

GOOD MONEY AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

CATCHING A BREAK

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TE MANAPOURI WERA's first trip on a deep-sea fishing boat was at the age of 18. He'd heard about the benefits of working on a Sealord vessel from his aunt and uncle, who are both crew members on the 66-metre-long trawler *Rehua*.

"I liked what they had been able to do for their families thanks to their careers at sea," says Te Manapouri.

His first job involved working in the factory on the same vessel, on machinery used to cut fish. Having climbed up the chain of command, he's

now a bosun out on the deck, helping cast and haul the net, and has ambitions to get his Mates ticket, which would enable him to take on more responsibility.

"I have a personal goal for the next five years to get more qualifications and Sealord supports crew members through these."

Now, at 21, he's appreciating the things he's able to do for his family as a result of his career.

"I've been able to put away money because I'm not spending it while I'm at sea, and help my family too," he says.

Another thing he likes about being at sea is that there's so much to learn. "You gain lots of skills out on the boat you can take back to land," he says. "Part of my role involves making sure everyone on deck is safe too and that the trawl net is in good condition. Learning to tie knots has been really useful – these days I can pretty much create a whole net."

In Year 13 at Te Wharekura o Rākaumangamanga in Huntly, Te Manapouri studied Science, Maths, Te Reo Māori, English and Toi Whakaari Performing Arts.

"I hadn't planned to be on deck, but my uncle and aunt encouraged me to try it. I liked that the job was really active," he says. "To see the sunsets is another one of the bonuses. It's a pretty satisfying job – you get an adrenalin rush and we have fun too."

He loves the camaraderie. "The crew is pretty tight, there's a special bond," he says.

And the food's another aspect of life at Sealord he highly recommends. "It's beautiful!" he says. "The cook makes sure there's a lot and there's so much variety."

It took a few trips on the boat before Te Manapouri realised he wanted to make a career of it. "It was my first time ever at sea and I'd heard it was a bit challenging. Everyone at school was telling me I'd never be able to make it out here so that's what pushed me, to prove that I could. I like a challenge so I gave it a go."

Te Manapouri works on a roster of eight hours on, eight hours off duty. "At the start I found it a bit hard to get to sleep at the end of a shift but because you're working hard, by the end you're ready because you've used up your energy."

Sailings are up to six weeks, with the same amount of time on land in between, during which he enjoys spending time with his family, riding his motorbike and playing rugby.

"I'd really encourage other youngsters to come and give it a go. You're never going to know if you'll like it out here unless you try."



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TE MANAPOURI WERA

KEY FACTS



- **TE MANAPOURI WERA** IS A **DECK BOSUN** ONBOARD THE **SEALORD** FISHING BOAT, **MV REHUA**, BASED OUT OF NELSON.
- HIS JOB AS **BOSUN** INVOLVES **HELPING TO CAST AND HAUL THE NET**, AND HE HAS **AMBITIONS TO GET HIS MATES TICKET TO ENABLE HIM TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY**.
- **TE MANAPOURI** SPENDS UP TO **SIX WEEKS WORKING AT SEA**, WITH THE **SAME AMOUNT OF TIME OFF ON LAND BETWEEN SAILINGS**.



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