



E-Ko New Zealand Limited Guide – Job Description

Company Ethos

At E-Ko, our aim is to increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife, the environment and promote conservation by providing a unique experience on both land and sea with exceptional service that exceeds all customer expectations. We recognise that it is the staff that provide this service. To facilitate you in providing the best possible service, we as a company take your wellbeing very seriously. To help us achieve this balance, we take inspiration from Te Whetu [The Star]. The concept of Te Whetu was developed as a framework to encompass the five key areas of overall wellbeing. These five areas are; manatu [mind], kaupapa [body], wairua [spirit], whanau [family] and whenua tapui [Land].

Manatu [Mind] – we encourage free thought, input from staff and proactively help develop staff members' skill sets and knowledge.

Kaupapa [Body] – we encourage staff to have a healthy lifestyle and endeavour to provide a good work/life balance. We compensate staff with fair and clearly structured wages and will work with you to achieve your individual goals within the organisation.

Wairua [Spirit] – Everyone at E-Ko, prides themselves on contributing to a positive working environment and as an organisation we are always looking for new and innovative ways to make your place of work a happy one that you can enjoy and be proud of.

Whanau [Family] – At E-Ko we consider ourselves a family and as such care for and look out for each other. We also recognise and respect your immediate family and your needs within that unit. We actively work towards providing you with a good work life balance so you can spend time with your family and loved ones.

Whenua Tapui [Land] – As an organisation E-Ko is actively involved in conservation and protection of the land. As an employee you will be involved with this process in the course of your day-to-day duties. Beyond this, employees will also be provided with unique opportunities to participate in conservation outside the scope of their general duties if they so wish.

Company expectations

All staff are representatives of E-Ko and contribute to making the company what it is. As such, all staff are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and act respectfully towards guests and fellow staff at all times. As part of the E-Ko team, you are expected to present information to guests in a manner that is polite and approachable, understandable and informative while showing a genuine passion for wildlife, the environment and conservation. Our goal is to present information in an educational and entertaining manner to allow the guests to take home the conservation message.

Appearance

As direct representatives of E-Ko, all staff are expected to maintain a clean and tidy appearance whilst on duty. Issued uniforms must be worn along with closed in, practical, non-skid footwear. Hair (including facial hair) must be neat, tidy and well maintained. Although individuality is encouraged, appearance must be neat, professional and appropriate.

Attitude

As a representative of E-Ko, having a positive, professional and passionate attitude is paramount. Your attitude will reflect greatly in how you perform your duties, interact with customers and the level of service you provide. Your attitude **IS** picked up by the guests and has a massive impact on their overall experience.

If you have an issue or disagree with any facet of the company or other staff, this must not affect your demeanour and attitude whilst interacting with customers. Any such issue should be raised in private with your direct superior.

Given the company ethos, spreading the conservation messages is high on our list of priorities. This can only be successfully achieved through passionate and likeable staff that the guests can relate to.

Training

E-Ko takes the training of each staff member very seriously. As an organisation we encourage individuality and strive to recognise each staff member's personal attributes and incorporate these factors into our internal training processes. E-Ko believes that, there is always room for improvement, growth and development. This philosophy is applied to the organisation as a whole as well as individuals that work within it. As a company, we at E-Ko continually strive improve our products, our service and ourselves.

Feedback and Reviews

All staff are encouraged to give each other constructive feedback on a regular basis. This is a small team, and working together with a high level of communication is key, particularly when it comes to resolving any issues and helping each other, as well as the business, develop and flourish.

All staff will also undergo a regular review process. These reviews will be conducted at least on an annual basis and additionally when first starting with the company after the 30 and 90 day probation and trial periods. These reviews are designed to pinpoint both strengths of the individual, in addition to areas that can be improved. Once such areas are identified, the review process then consists of a discussion as to how to utilize and build on such strengths, in addition to how to go about bettering areas that can still be improved.

The Review Process also provides grounds for staff to present their own feedback, concerns, ideas and ambitions for the future.

Guiding Levels and Responsibilities

To become a fully-fledged guide – within any industry – takes time and experience. Even the most experienced individual will still require time and training to undertake a new role within a new company. The following section of the job description outlines the various guiding levels within E-Ko, what each role entails and the expected responsibilities at each level.

Trainee Guide

The trainee guide is new to guiding and/or guiding with E-Ko. As a Trainee Guide, you will learn the roles and procedures required of the guiding position. This will include the following:

- Learn and practice delivering the commentary on all trips offered by E-Ko
- Learn the various checklist systems
- Learn and undertake tasks required of a crewmember on board the boat (including working the ropes, mooring/unmooring, cleaning, care of equipment, emergency procedures, etc.)
- Assisting guides on all trips while learning the general procedures
- Pre-tour set-up on both boat and office depending on tour.
- Pre-tour wetsuit and mask fitting for guests. Learning how to check the swimming forms and procedures in the event of irregularities or issues highlighted by the swim forms.
- Learning safe swim procedures – including setting up the back deck for dolphin swimming, safety briefing, safe swim procedures, emergency procedures, swimmer in distress procedures and communicating with the skipper.
- Learning proper searching techniques for dolphins and other wildlife.
- Learn to spot, identify and distinguish between the species present in the Queen Charlotte Sound, both on land and in the marine environments.
- Learn to understand and identify animal behaviours – particularly dolphins.
- Become familiar with the Marine Mammal Regulations and how to behave around marine mammals in the water.

By the end of the 'Trainee' period, the guide should have competently learned all the above procedures and be able to undertake trips with the support of another guide.

Guide

After the Trainee Guide has met all the criteria in the company's guiding progression framework and senior staff are confident in their abilities, they will then be promoted to the Guide position. They are considered a fully-fledged Guide once they are capable of undertaking the following roles:

- Independently undertaking full guiding trips.
- Be proficient at completing various checklist systems
- Consistently delivery good quality commentary.
- Undertaking all tasks on the boat and pre-/post-trip set-ups and clean-ups without supervision or delegation.
- Providing exceptional customer service.
- Displaying a consistently positive attitude.
- Good communication and teamwork with fellow guides, skippers and other staff members.
- Correctly fitting wetsuits during the morning swim preparations.
- Adequately spot dolphins and other wildlife.
- Adequately spot, identify and distinguish between the species present in the Queen Charlotte Sound, both on land and in the marine environments.
- Identifying various birdcalls on Motuara Island.
- Understanding and identifying animal behaviour – particularly dolphins.
- Can identify and assert when swimming would not be suitable – neonates, avoidance behaviour etc.
- Understanding and asserting the Marine Mammal Regulations and how to behave around marine mammals in the water.

Senior Guide

In addition to the above outlined roles and expectations of the Guide, a guide may be evaluated and promoted to a Senior Guide upon showing exceptional skill, effort and enthusiasm to go above and beyond the role of Guide in addition to the level of experience within the role.

A senior guide will also have a minimum of one full season of guiding experience with E-Ko. Specifically, the Senior Guide is capable of:

- Providing all standard commentary, with an extended focus on delivery, content and style.
- Fully understand checklist systems and assist in making sure other staff are utilising these effectively
- Delivering quality commentary and sustain the guests attention through adverse weather condition and/or the absence of wildlife.
- Handling 12 to 15 guests without the assistance of another guide or volunteer/intern.
- Working with and instructing/directing a second, assisting guide.
- Faultlessly spot dolphins and other wildlife.
- Fitting wetsuits correctly every time.
- Possessing a wide knowledge base of all aspects of the tours and continue additional studies on the content in the effort to constantly improve their knowledge base.
- Spotting, identifying and distinguishing between the species present in the Queen Charlotte Sound faultlessly, both on land and in the marine environments.
- Quickly and accurately identifying animal behaviour – particularly dolphins.
- Identifying and asserting when swimming is not suitable – neonates, avoidance behaviour etc.
- Fully understanding and asserting the Marine Mammal Regulations and how to behave around marine mammals in the water

Head Guide

Within the E-Ko team, a single guide will be appointed the leadership role of Head Guide. In addition to meeting the criteria for a Senior Guide, the Head Guide will:

- Have exceptional organizational skills
- Be the motivator of the Guiding Team
- Undertake a supervisory role of all Guides
- Coordinate the Guiding Team, pinpointing both areas of strength and weakness – working with the Team to ensure product quality is both consistent and constantly being improved
- Responsible for the training of new guides
- Ensuring consistent commentary content and delivery by all Guides
- Ensuring Guides are conducting their roles to the best of their ability, striving to improve and are conducted safely
- Serve as a representative of the guiding team when necessary
- Identify potential or current issues and assist in finding the best solution for the Team
- Ensuring all safety protocols are followed and delivered as required by SSM and HSE and that all SOP are adhered to.
- Show other staff the standards required by the company. This involves going the extra mile for customers on a daily basis, maintaining a positive disposition at all times and supporting all members of the team
- Assessing how company procedures work from a practical/hands on point of view and liaising with management to implement any required changes/improvements that have been identified
- Voluntarily explore possibilities for business expansion/new products. Discuss any ideas with management and be involved with any implementation.