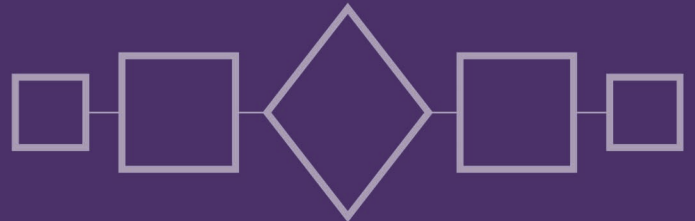




Building an Inclusive Workplace



FOREWORD

Dear Colleague:

Is finding the best qualified person to fill the job important to you? Do you need skilled people who can help your business thrive as you face the challenges of changing technology, environmental demands, and consumer expectations? Do you know how to expand your search for talent?

This guide provides practical tips and advice on how to make your organization welcoming and inclusive. You will also find important information on how to connect with talented, qualified Six Nations candidates.

Sincerely

Yvonne Beaver
Grand River Employment
and Training

Jill Halyk
Workforce Planning Board
of Grand Erie



WHAT IS AN “INCLUSIVE” WORKPLACE

Source: Wikipedia: Miller and Katz (2002) present a common definition: “Inclusion is a sense of belonging; feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best work.” Inclusion is a shift in organization culture. The process of inclusion engages each individual and makes people feel valued and essential to the success of the organization. Individuals function at full capacity, feel more valued, and included in the organization’s mission. This culture shift creates higher performing organizations where motivation and morale soar.”

Does this definition describe your organization? Can an inclusive environment be achieved? Will embracing an inclusive culture really help you improve your competitive edge? The answer is YES.

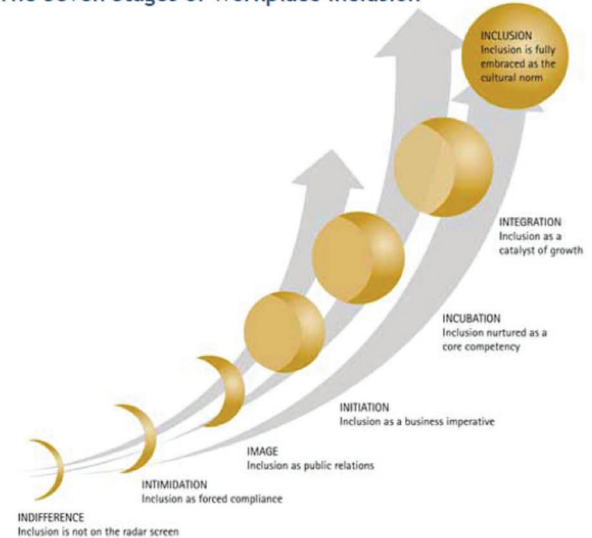
Creating an inclusive workplace is a key driver of success. By ensuring a work environment where everyone has an opportunity to fully participate in creating business success and where each individual is valued for their distinctive skills and experience, corporations can advance both organizational and individual goals.

Successful Aboriginal Inclusion Strategies

What are the measures of success that demonstrate if your organization is truly inclusive? People thrive in inclusive environments. Individuals’ differences, their unique strengths and experiences work together resulting in a creative and cohesive organization. Has your organization been successful in implementing their inclusion strategy? The Aboriginal Human Resource Council has identified seven stages of Workplace Inclusion. Where do you fit?

The Inclusion Continuum

The Seven Stages of Workplace Inclusion



Source: Aboriginal Human Resources Council

WHAT IS AN “INCLUSIVE” WORKPLACE



INCLUSION: PUTTING POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Wondering how your organization can become more inclusive? Follow the 8 point process described below:

1. VISION AND LEADERSHIP – IS EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY

Building an inclusive workplace requires leadership. Policy and practice must move beyond paper and pencil and turn into action – resulting in inclusion being the “norm”. In short, everyone within an organization, from the top down, and from the bottom up, must demonstrate daily the values and practices that ensure that all people are valued for the different abilities, skills, and experience they bring into the workplace.

2. WELL DEFINED BUSINESS CASE

The Demographic Business Case

The first of the baby boomers turned 60 in 2006. Canada’s birth rate is the lowest in history. The Aboriginal population is growing 6 times faster than any other population in Canada. Grand River has the largest Aboriginal population in Canada and it is growing fast. Almost 7 out of 10 Aboriginal people in Grand River reside in Brant, with the higher portion living in the City of Brantford.

The Diversity Business Case

In today’s competitive market, organizations must implement solid diversity and inclusion strategies. Legislative requirements have become less important than the recognition that it is only through valuing and pursuing workplace diversity and managing it well that businesses can attract and retain the skilled people they need to compete. Inclusive environments encourage managers and employees to give their best, resulting in happy customers, suppliers, and stakeholders.

The Corporate Social Responsibility Business Case

More than ever, consumers base their buying decisions on how they view the company’s ability to give back to the community. Consumers want to know their dollars are helping the community, and not just going towards the bottom line. Companies that make a commitment to their workplace, community and to our society at large understand that social responsibility and social marketing include the consumer and other stakeholders. These organizations will achieve both the values and financial goals.

The Skills Shortage Business Case

Finding the skilled talent that can improve productivity is the most critical challenge that employers face. Companies in Grand Erie have an excellent opportunity to expand their talent pool, develop a stable and dedicated workforce and develop strong partnerships with a future workforce.

8 POINT PROCESS



Aboriginal people bring more than special skills to the work place, they offer new perspectives. By employing Aboriginal people your company will enjoy increased exposure to new clientele, while gaining a better understanding of your existing customers. That's good for business and for the workplace.

3. COMPANY WIDE POLICIES TO CREATE A CULTURE OF DIVERSITY

Creating an inclusive workplace requires more than a one-page policy. Your organization's policies should clearly align core economic goals (new business development, customer growth, partnerships) with your inclusion strategy. Your primary diversity policy should be supported by changes in all organizational policies that impact human resources, e.g. recruitment, performance management, rewards and incentives, and work-life balance policies.

4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Creating an inclusive workplace requires a commitment to ongoing training and education regarding the organization's policies and practiced and desired outcomes. A continuous learning approach will encourage the behaviour and practices needed.

5. SUPPORTIVE WORK PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Inclusive workplaces are open and welcoming and demonstrate good examples of flexibility. Recognizing and respecting cultural differences enriches the workplace and makes it a more exciting, interesting place to work.

6. TRANSPARENT RECRUITMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Organizations must make a commitment to recruitment and promotion practices and strategies that ensure career building opportunities for job candidates and employees.

7. TARGETED OUTREACH AND WIDENING OF THE RECRUITMENT NET

Raising awareness of your industry, promoting opportunities, and developing connections with aboriginal organizations and services are an essential part of building an inclusive environment. Expanding your recruiting net will bring fresh, new talent and perspectives into your workplace, enhancing your organization's competitive edge.

8. MONITOR, IMPROVE AND CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Believing your organization is inclusive may not be enough. Make sure you measure your progress using both qualitative and quantitative measures. Talk to you employees about how things are going. Provide people with an opportunity to share their thoughts confidentially through the use of surveys. Don't forget to ask your customers how you are doing!

8 POINT PROCESS



RECRUIT, RETAIN, REWARD

Using conventional methods for hiring and human resource management won't work for organizations who want to build an inclusive environment. Below are tips and suggestions to help you recruit and retain new talent for your workplace.

RECRUITMENT

- Review your recruitment and selection processes to ensure diversity principles are being considered and applications do not impede aboriginal people from fair and equitable consideration
- Train your recruiters and hiring managers to help them identify qualified candidates and to improve retention rates. Avoid stereotyping. Walk candidates through the interview process prior to conducting the formal interview.
- Expand the sources of recruitment: university and college aboriginal programs, aboriginal employment services, job banks, aboriginal newspapers, etc.
- Be informed – ask questions. A lack of understanding or knowledge can contribute to exclusion from the recruiting process.
- Develop partnerships. Work with aboriginal organizations who offer job development and employment support services. Get involved with skilled trades training programs. Open your doors to co-ops and internships.
- Learn about wage subsidies and other programs like Youth Summer Job programs that support you and your employee while they learn the job.

“The reason why we were really anxious to work with the job services in Six Nations was; it was the right thing to do. You know we have a diverse community and I think having an aboriginal ... person in there just made sense for the community of Brantford. But at the end of the day we simply hired the most qualified people to come in and work. And ... the two people through your program came down and did an excellent job. We were very happy with their work and they really added something to our team.”

Mike Cripps, Manager Galaxy Theatre, Brantford

RECRUIT, RETAIN, REWARD



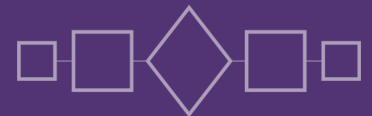
“Lockwood’s strategy for hiring, places the emphasis on the ability to do the job. Several of our full time and part time positions have been filled by aboriginals. They are valued employees. The quality of work, attitude and ability, have met all of the positions criteria. I believe that this is a valuable, untapped resource.”

Barbara Roberts, RH Manager, Lockwood Manufacturing Inc

RETENTION

You have found the right person. They have all the skills and knowledge you were looking for... but you are worried they may not stay. Employee turnover is creating a problem with staff morale and creating financial stresses on the organization. Here are strategies that will ensure job satisfaction for all of your employees (aboriginal and non aboriginal).

- Adapt an open door policy so that your employees can meet with you informally and formally to discuss their progress on the job.
- Recognize that the aboriginal culture may place different family and social demands on individuals. Learn about the differences and listen to the needs. Try to adapt flexible practices that will allow both the organization and employee to meet their commitments.
- Mentoring relationships between employees will provide a venue for advice, support, encouragement, and shared learning.
- Public respect for the aboriginal culture is important. Cultural days of significance should be recognized and celebrated.
- Career planning and development play an essential role in employee retention. Encourage individuals to discuss what they hope to get out of their job and how they see their career path developing.
- Promote excellence. Recognize leadership and ability and ensure promotions within the organization are fair and equitable.



IT PAYS TO HIRE FROM THE SIX NATIONS' LABOUR FORCE

A Stable, Local, and Educated Workforce

For businesses situated in and around Six Nations, increasing the number of employees from Six Nations labour pool can prove to be an economic benefit. Workforce issues can be a drain on productivity and access to a local workforce is critical in managing skill shortages and meeting specific training needs. GREAT offers employers the opportunities to engage in apprenticeship programs, employment supports, wage subsidies, and training on the job opportunities that often lead to long-term employment relationships. In many cases, Six Nation employees have access to specialized training or educational opportunities. Finally, GREAT can assist the employer in identifying future workers and facilitate early access to students enrolled in specialized skills training and post secondary education institutions.

The education levels of people with post secondary education have increased since 1996. Between 1996 and 2008, 9,475 individuals were funded under Six Nations' Post Secondary Education Program. Approximately 75 post secondary students graduate each year from a variety of programs with a high number graduating from social sciences, health sciences, education, business and commerce, and engineering and applied arts.

New Market Opportunities

By employing from Six Nations' workforce, your business can enjoy increased exposure to Six Nations population, thus opening up valuable new market opportunities. There are approximately 11,223 Six Nations citizens living within Six Nations of the Grand River and another 11,777 living off reserve with a significant number living in the surrounding areas of Brantford, Hamilton, and the Niagara region. The purchasing power of Six Nations growing population and income comprise a significant market for goods and services.

There are over 300 businesses operating within Six Nations and the New Credit Territory. Employing Six Nations' people can lead to new market opportunities and greater access to new development opportunities as a result of increased understanding of the customer and creating a positive relationship with Six Nations' business community. Your business image and reputation is important in marketing goods and services and impacts the ability to access certain markets. A positive image with respect to Aboriginal relations can be a significant competitive advantage in the market place.

IT PAYS TO HIRE...



Avoidance of Delays and Managing Risk Exposure

In some instances, it is recommended that businesses seek out and develop expertise related to Aboriginal engagement. Such expertise will prove invaluable in understanding Six Nations' practices, concerns and protocols. Businesses developing near traditional lands need to address Six Nations' concerns regarding land claims and whether there has been satisfactory resolution to the issue. Early engagement with Six Nations may help to establish a basis for cooperation and reduce or eliminate possible objections to a project and costly interventions in the regulation processes. Hiring from Six Nations' workforce may well be the beginning to opening those doors to understanding the practices, concerns, and protocols of Six Nations' people.

Legal Obligations

The Employment Equity Act requires federally-regulated employers to achieve a representative workforce including women, people with disability, visible minority, and Aboriginal people. The Canadian Human Rights Act permits employers to take special measures to achieve equitable representation of Aboriginal peoples and other groups in the workforce. Hiring from Six Nations' workforce is one way of achieving a representative workforce.

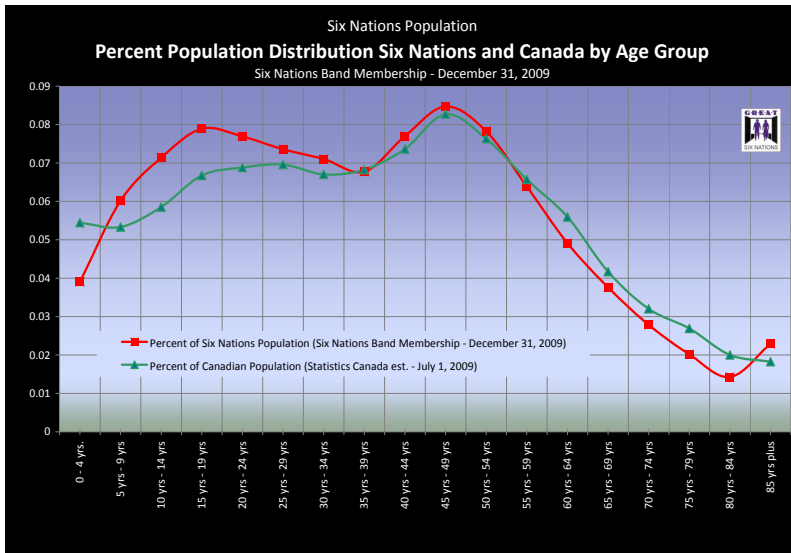
Cultural Diversity

In the workplace, cultural diversity is viewed as the cultural differences that exist between co-workers such as language, dress, tradition, values, and concept of morality. The values and world view of Six Nations' workforce is unique. For example, Six Nations people tend to be more community oriented as opposed to individualistic in their way of thinking and behaviours. This characteristic can be comparable to being a team member in the workplace. Research has shown that heterogeneous (mixed) groups are more productive than homogenous (similar) groups in the workplace. Six Nations' workforce can increase productivity in the workplace by means of new ideas, new ways of seeing a problem, striving to reach consensus, and by easily fitting into a team approach to getting things done.

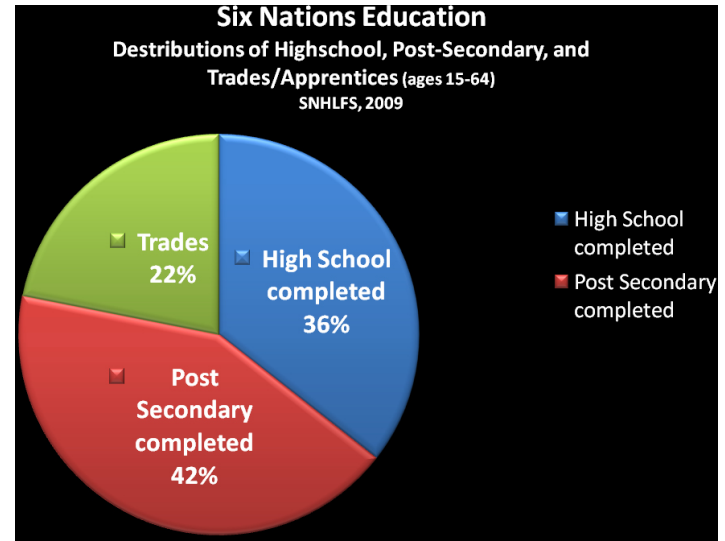
Improved Customer Service

Hiring from Six Nations' workforce will offer employers a new perspective and enhance the ability to service Six Nations and other Aboriginal people. Aboriginal communities and businesses represent a significant and growing market for goods and services. Businesses that demonstrate initiative and improve their business understanding of this market will create a welcoming environment for Six Nations' employees and business clients. Creating networks with Six Nations' workforce and businesses will help employers understand the Aboriginal person's and community's spending habits, values, expectations and practices.





The Aboriginal population in Canada is young and growing at a rate that is almost twice the general Canadian population. The above charts show that Six Nations workforce has a larger percentage of young workers than does Canada as a whole. As new technology and new roles emerge for the new Green industries, business will look to the young to learn and develop.



Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT) is working to strengthen its workforce to match the needs of Canadian businesses. Six Nations of the Grand River Territory's workforce is becoming more educated and developing more employment-relevant skills than ever before. Over 80% of Six Nations employment eligible population reported an education level of grade 12 or higher. That group is broken down in the chart above. Six Nations' workforce has much to offer employers.



CONNECT TODAY!

Aboriginal Inclusion Resources for Employers

Grand River Employment and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) P.O. Box 690, 16 Sunrise Court, Ohsweken Ontario N0A 1M0
Telephone: 519 445 2222 www.greatsn.com
Toll Free: 1 888 218 8230
Fax: 519 445 4777

Labour Market Solutions (G.R.E.A.T. Employment Project) Telephone: (519)445-0770
Toll Free: 1-877-670-WORK.

Aboriginal Employment and Training Centre 129 Colborne Street, Suite #101, Brantford, Ontario N3T 2G6
Telephone: 519 758 9210

OSTTC (Ogwehoweh Skills and Training Centre) 16 Sunrise Court, Ohsweken, Ontario N0A 1M0
Telephone: 519 445 1515 www.osttc.com
Toll Free: 1 866 827 5912

Six Nations Polytechnic P.O. Box 700, 2160 Fourth Line, Ohsweken, Ontario N0A 1M0
Telephone: 519 445 0023 www.snpolytechnic.com
Fax: 519 445 4416

Grand River Post Secondary Education P.O. Box 339, 2160 Fourth Line Ohsweken, ON, N0A 1M0
Telephone: 519 445 2219 www.grpseo.org
Fax: 519 445 4296



Building an Inclusive Workplace

A Joint Partnership



Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie
Commission de planification de la main-d'oeuvre de Grand Erie

1100 Clarence Street South, Suite 103B, Box 12, Brantford, Ontario N3S 7N8
T: 519-756-1116 F: 519-756-4663 E: admin@workforceplanningboard.org

and



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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.