities.

Will&Able's aim is to create 100-plus jobs for people with disabilities, beginning with 30 fulltime minimum wage jobs in the next year. These jobs include labelling, filling, batching, boxing, packing and dispatch.

Sponsorship from partner Aon has been used to create a marketing campaign, including television advertising and a CEO breakfast, to grow brand awareness and increase sales revenue from supermarkets and online sales, providing scope to employ more people.

Another project that supports people with disabilities is a nationwide recycling scheme called Purposeful People. Customers can send used Will&Able bottles back to be washed and reused. Bottles are sent to four disability organisations around the country, in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, depending on where customers live. People with disabilities who work at those organisations are then given work washing Will&Able bottles ready to be refilled and used again.

"We define and measure our social impact qualitatively and quantitatively by the provision of employment to people with disabilities, the resulting sense of purpose and social inclusion they experience, and whether they feel able to contribute to the organisation and society," Maya says.

The activities of the organisation also have an ongoing social impact by shining a light on the challenges people with disabilities face to be included in the workforce.

"We want to see people with disabilities shine and become more normalised in society, rather than a marginalised group that is often forgotten about."

"New Zealand benefits from having a more diverse workforce – there are fewer people unemployed and relying on benefits and therefore more people being productive citizens. Employees are able to build skills and experience that can open up future job opportunities for them beyond Will&Able. It also leads to more people living fulfilling lives and reaching their potential, and improved mental health outcomes," Maya says.

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Will&Able conducts interviews with team members to capture the impact working for the organisation has on their lives.

“Will&Able makes me feel better about my disability. It makes me feel useful, like there is something I can do. Working at Will&Able has given me heaps of friends. We help one another out, we talk and share lunch together. I feel part of a community. My life would be really boring and sad if I wasn't at Will&Able.”

Another employee says, “Working at Will&Able keeps me active. I've learnt things on the job about getting along with people, showing up on time, and learning about different disabilities and mental health.



“It gives me motivation to get up every morning, gives me something to do, helps me feel like I am contributing to the world. Will&Able is a community, a family where you have to stick together. We look out for each other.

“If I was not at Will&Able, I would still be at home doing nothing and feeling lazy. Will&Able gave me the opportunity to work and take pride in work.”

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