



# Helping others become sustainability heroes

**Ferran de Miguel Mercader**

Sustainability Manager, Fletcher Building

“How do I make sure that I am not the hero of everything? How do I make sure that we can create heroes?”

Those were the questions posed by Ferran de Miguel Mercader, Sustainability Manager at Fletcher Building, when he started the Sustainability Leadership Programme in early 2020.

Ferran had recently taken a new role, moving from being a sole sustainability manager at Laminex New Zealand to a role at Fletcher Building where he would be working with the many businesses across the Fletcher Building Group.

“Some of our businesses had well-developed sustainability strategies while others were earlier in their journey,” says Ferran.

Ferran says the SLP course helped him see clearly that he didn't need to be the hero, that was impossible – “the opportunity was in use your skills to bring people on the journey with you and they will make things happen” says Ferran.

A chemical engineer by training, Ferran was previously focused on research and development before moving into sustainability.

“When you do the programme, you learn about adaptive challenges, which do not necessarily have a technical solution—you cannot just make a spreadsheet,” says Ferran. “You need to understand how to solve a systems change challenge. How do you use transitions and make them as painless as possible? How do you influence others? The SLP provided a lot of tools for bringing people on a journey.”



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With the realisation that he could engage others to promote and drive sustainability, Ferran created a unique tool to help businesses self-assess their understanding of sustainability.

“With the help of my colleagues specialists in their areas, I created a tool which allows businesses to rate themselves across 28 facets of sustainability such as social and environmental impacts, product responsibility, and supply chain to create awareness of what is such a broad topic,” says Ferran.

Ferran also designed and ran workshops for colleagues to promote sustainability leadership.

“The SLP provided a lot of tools to create workshops and bring people on a journey. I used them all! Together with our sustainability team, we developed a workshop to help broaden thinking, but also focus action on sustainability. We have already piloted it and it is now available to all our businesses”

“I was actually surprised how well it all worked,” says Ferran. “One of the things the SLP taught was, start somewhere—don’t be afraid to start. Things will then accelerate, and people will join because they will see that there is value.”

Ferran also highly rates the network of people he met, many of whom he is still in touch with.

“The people in my LeaderLab group were touching base online at least once a week during the April/ May lockdown and helping each other,” says Ferran. “So, it was a support network, while figuring out how to solve our challenges. That was really valuable.”

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The Sustainability Leadership Programme is Australasia’s most comprehensive sustainability leadership course. Run in partnership by the [Sustainable Business Council](#) and [Catapult](#) this short course gives you the tools and confidence needed to make a measurable impact. **[Find out more.](#)**