

ROWAN TONKIN

GENERAL MANAGER HUMAN RESOURCES

GEN-I

AUCKLAND

What's the best thing about your job?

The variety and complexity of working in a dynamic industry, a leading company, working with a talented HR team and dealing with the strategic and complex issues associated with the ICT and professional services industry.

What's the worst thing about your job?

With over 2500 people in a demerging business it has to be the intensity. It is addictive, hugely rewarding, but can also be consuming so I have to balance that with our young family.

What's the best advice you've ever been given?

You live in the world's most beautiful city, take time every day to enjoy it (Reiner Strecker, expat CFO).

What's the most important lesson you've learned?

Listen and understand others first. My natural response is to take a position or make a judgement, but waiting, listening and thinking first has saved my hide many times.

Managing people: what approach works for you?

Facilitate rather than lead. I work with brilliant people and my role is to facilitate their success, coach through barriers and ensure they have my full support to deliver results.

What brings a smile to your face at work?

My CEO is Chris Quin. I really enjoy working with him, he is humorous and incredibly witty and there are times when everything is serious, he makes us remember to laugh at things, sometimes at ourselves. Chris makes me smile.

What about you would surprise your colleagues, if only they knew?

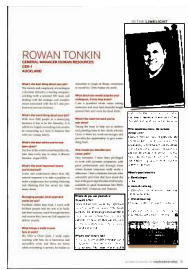
I am a qualified white water rafting instructor and once had shoulder length permed hair and wore tie-dyed shirts.

What's the most fun work you've ever done?

Taking the team to help out at shelters and planting trees at low decile schools. I love it when my work encourages and provides the opportunity to give something back.

How would you describe your career path?

Very fortunate. I have been privileged to work with dynamic companies, with great professionals and through times where human resources really made a difference. I had a fantastic first job after university and from that have made the best of the great opportunities that became available in great businesses like BNZ, NAB, BAT, Vodafone and Telecom.



Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

Retired but still working—spending more time with my family at the beach, working on interesting projects and being more involved in New Zealand. I would like time to build another car and go to all the legendary motor racing events around the world.

What's your dream job?

It is not so much the job but the application or opportunity to make a real difference to a business. My dream role would be leading the HR team in an organisation that really makes a difference to New Zealand. Not far off from what I do today.

Who would you most like to have dinner with?

Branson, McCaw, Key, Shipley and the late Steve Jobs. The dynamics would be fascinating, conversation controversial and all interesting people I respect and admire. However, the person I would most like to have dinner with is my wife Eleanor, a picnic on Waihi beach in summer—perfect!

What's your favourite:

a. Band/singer

ACDC

b. Item of clothing

Old beach shorts—makes me forget that

I'm 40-something.

c. Way of relaxing

Driving my AC Cobra with my boys

Congratulations to Rowan on becoming the 2011 HRINZ HR Person of the Year. 