

TEAM TUNES

Former lawyer Wendy Chen describes how her new choral venture Do Be Do Well is changing businesses for the better.

"I've been singing in choirs all my life, and so much of what I've learned about personal and professional development in my corporate career is relatable to the experiences I've had in them. Workplace teams are looking for practical ways to build culture, engagement and trust, and a wonderful solution exists, something we can all do – whether we believe we can or not.

Group singing is humanity's oldest way to express ourselves and build shared stories of who we are. Do Be Do Well connects all kinds of Kiwi workplaces with the expertise of New Zealand's best conductors and music facilitators, interspersing fun musical activities with discussions on topics such as leadership, courage, vulnerability and resilience. Our workshops are safe and supportive; we don't single people out – the emphasis is on the power of the team.

I love the reactions from our participants – people really come out of their shell. We recently ran a workshop with a group of stressed-out software developers. They started off pretty quiet, but by the end, they had huge grins on their faces. I was stunned to learn that a week later, they decided to do a flash-mob performance of the waiata they'd learned in our workshop for the rest of their company to mark Te Wiki o te Reo Māori.

For longer-term workplace benefits, including a sense of belonging and opportunities to de-stress, nothing beats a choir. My dream is for every New Zealand workplace to have one."

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