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He rangi ta matawhaiti
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A person with narrow vision has a restricted horizon; a person with wide vision has plentiful opportunities

Happy 1000th Birthday, Kia Tūpato: Where Kia Tūpato Came From and Where It Is Heading

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Abstract

Legends and fairytales often centre on caution: Māui used a careful plan to slow the Sun, while Little Red Riding Hood sensed something was wrong with her grandmother. Kia Tūpato is a traditional Māori expression meaning caution. Rooted in Polynesian culture, it has moved through two key phases: its adoption by Māori and its continued use after European settlement. It is now entering a third phase as a digital workplace tool. This oral presentation traces the history of Kia Tūpato, presents findings from two recent case studies, and explores its use in workplaces and its emerging role as a digital app.

The case studies show how Kia Tūpato can help workers make safer decisions, connect more effectively with workplace systems, and engage with decision-makers. Grounded in culture and practical relevance for Māori and many blue-collar workers, Kia Tūpato gives human factors and ergonomics practitioners a clear example of how cultural predispositions can shape worker decisions and support safer behaviour.