



INDIGENOUS TOURISM

WISE WAYS

A Guide of Smart Practices to Attracting and Retaining Indigenous Talent



Canada



Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia
Labour Market Development Agreement.

About this Guide

This guide is a quick reference tool for Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism employers who are seeking proven 'Wise Ways' and 'Smart Practice' solutions to find, attract, hire, and retain Indigenous talent, and offers ideas to navigate operating challenges. It covers key areas of interest and concern identified by participants of the Indigenous Tourism BC Labour Research project surveys, focus groups and interviews, and features their advice, smart practices, and 'Wise Ways' that worked for them with the project team, and is supplemented with material from other research, studies, and guides.

Wise Ways are ideas based on experience. These ideas were selected based on common conditions, and while they worked, every situation is different. Use these concepts to guide you, your business, your community, your Nation with building strong Indigenous tourism and to support Indigenous people with establishing long successful careers in Indigenous tourism.

It does not offer legal advice or should be considered Employment Standards. Check with your Band, Indigenous employment agency, or local government services office to determine which Employment Standards legislation applies to your business.

How to Use this Guide

Use this handbook as a quick reference. You do not need to read the whole manual to get to the information you want, just look up the topic in the Table of Contents, then turn to that section.

A **Smart Practice** is a method or technique that has been generally accepted as a superior practice because it produces results that are better to those achieved by other means, or because it has become a standard way of doing things, like a standard way of complying with legal or ethical requirements. **Wise Ways** in the Indigenous community incorporate Indigenous culture, values, and morals.

Wise Ways

About the Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC)

ITBC is a non-profit, stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry that envisions a sustainable Indigenous tourism sector with diverse products in every region of the province. Through training, information resources, networking opportunities and co-operative marketing programs, ITBC is a one-stop resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in British Columbia who are operating or looking to start a tourism business. ITBC works closely with tourism, business, education, and government organizations to help BC's Indigenous tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promotes these experiences to visitors and residents.

Project Advisory Committee

The project is guided by a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of Indigenous and mainstream tourism industry leaders. The members provided advice throughout the project on the research activities, reviewed project reports, and offered guidance on strategic activities.

- Krista Bax, CEO, go2HR
- Sharon Bondhogg, Owner/Operator, Kekuli Café / Director, Indigenous Tourism BC
- Andrea Hinck, Director of Industry Training, go2HR
- Walt Judas, CEO, Tourism Industry Association of BC (TIABC)
- Richard Porges, Acting CEO, Destination BC
- Arun Subramanian, Director of Industry Health & Safety, go2HR
- Sandra White, Sandra White & Associates

Ex-Officio

- Ryan McCormick, BC Ministry of Advanced Education & Training
- Jessica McKierahan, BC Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture

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- Karen Abramsen, Okanagan Training and Development Council, Program Manager
- Gary McDermott, ACCESS Director of Programs / USF Director of Development



The Consultants – O'Neil Marketing & Consulting

O'Neil Marketing & Consulting collaborates with other leaders in Indigenous and tourism research and economic forecasts. For more than 25 years, O'Neil has tailored project teams to the client. O'Neil and team members have worked on projects that defined Indigenous tourism in British Columbia, Canada, and has guided Indigenous people and Nations worldwide in designing tourism experiences that reflect their story. More info: www.designingnations.com

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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of its author(s) and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.



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INDIGENOUS TOURISM WISE WAYS

A Guide to Smart Practices to Attracting and Retaining Indigenous Talent

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“A Smart Practices Guide for attracting and retaining Indigenous people in tourism operations is an excellent tool for managers and business operators. It would have been great when I was hired.”

-Jared Beaton, General Manager, Best Western Tin Wis Resort

INDIGENOUS TOURISM WISE WAYS

A Guide to Smart Practices to Attracting and Retaining Indigenous Talent

Introduction

Tourism offers Indigenous people the opportunity to celebrate and share our culture, and for Indigenous Nations to provide opportunities for their people and others to connect with Indigenous culture and history. It is a big contributor to the Canadian and British Columbia economy. Tourism added an "...estimated \$104.9 billion in tourism expenditures in 2019, supporting approximately 1 in 10 jobs in communities across Canada and contributes an estimated \$43.5 billion in Gross Domestic Product."¹ In fact, 2019 was the third industry record breaking year supported by around 2.1 million tourism workers. In that period, the 488 Indigenous tourism businesses in British Columbia employed 4,428 people.



1 in 10

Jobs = 2.1 Million
Tourism Workers
Canada



1 in 16

Jobs
Tourism Workers
Canada




4,428

Employees in
488 Indigenous tourism
businesses

"Valuing and recognizing employees in the tourism sector is fundamental to developing a strong Indigenous tourism labour market."

- Sandra White (Siksika), FirstHost Customer Service Training Program Developer and Tourism Consultant

¹ "Canada experiences third consecutive record-breaking year for tourism in 2019." Destination Canada.
<https://www.destinationcanada.com/en/news/canada-experiences-third-consecutive-record-breaking-year-tourism-2019>

A person wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a dark vest over a light shirt, and jeans is standing on a large, mossy rock in a dense forest. They are holding a drum and a stick, appearing to play. The forest is lush with green trees and moss-covered rocks.

Through tourism, Indigenous people can celebrate who they are, tell their story, enable Elders to restore their place in the community through knowledge sharing, and youth to learn and celebrate their culture.

After the COVID-19 global pandemic was announced in spring 2020, there was 22% fewer employees². In British Columbia this equated to a loss of roughly 60,000 workers, down from 337,800 the year before.³ The challenge to BC's tourism industry and Indigenous tourism is **rebuilding to the 2019 levels** as rapidly as possible and attracting the return of the 60,000 workers and new entrants after COVID-19 orders are lifted.

Tourism employers will reface the ongoing challenge of attracting people in a competitive environment where other industries pay more. Tourism HR Canada says that ongoing tourism job losses will impede recovery, and the longer workers are disconnected from their workplace, the harder it will be for employers to get them to come back.⁴

Even with natural disasters like floods and fire, and economic downturns, the tourism industry has been able to thrive. Indigenous tourism offers to Indigenous people cultural connections that few other industries can provide.

This guide shares experiences and ideas on how to attract Indigenous people to work in Indigenous and mainstream tourism businesses. It is your tool for planning how to design a culturally appropriate workplace where people will want to work, stay, and grow.

Who is this Guide for?

- ✓ Band owned businesses
- ✓ Indigenous owned business
- ✓ Non-Indigenous owned tourism businesses who want to employ Indigenous people

² "Workforce Shortfall: And What it Takes to Restart Canada's Tourism Workforce." Tourism HR Canada, Webinar, January 15, 2021. https://tourismhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/Tourism_HR_Canada_Webinar_Workforce_Shortfall.pdf

³ IBID. Seasonally adjusted employment numbers.

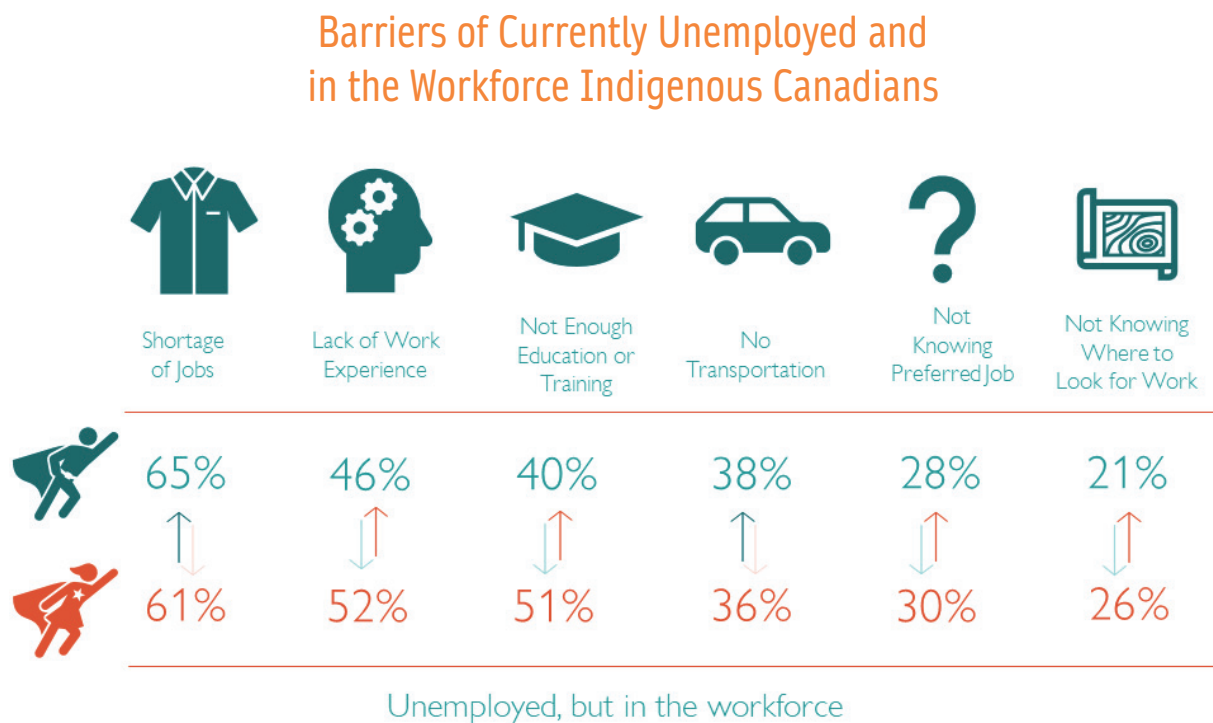
⁴ IBID. Quote from speaker in webinar.

1. What to Know – Indigenous People Workers

Tourism employers seeking Indigenous people should understand the challenges and barriers Indigenous people can face when seeking employment. While many industries report labour shortages, there are Indigenous people who feel there are job shortages. The reasons they feel this can be for a wide range of reasons. First, most Indigenous communities in BC are rural or isolated making job opportunities in their immediate community few, and difficult to get to other jobs, due to transportation being limited or unavailable. When work experience and education are added to the job requirements job, Indigenous candidates may be reluctant to apply to jobs.

Indigenous people are essential to truly authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experiences. Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism employer should know what prevents or deters Indigenous people from securing employment.

Information on the tourism workforce provincial, nationally, by sector, and other criteria is available through the Tourism HR Council (<https://tourismhr.ca>).



Source: Statistics Canada. 2018. Labour Market Experiences of First Nations people living off reserve: Key findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2018003-eng.htm>

What Would Help People Currently Unemployed and in the Workforce



22%

More Jobs



14%

Skills Training



13%

More Education



10%

Transportation



9%

Work Experience



4%

Contacts / Networking



3%

Childcare



2%

Being Younger



2%

Moving



2%

Job Finding Clubs

Source: Statistics Canada. 2018. Labour Market Experiences of First Nations people living off reserve: Key findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2018003-eng.htm>

“Stepping back to the 6,000 foot level, attracting workers into tourism in general is extremely difficult, and is becoming even more so.”

– Barry Zwueste, CEO, St. Eugene Golf Resort Casino, Cranbrook, BC

Barriers of Unemployed and Out of the Workforce Indigenous Canadians

Reasons for Not being in the Workforce



32%

Illness or disability



19%

Attending school



12%

Absence of childcare



7%

Other personal responsibilities



5%

Believed no work available

What Would Help People Not in the Workforce



29%

More Education



25%

Skills Training



19%

More Jobs / Work



17%

Work Experience



16%

Resume Writing Skills



16%

Better Health



14%

Contacts / Networking



13%

Job Finding Clubs



12%

Transportation



12%

Childcare



9%

Moving



4%

Help Starting a Business

"You can't build a reputation on what you're going to do."
- Henry Ford

Why Work in Tourism?

For Indigenous people tourism is more than a job. Tourism provides Indigenous people opportunities to work on the land and reconnect with their roots and share their culture, as well as for Elders to share culture with youth, and for youth to connect with the earth and expand their self-confidence and self-esteem.

While culture and opportunities to connect with the lands are key features that attract many Indigenous people into the tourism industry, these too must be balanced with typical job basics – good pay with benefits and flexibility, and a respectful workplace free of discrimination and bullying. Some will want to know there are supports for training, and the prospect of promotion, while others want the opportunity to practice and share their culture in the workplace. Like other non-Indigenous people, the Indigenous employee's decision may be influenced by the reputation of the employer, employee standards and cultural benefits, and the availability of housing, transportation, childcare, and training supports.

Cultural benefits are opportunities for employees to share, participate in, and / or experience other Indigenous cultures. This may be in the workplace in sharing days, cultural team building activities, or through employer benefits that recognize an employee may have obligations, a role in their community, or is actively engaged in cultural activities such as a ceremonial leader, gathering and hunting for the Elders, or a pow-wow dancer.

Research on the BC Indigenous tourism labour force revealed Indigenous owned tourism businesses, that were small (employing less than 25 people) fostered a familiar environment with work values that were like those of the Indigenous candidate. Factors that influenced Indigenous people's decision to seek employment in tourism workplaces included:

- ❑ **Job-Personality Match** – provided a job that suited their interests – one that they could be passionate about and offered a fast-paced busy workplace.
- ❑ **Career / Advancement opportunities** – provided the opportunity to learn and try other positions and had career advancement opportunities.
- ❑ **Workplace enjoyment** – offered them a place where they would be respected and valued, and the work would be fun and enjoyable.
- ❑ **Customer Interaction** – provided chances to interact with customers – one respondent exclaimed that was what they liked most about working in a destination resort.
- ❑ **Wage rate** – provided a living wage, and one that reflected the value of the work and its demands.
- ❑ **Reputation of Business** – which was reflected in the people and management, and awareness of why employees left or were dismissed.
- ❑ **Indigenous owned and operated** – fostered a familiar environment with work values that were like theirs.
- ❑ **Location** – provided jobs in a place suited to their lifestyle.

MATCH THE JOB WITH THE PERSON

Employers find the greatest success with attracting and retaining employees when they learn what the person wants to do and then matches this with the right job and appropriate training.



2. Plan for Your Success with the Right People

Indigenous tourism employers face many challenges to filling jobs of a medium to large sized new business. Even micro and small sized businesses can have problems. Employers must realistically consider that there can be difficulties in filling jobs vacancies when starting, acquiring, or expanding a business. Key is 'People make the business.' Without effective human resources planning, your tourism business can flounder and fail.

There are many barriers to Indigenous people employment that a business, and especially a First Nation, have successfully developed programs and resources to overcome. For example, many Indigenous Skills Employment Training agencies (ISETs) offer drivers licence training and can tailor training programs with post-secondary, offer certificate workshops and support individual training, offer career counselling, and employer recruitment and screening services. There are also First Nations that offer childcare, and are building their language and cultural activities. Despite advances, barriers still prevail.

Barriers to Indigenous Employment

- ✓ Racism, discrimination, and social exclusion
- ✓ Recruitment Difficulties (*how to find Indigenous workers and communicate with them*)
- ✓ Literacy, Skills Education, Technical, Job-Related Skills, Professional Qualifications
- ✓ Work Experience
- ✓ Cultural Differences (*including language*)
- ✓ Self Esteem
- ✓ Poverty and Poor Housing
- ✓ Lack of Drivers Licence
- ✓ Lack of Transportation
- ✓ Childcare
- ✓ Family structure (*early parenthood, single parent*)
- ✓ Rural / Remote areas
- ✓ Labour Policy / Poor Program Alignment

Indigenous employers to must prepare for challenges to filling jobs. The most challenging factors are itemized below.

Most Challenging Factors to Filling Jobs by Indigenous Tourism Employers

Overcoming limited awareness of Indigenous culture



Finding employees with cultural knowledge and / or language

Finding employees with high school completion



Finding employees with post-secondary completion

Creating job awareness



Competing with other tourism employers



Competing with non-tourism employers



Providing competitive job wages / salaries



Having sufficient appropriate employee housing in the area



Having transportation available to and from the job



Overcoming negative perception of tourism jobs and careers



Establishing connections with labour sources, such as local First Nation Bands



Accessing local training and education

Source: Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future: Research Findings. BC Indigenous Tourism Businesses: Factors Impacting Recruitment. Indigenous Tourism BC. O'Neil Marketing & Consulting.

Indigenous governments design the environment.
Business decisions makes it work.

Set the Stage – Define Government and Business Roles

There is a difference between how you manage a Band government and how you operate and make decisions for a tourism business. The business should structure to operate independent of Band government and be able to focus on financial feasibility and business goals such as profit and continued operation. Band government is responsible for providing the vision, direction, and community policies for all business, while staying out of daily business management. Bands and Band owned businesses are 'publicly owned', therefore separating the two is essential especially when hiring, promotion, wage increases, and dismissals are concerns.

Start by setting clear boundaries between Band governance and business by defining the roles and authority of each. Remember that Chief and Council govern, while business leadership manages. Business must be solely responsible for hiring, promotions, wage and salary matters, and dismissing employees – involving elected political officials in these decisions exposes everyone to perceived conflict of interest accusations... and in communities where people are often related, through marriage or birth, even if a Chief or Councillor excuses themselves from hiring decisions, a few years later, it could be difficult to prove if Chief and Council made these decisions.

When a Band starts a new tourism business or acquires an existing one, it should plan its labour and human resources (as well as other business matters). At the start of the tourism business, there should be a protocol agreement between the Band and business, and a labour strategy plus a human resources plan, followed by human resources policies specific to the tourism business.

The Protocol Agreement

A Protocol Agreement defines the responsibilities of Chief and Council as it relates to the business operations, and the responsibilities of the Chief and Council and how they relate to the business' Board of Directors. A typical protocol agreement covers:

- ❑ **Roles and Responsibilities** – of the Band government and the business who is responsible for what, and how decisions will be made including staff management issues.
- ❑ **Business Governance Structure** – sets out the practices and principles under which a business is run and its roles and responsibilities to its owner, the community.
- ❑ **Development Corporation Board of Directors** – operates independent of Chief and Council, and solely gives direction to the business management.

Protocol Agreements define the roles of Band leadership and the Band businesses. Chief and Council govern, while business management manages.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM LABOUR PLANNING

Protocol Agreement



Define how the Band and business will work together, and each parties' roles and responsibilities.



HR Strategy



Strategic Analysis

Identify Strategic HR Issues

Prioritize Issues and Actions

Prepare HR Strategic Plan for the HR Plan

Set the direction of the business labour needs with a realistic analysis of the current and future labour force and trends.



HR Plan



Determine Labour Needs

Recruit

Select

Design Training

Map the tasks for recruiting and selecting people, including pre-opening and ongoing training. The plan should have timelines, budgets, and list partners.

Appraise Performance

Compensation

HR Policies & Procedures



Align the HR Policies & Procedures with the Band's policies, and ensure there are incentives to staff achieving excellence in the business.



**INDIGENOUS
TOURISM BC**

Labour Planning – The Human Resources Strategy and Plan

Start a new business with well thought out course of action by developing a **Human Resources (HR) Strategy** followed by a **Human Resources Plan**. The **Human Resources Strategy** and **Human Resources Plan** address many aspects of your business from concept to start-up to operations and growth, covering recruiting to retention, productivity, and succession planning. It is an important part of your community and business strategic plan. The more people your business needs, the more complex it becomes – there are more people to keep in the loop and ensure they have the same vision and quality and customer relations standards. In businesses where there are promotion and career growth opportunities, people will be more concerned with their career. These plans should be developed to combat the common barriers to Indigenous employment and propose how your business will operate to attract and sustain employees.

The **HR Strategy** precedes the **HR Plan**. The HR Strategy sets out the vision and goals of what you are going to achieve based on your evaluation of the environment, while the HR Plan maps ‘HOW’ you are going to achieve it, ‘WHAT’ you are going to do, and ‘HOW’ it will be evaluated.

- The HR Strategy is a critical analysis of the current environment. It profiles the Band’s or Nation’s labour force now and future, as well as the labour force region and assesses future interest, challenges, and opportunities to meeting the business labour needs. The **Indigenous labour profile** covers who has cultural knowledge, language skills, and awareness of the First Nation’s traditional lands, history, practices, and legends. The strategy must also address recruiting for opening, training to business and service standards, as well as hiring policies and priorities, and filling vacancies. First Nations with low populations of working age and available labour force will need to consider recruiting outside of Band membership, and for positions that require unique skills or specialized credentials.

The steps to preparing the HR strategy and plan are illustrated in the Indigenous Tourism Labour Planning diagram (on page 10).

Quaaout Lodge & Spa at Talking Rock Golf Resort – Empowering Employers

With Little Shuswap Band, and the Adams Lake Band T'selcéwtqen Clleq'mel'ten / Chief Atahm School, Quaaout Lodge hosts a work experience program for youth and adults. The resort is empowered to be a ‘desired employer’ of jobs for Indigenous people building careers. An 8-week onboarding program includes job shadowing, mentoring, and identifying interests, as well as establishing skills in guest interactions or office systems, and self-employment. After people find out what they like, they are hired into positions that match their interests and passion. Hiring Band members for any job instead of what the person likes leads to people doing work just because, work dissatisfaction and job failure.

– Adam Blair, General Manager

Questions for Building Your Human Resources Strategy

- 1 **Separate Government from Business Relationships** – If this is a Band owned business, have you determined how the Band government and business management be separated? Is the business' vision, mission and mandate aligned with the Nation's?
- 2 **Prepare a Human Resources Profile** – Have you developed an inventory of your citizens along with a profile of the local and regional labour pool? Get to know your citizen's cultural knowledge and language skills, education, technical skills, credentials, occupational and industry experience, interests, age, gender, and employment status.
- 3 **Job Lists and Descriptions** – Do you have a complete list of the number of jobs with a job description for each position? The National Occupational Codes and Canada Job Bank have industry standard job descriptions, and current descriptions can be found through online job post websites.
- 4 **Match Jobs with Inventory** – Have you completed an objective analysis of matching the jobs with available people in your community and area?
 - Be certain to assess the likelihood that your community members will want or are interested in the jobs?
 - Does your community have the skills it needs to fill each job with the right cultural, interpersonal skills, credential, education, and experience?
 - How will you fill the vacancies?
- 5 **Strategic Tactics and Resources Needed** – Determine how gaps and shortages will be filled. Objectively ask yourself:
 - How will recruitment be done?
 - If you do not have people within your community that qualify for the jobs now, be realistic in forecasting when enough people can be trained and how many will be interested and qualify for these positions.
 - How long will it take to train someone in relation to your business opening, the level of on-the-job experience is needed, and whether your people are interested in these occupations.
 - What training can be done in advance? When can training be done? Who will deliver the training?
 - What resources are needed to recruit and deliver training? Are there programs in your area that support training programs?
 - If skilled people need to be sourced elsewhere, who will they be, how will you find them?
 - Where will people live? Do you need to build staff housing or provide transportation?
 - Do you have succession planning? Do you have a partnership that the Indigenous partner plans to buy out? How will management, especially senior positions, be replaced with your citizens?
- 6 **Finding and Recruiting Employees** – determine how you will connect with Indigenous people.
 - Do you require external help to recruit your employees?
 - If this is a seasonal business, how will you recruit each new season and attract or encourage people to return?
 - Are the skills highly specialized?
 - Do you need a large number of employees?
 - Is there a career fair you can attend? Are you prepared with interview questions and job information?
 - What resources do have for recruitment?

- 7 **Employment Policies and Priorities** – Will community, nation and Indigenous people be given priority to job openings?
 - What criteria will be set for selecting employees?
 - Will there be targets in the percent of Indigenous hires at opening? Are you sure you can maintain those targets after opening?
 - What criteria will be Will targets be set?
- 8 **Training and Preparation** – What is your training strategy – pre-opening, for onboarding, and during business operations?
 - Do you have training that sets standards on how people will be greeted, tables set, staff appearance, etc.?
 - Have you planned for on-the-job training, onboarding and ongoing skills development for career and succession planning?
- 9 **Values Proposition** – Do you know what benefits and supports you will offer to attract and retain employees?
 - Do you know how your business is perceived by others? What is your business employment reputation and values proposition?
 - Will there be signing bonuses, travel and moving costs offered? If equipment is required or special credentials, will your business provide these.
 - How will your wages compare to other employers in the area, and in similar positions? Are you offering a living wage?
- 10 **Plan the Work Environment** – What is the workplace you want to have?
 - Can you describe how people will feel when working? If a candidate asked you to describe the workplace, what would you say it is or will be like?
 - Once hired, how will you motivate and retain employees?
 - What will regular perks and incentives be for working with you, such as personal and family life, vouchers, and gift certificates?



Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre Youth Recruitment Strategy

“Our Indigenous Youth Ambassador (IYA) program is the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre's longest and most successful program. Service Canada invests in the SLCC and the Indigenous youth living in the Sea to Sky region. We have cohorts of youth living and learning their culture, retail, back-of-house, financial planning, FOODSAFE, Serving-It-Right, First Aid, resume building, and public speaking. The IYAs join the staff each morning before opening for a drum and song, learning, and witnessing their language and dance. The program encourages retention and hiring for not only tourism positions, but anything the students are interested in pursuing. The experience here creates higher paying jobs as front-line workers, and gives them the foundation to become future leaders.”

– Heather Paul, Executive Director, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

Filling Positions

There may be jobs your community members are not skilled or interested in doing. The work still must be done. Attract candidates to hard to fill positions.



Top 10 Most Challenging Indigenous Tourism Positions to Fill

1. Outdoor Sport and Recreation Guides
2. Cooks
3. Musicians and Singers
4. Bus Drivers, Subway Operators and Transit Operators
5. Light Duty Cleaners
6. Hotel Front Desk Clerks
7. Retail Salesperson
8. Chefs
9. Other Customer and Information Services Representatives
10. Food and Beverage Servers



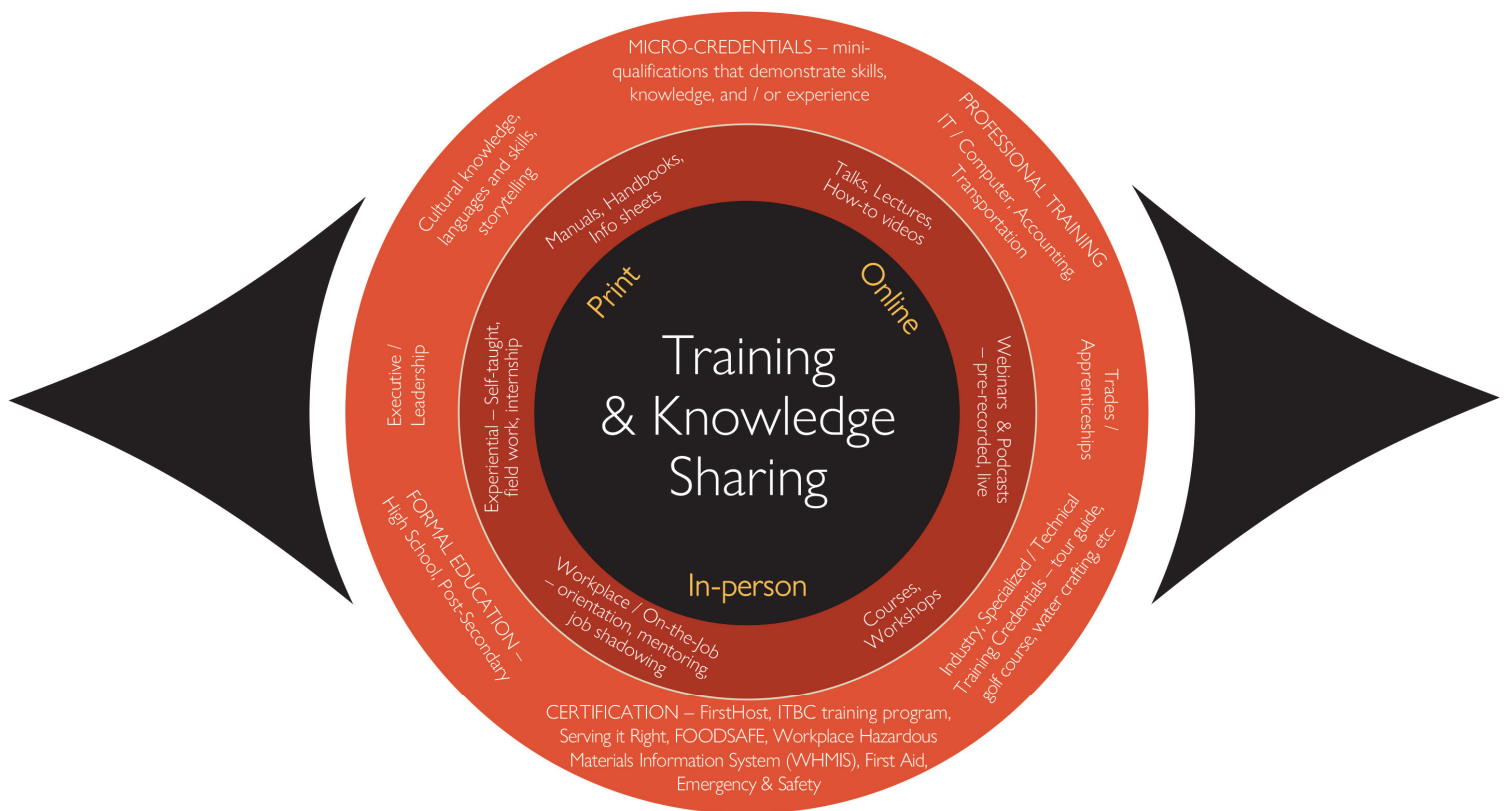
Source: Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future: Research Findings. BC Indigenous Tourism Businesses: Factors Impacting Recruitment. Indigenous Tourism BC. O'Neil Marketing & Consulting.

Training Programs

Ongoing training is part of an employee and a business success, whether it is intended to prepare someone for the job or to groom for a new role or position. Training typically develops hard skills and can also be to build soft skills. First Nations also offer cultural hard skills training to build cultural knowledge, history, language, practices, and other teachings.

There are a wide variety of training programs, courses, and workshops that should be included in your Human Resources Strategy, Human Resources Plan, and business operations.

Types of Training and Education



Indigenous Training Program design should be done with the Indigenous learner in mind. They should be delivered in the community by Indigenous instructors and containing Indigenous content is highly effective. If the training is specialized and there are no Indigenous instructors, include Indigenous speakers and activities into the learning environment. Indigenous activities could include having Elders in the classroom, offering cultural history and language lessons, doing arts and crafts, and going on field trips.

Key Elements of an Indigenous Training Programs

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) “Doing it Right: A Best Practices Guide to Attracting, Training, Employing, and Retaining Aboriginal People in the Trades: Best Practices” found that Indigenous courses and programs that have high completion rates followed by workplace success are:

- ❑ Flexible in the training program admission, delivery, and schedule.
- ❑ Incorporate cultural teachings and activities, such as field trips, speakers, interactive activities.
- ❑ Have smaller class sizes offering more one-to-one interaction with the instructor.
- ❑ Offer optional out-of-class support, such as tutoring, daycare.
- ❑ Provide meals – breakfast, snacks, lunch, and dinner if in the evening.

(See <https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/info/GUIDE-ITA%20AI%20LMA%20Review%20Pt2-Best%20Practices%20Final.pdf>)

Executive and Leadership Training – include it in the training programs and provide opportunities in the workplace for people to test and develop their leadership skills. This could be in leading a project or work team, spearheading the design of a new tour package, taking turns leading a tour, or participating in a planning project. An element of leadership training is ‘**cross-training**’ which places staff in other positions to develop their skills and knowledge and improve awareness in the organization.

Go to go2HR

Your Source for Tourism Industry and Safety Training

go2HR is BC's tourism and hospitality human resource and health and safety association offering education, training, tools, and information to support employers with human resources and health and safety practices.

- **Best HR Practices** – information on best practices and industry award
- **Industry Health and Safety** – tools for training young and new workers, food and beverage operator's safety guide, guide to handling workplace impairment, kitchen safety, implementing a COVID-19 Safety Plan, Certification of Recognition (COR) which incentivizes employers to go beyond the legal requirements of workplace safety.
- **Labour Market Information** – regional data for planning
- **Certificate Training** – FOODSAFE, SuperHost*
- **Tourism Career Awareness** – job board and career website
- **Other Tools** – training and recruitment planning tools, training map, and information on tourism training in BC

More information at www.go2HR.ca

**ITBC offers the First Nation First-Host customer service program.*



3. Attract the Right People and Make them Want to Stay

Like every industry, tourism employers want to attract and keep great people. Businesses invest time, money, and other resources to find the right person for a position; if that person does not work out then they start again. While a vacant job position seems like your business is saving money in wages, that vacant business can harm and cost your business. Costs are incurred in keeping that position empty and in looking for the right person. A vacant position can strain and stress other employees, increase overtime and accidents, reduce productivity, decrease customer service and satisfaction, and increase employee dissatisfaction which can lead to increased turnover. Hiring should be a top priority because being short staffed can harm your business.

Can You Afford to Lose an Employee?

The cost to replace an employee earning:

\$15/hour = \$5,000*

\$30,000 to \$50,000 a year = \$8,000

*Adjusted from \$10/hour at \$3,328 cost to replace a lost employee.

Source: www.peoplekeep.com/blog/employee-retention-the-real-cost-of-losing-an-employee

The Job Description and Post

While wages and salaries are important, tourism has attractive qualities that many Indigenous people say they are looking for. Indigenous people who participated in the Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research project⁵ said they were seeking employers who offer jobs that match their personality / personal interests, where there are career and

advancement prospects, and opportunities to interact with customers. While wages are not the top reason an Indigenous employee is attracted to an employer, poor wages can keep a good employee from accepting a job, as well as reduced or low work hours, workplace safety and discrimination and unfair treatment in the workplace.

Tourism offers Indigenous people ways to connect with and share their culture that other industries are unable to provide. Also, many tourism jobs have low entrance requirements as a person's interpersonal and 'soft skills' are of greater importance to a tourism employer where customer service skills are highly valued.

Indigenous People Want and Don't Want in an Employer

Attracts

- Job-personality match
- Career / Advancement opportunities
- Workplace enjoyment
- Customer interaction
- Wage rate
- Reputation of business
- Indigenous owned and operated
- Location

Repels

- Low Wages
- Reduction in or low number of working hours
- Unsafe workplace
- Discrimination and unfair treatment
- Wrong job
- Dead end job
- Mismanagement and lack of leadership

Source: Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future – Research Findings. ITBC, 2021.

⁵ Source: Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future – Research Findings. ITBC, 2021.

Your job description is your business advertisement. It must be designed and worded to have the greatest appeal to Indigenous people so they feel welcome, that they will be treated fairly, valued, and have a realistic chance of being hired. State your intentions to employ a diverse workforce of which Indigenous people will feel cherished and wanted.

Design the job for the Indigenous candidate by incorporating recognition of Indigenous cultural skills and valuing that knowledge.

The job description along with educational and work experience demands must be what the candidate feels is the appropriate and commensurate wage.

Job descriptions which require high education and / or a lot of work experience can discourage an Indigenous person from applying, even if they have the credentials or equivalent experience. Stating in the post "Or equivalent experience" too can curb interest as candidates may believe that preference will be granted to candidates who satisfy formal education requirements.

Design the job description based on the activities of the position and whether on the job training and promotional opportunities, including cross training will be provided.

Employer requirements for skilled, educated or entry level positions, should not prevent employers from hiring persons who would otherwise have the ideal personality and traits, such as a positive attitude, clear communication and listening skills, assertiveness, sense of humor, empathy, taking responsibility, and more for the position. These **soft skills** make a person a good employee, they are not so much taught, as they are 'cultivated'. Job requirements that emphasize 'learnable' criteria, including credentials and educational attainments, can be taught on-the-job or through courses and workshops. You may be missing out or overlooking an excellent Indigenous candidate who has the right personality, because of skills they can learn.

Why a Long Job Vacancy??

Studies show that the duration of a job vacancy is positively correlated with more demanding hiring criteria such as age, level of education and years of required experience.... the higher demands you have for applicants, the longer it will take to fill the positions.



Assertiveness



Sense of Humor



Empathy



Positive Attitude



Taking Responsibility



Communication & Listening Skills





Use the National Occupational Classification (NOC) System to Guide HR Planning and Job Descriptions

The National Occupational Classifications (NOCs) system offers standardized descriptions of jobs along with codes that serve as a framework useful for recruiting, gathering statistics, analyzing market trends, and planning human resources. The NOC is a useful tool for developing HR plans and job descriptions, as well as counselling Indigenous candidates with mapping their tourism career. Indigenous Skills Employment Training agencies (ISETs) also utilize these NOC descriptions for conducting Essential Skill⁶ assessments which assess the alignment of the client with the position demands.

This four-tiered NOC hierarchal structure has typical job titles for each code from senior management to entry level descriptions. Each NOC has the main job characteristics and the aptitudes, interests, data, people things, physical activities (i.e., vision, body position, strength, hearing, visual requirements related to color discrimination, and limb coordination), occupations, workplaces and employment requirements in education and training indicators, and occupational options. Occupational options are jobs that have some form of mobility such as transferability, lateral mobility, upward progression, and specialization.

Design Collateral Materials and Job Postings to Attract Indigenous People

The design and preparation of collateral materials for your business and job posting can have greater appeal to an Indigenous person when these fundamentals are applied to their design.

- ❑ **Images** – be authentic, be real. Refrain from using ‘models’ in your photo sessions. Use photographs of Indigenous people who actually work in your business – you cannot have an authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experience by profiling ‘fake’ workers. As possible, caption in the photo the Indigenous person by name, Indigenous ethnicity, and occupation. Keep in mind a lot of Indigenous people know each other, or the family or community – when they identify with the person in photo, a connection develops along with the belief they might work there too.
- ❑ **Terminology** – refrain from using words and phrases that imply ‘savior’ language, people must feel they are valued and wanted based on who they are and their strengths, and not that they are a project. Develop wording which reflects features that attract people to your tourism experience like those listed in the “Indigenous People Want and Don’t Want in an Employer” diagram (see page 17). Wording should inspire Indigenous applicants to feel empowered. Refrain from using words and phrases that imply you are there to ‘help’ or ‘save’ them.
- ❑ **Testimonials** – include testimonials from your employees in your promotional materials, on your website, in social media, and add any accolades from customers about your employees.

Attract candidates who want to develop careers and grow with your company by advertising ‘laddering positions’ which lead to growth opportunities.

⁶ Essential Skills Assessment provides an indication of a candidate’s skill strengths and areas that may require improvement. Many ISETs offer these to assess and design a skills and educational plan that assists a person in preparing their chosen career. Visit the Government of Canada online ‘Essential Skills Indicator’ at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/tools/online-indicator.html>

- ❑ **Art** – if using Indigenous styled designs or art in your promotional materials, ensure it is created by an Indigenous person, rather than 'inspired' by Indigenous culture.
- ❑ **Designers and Suppliers** – Walk the talk. If you want Indigenous people to work for your business, start by hiring Indigenous people to be your designer, advisors, suppliers, and consultants.

Finding Indigenous Talent

The Indigenous population is the fastest growing group in British Columbia and Canada. Many industries look to the Indigenous community to be the solution to their labour shortages. Consequently, First Nations are courted by many employers and industries who need entry level, semi-skilled and multiple barrier labour. The large employers of primary industry and major construction projects are often able to offer incentives, provide more resources and employment supports, and jobs that pay highly competitive wages.

Tourism employers must be innovative in the approach and incentives they offer to attract quality candidates.

- ❑ **Know Yourself** – Tourism employers must know their **Value Proposition**... what you offer that sets you apart from other tourism and other industry employers, especially those that pay more than you.
- ❑ **Connect with the Indigenous Community** – There are many ways to channels to link with the Indigenous community when seeking Indigenous talent.
 - First Nation Band and Tribal Council
 - Friendship Centres
 - Post-secondary school Indigenous student services
 - Indigenous youth centres and programs
 - Elders' initiatives
 - First Nations career fairs
 - Womens centres
 - Indigenous tourism associations
 - Indigenous media outlets
 - Social media using hashtags (i.e., Indigenous, First Nation, Youth, Elder, Culture, etc.)
 - Indigenous Skills and Employment Training agencies
- ❑ **Indigenous Skills and Employment Training agencies** – Indigenous employment officers and agencies are located throughout British Columbia. Some are situated in Band and Tribal offices, in employment agency offices, Womens and youth centres, and Indigenous Friendship Centres. There are 20 Indigenous Employment Skills Training agencies (ISETs) throughout BC that can help you (see Appendix B for list of ISETs).
- ❑ **Employment Package** – Prepare literature for prospective candidates on why they should choose to work at your business listing benefits, describing the workplace, career paths, and testimonials from employees and customer praises.

A Living Wage

A **living wage** is the minimum income necessary for an employee to meet their basic needs and enable them to afford a basic but decent standard of living through employment without government subsidies. Basic needs are – food, housing, and other essential like clothing. A living wage is more than a **subsistence wage** – a subsistence wage provides barely enough money to pay the very basic living expenses.

Source: Adapted from the Wikipedia definition.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Living_wage

Your Value Proposition –
Know what you offer that is different
and better than other employers.

- ❑ **Indigenous Job Fairs** – Participate in Indigenous employment fairs.
- ❑ **Contribute to Indigenous Events** – Sponsor and speak at Indigenous events, be a good community contributor.

Focus on Indigenous Groups – Women, Youth, LGBTQIA2S+, and Multiple Barrier Persons

There are several different groups within the Indigenous community that for employers to reach they need to focus their activities. Start by developing a plan designed specifically to reach them.

Women – The policies best aimed at attracting female employees in tourism are those that support their employment by addressing inequalities at the workplace. The most effective policies are those that meet the needs of women employees.

Youth – Career counselling services can be supplemented through the ISET services. Young First Nations people were more likely to have had difficulty finding work because they did not know what type of job to look for (41%) than core working age adults (22%) or older adults (9%).⁷

Tourism provides great opportunities for women's employment including in other labour, self-employment, arts and crafts, harvesting, etc.

What Female Employees Need

- ✓ Access to better quality jobs
- ✓ Equal access to opportunities
- ✓ Education and training
- ✓ Earning the same as men for equivalent work
- ✓ Commitment to reduce the gender pay gap
- ✓ Promote women's leadership
- ✓ Benefits for women – childcare, tax, social benefits, maternity protection, and incentives to return to work
- ✓ Flexible work arrangements
- ✓ Combat unconscious bias
- ✓ Employers to understand the benefits of employing women
- ✓ Entrepreneurial opportunities and equal access to start-up grants

LGBTQIA2S+ and Two-Spirit People –

LGBTQIA2S+ means Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit, and the countless affirmative ways in which people choose to self-identify. “Two-spirit” refers to a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit and is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual gender and/or spiritual identity. In the Indigenous community two-spirit people are valued as gifted having received two spirits by the Creator. The Indigenous community also identifies five-genders.

Tourism HR Canada says “LGBT+ travellers represent a major opportunity for recovery for our Canadian tourism industry. They outspend their mainstream counterparts at seven times the average trip expense. They rebound faster after industry shocks, being among the first segment to recover post-9/11 and SARS. And right now, 90% of them are seeking travel opportunities within Canada.”⁸

⁷ Labour Market Experience of First Nations People Living Off Reserve: Key Findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. Stats Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2018003-eng.htm>

⁸ LGBT+ Travel Seminar – <http://tourismhr.ca/author/heather/>

Indigenous tourism businesses need to be ready to welcome LGBTQIA2S+ people as employees and customers. Employment applications and processes must respect and welcome people who identify as LGBTQIA2S+. go2HR offers the **SuperHost Service for All** online course for employers to develop skills for making a diverse workplace. As well, Tourism HR Canada has joined with the Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce to provide diversity training workshops for anyone working in tourism.

“I worked many years in the hospitality industry. After years of hiring and cycling staff through the restaurant, I learned that it was more advantageous to hire young people with no previous experience yet had lots of enthusiasm. This way we trained them to our standards. These youth typically started in entry level positions, and I committed to promoting from within. This approach fostered greater staff loyalty who stayed longer.”

– Gary McDermott (Cree, Sawridge First Nation), Professional Cook, 17 years’ experience in the restaurant and hotel industry

The Right Words

Employers can make their job posts and application process more gender welcoming by using gender pronouns like - **They / Them / Their** rather than **He / Him / His**.

Multiple Barriers to Employment – Multiple barrier candidates face many obstacles to gaining and sustaining employment. These may be related to low educational attainment, health challenges (mental and physical), transportation, housing, experience in foster care, or are single parents who require childcare and flexible work hours. Some may also be suffering substance abuse, lack life skills, or have been in the justice system. A job mentor and / or job coach, along with Elders and cultural programs are found to successfully support Indigenous people who have multiple barriers to employment, especially when those supports are provided by an Indigenous agency and counsellors.

What’s More Important – Hard Skills, Soft Skills, Cultural Skills, or Essential Skills?

Every occupation has hard and soft skills. **Hard skills** are teachable and measurable abilities, like writing and math, or abilities like grooming a trail, or cooking a meal. By contrast, **soft skills** are the traits that make a person a good employee, like getting along with people, communications, listening, responsibility, and leadership development – these are not so much taught as they are cultivated. In First Nations, and increasingly in tourism, an Indigenous person’s **Cultural skills**, such as practicing Indigenous activities, activities on their traditional lands, speaking and teaching their language, storytelling of history and legends, and living by Indigenous principles and values, are growing in demand and importance in tourism (as well as by other industries).



Typically, job posts and interviews emphasize hard skills, delving into a person's education and work experience, while neglecting soft skills. Soft skills drive career advancement and make both people and businesses successful. Common soft skills to look for are communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, critical thinking, and work ethic. Keep in mind that people are inclined to be stronger in some soft skill areas than others, yet soft skills which require development can be nurtured over time with self-awareness, empathy, persistence, and humility. Redesign your recruitment process to get to know a person to understand their soft skills that make them good learners and employees, rather than whether they obtained educational and other credentials.

Being Indigenous and having Cultural Skills

There is a difference between being a person of Indigenous ancestry, being connected to the community, of having the Indigenous community recognition of your lineage, and of knowing your Indigenous culture along with cultural knowledge and skills. These are not synonymous. Cultural skills can be learned and taught, like language, harvesting, stories, legends, history, ceremony, and dance – these are 'Cultural hard skills'. Cultural soft skills can also be fostered and built, such as values and beliefs which can guide decision-making and communication, though being Indigenous is not possible without having sufficient Indigenous ancestry or being recognized by their Indigenous Nation. There are Indigenous people who were separated from their Nation through government legislation outlined in the Indian Act, or who were removed from their families as children.

Indigenous People – Connected to the Land

“There are many beautiful places in the world, you bring your place alive and make it unique by connecting it with the people, our language, and our history and our stories.”

– Nasukin (Chief) Sophie Pierre, Ktunaxa Nation

An Indigenous person who works in their traditional lands, is connected to the land by ancestral responsibility and probably grew up in the area. They will have unique and specialized knowledge and insight that few non-Indigenous people possess. Indigenous people's cultural knowledge and expertise should be recognized and valued.

Essential Skills

Skills Competencies Canada

(www.skillscompetencescanada.com) frames nine **Essential Skills** (though some occupations include Driving as tenth Essential Skill) people need for learning, work, and life. They are used in the community and the workplace, in different forms and at different levels of complexity. Each Essential Skills has five levels of expertise from the Level 1 “Many challenges to learning” up to Level 5 “Independent Learner”.

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ✓ Reading | ✓ Writing | ✓ Thinking |
| ✓ Document use | ✓ Oral Communications | ✓ Digital Technology |
| ✓ Numeracy | ✓ Working with Others | ✓ Continuous Learning |

ISETs can conduct Essential Skills Assessments of their Indigenous clients to identify training, education and work readiness and support needs, and will provide career Counselling. Some ISETs will also provide support to employers by performing applicant screening and resume and interview readiness coaching.

Top 10 Soft Skills for Customer Service Jobs



Know Where to Look for Indigenous Talent

Indigenous people are more likely to find jobs through family and friends, as well as First Nations, Indigenous and Métis employment services (see Appendix B for list of ISETs), and in urban settings, at Aboriginal Friendship Centres. Social media too is becoming a site for job postings. Bands too may have a regular newsletter and bulletin where jobs can be posted, and there are national Indigenous agencies, like Amik (www.amik.ca) and CANDO (Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers, www.edo.ca) who also post jobs.

Employers who do not have connections with the Indigenous Nation whose traditional territory the business is located can begin building a relationship with the Indigenous community by getting advice from the closest Indigenous Skills Employment Training agency. ISETs are typically non-profit societies of First Nation Bands, with program funding through government sources. ISETs offer a wide range of services and supports for employers and employees, including wage subsidies, and may be able to provide individuals with training, education, supplies and equipment funding support.

If your tourism business has many jobs to be filled, contact the Band or Tribal Nation administrator for advice and launch a relationship with the Indigenous Nation. Let the First Nation know what resources you can bring to the relationship.

In rural and remote areas where there is no public transit, or transit hours are not in alignment with your tourism business hours, or the workplace is a long distance from the residential community, employers must figure out how people will get to work. You might have to provide transportation solutions to attract and retain employees.

Attend or Create Special Events

Special events include job fairs, and when you are launching a medium to large tourism business, and hosting a special event to let people know about your business and attract candidates. Have employment packages on hand at these events (see 'Creating Collateral Materials and Job Postings' for tips on package preparation).

Know your audience and speak the way they will feel comfortable and engaged. A presentation to youth should be different – images, color, wording, energy, even presenters – than a presentation for a middle-aged crowd; an all-female audience is different than an all-male audience. These events need to be exciting, exhilarating and enticing to the prospective employee and shows what you offer employees, and how they differ from other employees and industries. Make your exhibit engaging and use it as a ground for candidates to test their aptitude for the jobs, for example – Outdoor adventure – offer axe throwing, Mountain biking show 3D-virtual experience videos of the trails, a restaurant could have people practice shucking, if its cultural interpretation have a story telling contest.

The Interview

Times have changed, employers are no longer solely in the driver's seat of hiring. Employers can not treat candidates the way they did when there were more people looking for work than there were jobs. Now good people are in high demand they decide who they work for.

It is not an interview; it is a courtship. Interviewing can be a terrifying experience for many people. Traditional styles of interviewing can prevent you from getting to know whether the candidate is the right match and prevent the candidate from determining if you are the employer right for them. The interview should be a two-way street which enables all involved to effectively assess each other.

- ❑ **Interview Setting** – As in any 'courtship' picking the right place sets the stage on how the rest of the meetup will go. An office where the interviewer sits behind a big desk and their credentials are plastered all over the wall can present the appearance of superiority and make it uneasy for the interviewee. Be different. Be new age. If the job is for a professional cook, why not meet in the kitchen where your head cook is preparing items and have gear nearby for the candidate to show their skills? If the job is for an outdoor guide which includes trail maintenance, meet on the trail where you and the candidate would go on a hike and you invite the person to tell you a story, or in backyard with a rake nearby to see if the person will be a self-starter. In the interview, you want to assess the person in the setting they will be working so you can witness their 'soft skills', and not by the credentials on their resume or job application. Some people are great at interviewing and lousy workers, while others freeze up in the interview though are exceptional in the workplace. The interview setting and process should be designed to assess the person for their personality, the soft skills they will need on-the-job.
- ❑ **Interview in Pairs or Groups** – If you are hiring a few people for similar jobs, schedule interviews in pairs or groups. This is ideal for jobs where teamwork and leadership are essential skills for the job, and especially for youth who may be shy or reluctant to attend an interview without a buddy.

Interview in a setting where the candidate will feel most at ease so you can better assess who their personality as it relates to the job's essential skills.

- ❑ **Have a Conversation vs an Interview** – In the interview, it is better to set the stage by stating you are going to 'have a conversation' than have a series of questions that you must go through.
- ❑ **"We" not "Me / I"** – Recognize that it may be culturally inappropriate and against an individual's values to speak about themselves. For an Indigenous person to say, "I did this" or "I did that" is a sign of vanity. An Indigenous person is more likely to use first plural pronouns (we, us) in their dialogue versus first person pronouns (I, me).
- ❑ **No Eye Contact** – In an interview setting, eye contact may be avoided as a cultural practice and sign of respect. Eye contact should not be used as a measure of a person's confidence, instead, set the chairs or conversation at angles to one another or side-by-side.
- ❑ **Assistance with Candidate Screening** – if working with an ISET, candidate screening can be offered along with an Essential Skills Assessment. The ISET may also offer skills training and employment supports based on the needs of the participant. Employment supports minimize participation in training and employment. Examples include counselling, mentoring, childcare, transportation, disability supports, work experience, wage subsidies and personal protective equipment and tools. The ISET can advise the employer on how to conduct an interview and assist the candidate with preparing so you get a better chance of knowing the real person.

"If you hire people just because they can do a job, they'll work for your money. But if you hire people who believe what you believe, they'll work for you with blood and sweat and tears."

– Simon Sinek



Klemtu Tour Guide

Conducting a Reference Check

The reference check is done late in the hiring process after the applicant screening and interview process. Whether you conduct an interview may also depend on the complexity and responsibility of the position. Past work performance (PWP) can be verified by checking references, professional and personal; however, in tourism and in the Indigenous community, it may be challenging to provide references when the candidate is new to employment or has been out of the workforce for a while. Also, a requirement that the reference not be family or related can be problematic for an Indigenous person from a small and close-knit community, or one who has just moved into the area. Qualifying a person's credentials can be done by speaking with former employers, teachers, sports, and cultural coaches, and other personal references like friends and parent's friends. Keep in mind that references are volunteers – do not make the process cumbersome to the reference.

When contacting a reference, start from the premise that the person is good, and understand that no candidate is perfect. A reference check of open-ended questions will elicit more information on your candidate than an online or telephone survey of close-ended or multiple-choice questions.

Suggested statements and questions are:

- Opening Statement – “XXX is a great candidate and will make a good employee.”
- Describe the Job – “
 - We are seriously considering XXX to be the [job title] which requires [description of duties, tasks, essential skills needed]
 - What was XXX exact role and what were the responsibilities?
- Explore on-the-job Skills –
 - What did XXX do? How did XXX do it?
 - What were the consequences of her actions?
 - To be effective in this role, XXX needs need to be able to do XYZ.’
- Get to know the candidate –
 - What can you tell me about XXX?



Making the Offer

How you treat people when making the offer sets the rest of the conversation and your relationship. A fair competitive wage vs a 'low-ball' offer, or comments like "Take it or leave it", "We have plenty more applicants for this job" can leave a candidate jaded, and if they accept the job, dissatisfied from day one.

Employment Contract and Service Agreements

An employment contract brings the candidate under the business umbrella and its employment policies and minimizes the risk for the employee. Not every job is confirmed with an employment contract, though it is ideal to define the employer-employee relationship in an agreement regardless of the position level within your organization to prevent any misunderstanding later about the terms of employment and the job duties. An employer cannot opt out of paying the employer share of statutory payments like Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) by issuing a Self-Employment or Service Agreement to a worker. Revenue Canada has strict guidelines that defines whether a person is an employee or self-employed; if uncertain, an employer can request a ruling on a person's employment status from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Employee Records

Employee records are legally required to be maintained and may be demanded in legal and insurance matters. British Columbia requires the employee file contain personal and emergency contact information, documents that confirm job qualifications and that have been verified for authenticity (i.e., degrees, licenses, permits). It may also include an Oath of Employment or Employment Agreement signed by the employee witnessed by a BC commissioner for taking affidavits. The employee file should also keep all job-related documentation such as hiring records, performance reviews, disciplinary actions, and job description. Consider whether the document would be relevant to a supervisor or mediator who may review the employee file when making decisions in a legal or insurance setting.



Osoyoos Indian Band Campground and RV Park - Cultivating a Working Culture

The Osoyoos Indian Band has an international reputation for promoting a working culture. Every Band member who wants to go to school has their education paid. If they fail, they pay it back. The culture of hospitality is natural to Indigenous people which continues in cultural gatherings like pow-wows and ceremonies. Business too must have culture. The Campground and RV Park created a culture in its campground operations by adding a piece of OIB culture. Every family had someone working on the campground site, with one summer employing every kid that asked for a job. Hard to fill jobs, like janitorial were paid more, than that job became the work everyone wanted. People are trained on every aspect of the campground, with jobs matched to the employee, and every staff member knowing the HR manual benefits and discipline procedures. It is important to know community members and their interests so people who want seasonal work are built into staffing plans.

– Chris Bauer, Osoyoos Indian Band Campground and Economic Development

4. Be the Place to Work

Be the place people want to work. Customers, as well as current and past employees will tell others about your business. Be the place to be. Create a workplace that has a great reputation. Do this by empowering staff to provide ideas, involving them in decision-making and planning, as well as taking control and accepting responsibility.

Indigenous businesses can distinguish their business from other tourism businesses by operating by the principles of the **Ojibwe Seven Grandfather Teachings**.

Setting the Stage – Orientation and Onboarding

Start every new employee and every new tourism season with an orientation session.

In the beginning... make the first day and week one to remember. Better yet, start onboarding before the employee walks through the door. The onboarding and orientation of new employees and returning staff at the launch of a new season has greater importance in seasonal tourism businesses where operating periods are short. In seasonal businesses it is critical that you get your people up and running as fast as possible and that all people have the same attitude, perspective and deliver the same level of high-quality service. New people must be integrated in the organization rapidly so they 'hit the pavement running'.

Your onboarding session should be friendly and welcoming and begin before the employee first shows up for work. Start with a welcome phone call and email, describing what to expect on their first day and week, and identify a person who meet and host the new employee and show them around, introduce them to their co-workers, show where things are, explain how to get things done, describe the neighborhood places to go for coffee and lunch and transportation, and checks on the new employee and helps them feel welcome by inviting them to coffee breaks and activities. This host is the mentor for at least the first week.



**You don't build a business.
You build people, and then the
people build the business.**

Onboarding Training Topics

Employee onboarding prepares the person for work and sets the stage of the employer-employee working relationship, describes how the workplace should be, and promotes the expected service quality. Suggested topics for an onboarding or employee orientation session are:

- ❑ **The Business** – present your business' history, what compelled its creation, philosophy and principles, products and services.
- ❑ **Policies and Procedures** – the work environment, Indigenous culture and history, health and safety, and emergency procedures, privacy, and information protection, who to report to, how to check in, pay periods, reporting administrative matters, etc.
- ❑ **Reporting Workplace Concerns** – how to communicate and report workplace concerns, especially bullying, lateral violence, and management and operating concerns. Inform them on Whistle Blowing policies which protect workers from backlash for reporting.
- ❑ **Performance Expectations** – including with rewards and disciplinary actions.
- ❑ **Taking Breaks** – smoke breaks, personal activities – during work hours like phone calls.
**Some employers are now rewarding non-smokers with time off equivalent to the lost productivity time of smokers – this also incentivizes smokers to quit.*
- ❑ **Use of Company Resources and Property** – employee use of computers, phones, vehicles, work sheds and other buildings, tools, etc.
- ❑ **Privacy and Public Behavior Policies** – in and out of the workplace, including private/personal social media and company social media and behavior in public.
- ❑ **Resigning** – notice of 2-weeks by employee when leaving employment.
- ❑ **Employment Benefits** – typical benefits like vacation time and holiday pay, employee discounts, and any benefits specific to culture (i.e., cultural and family breaks), and time off for emergencies.

Youth Health & Safety Training

By regulation, additional 'health and safety' orientation must be provided for young workers. Make it easier for young workers to attend training sessions by pairing them with a more experienced 'buddy'. Deliver youth health and safety training apart from other training.

It is worthwhile to walk employees through the policy and procedures manual highlighting key aspects. After completing the review, have each employee read and sign an agreement acknowledging that they have read and understand what is in the manual. Place this declaration in the employee's file.

“Lead by example and give staff a sense of responsibility and ownership too. Involve them in decisions and ask their opinion, like, ‘What do you think we can do better?’ This is how you build your business. This is what defines a boss or a leader.”

– Elijah Mack, Owner, Kekuli Café, Merrit



Retention – Be the Place Where People Want to Work, Stay and Tell Others About

If you are not intentional about designing your workplace, the business culture will develop itself. If the employer does not set the standards and climate, the employees will.

Responses by Indigenous people to the ITBC Indigenous Tourism Labour Research project 2021, revealed they prefer to work for Indigenous owned tourism businesses.⁹ They also want to work where their talents, knowledge and skills are recognized, and their voices heard.

People want a workplace where they feel valued and empowered. This can be done in many ways. For Elijah Mack, owner of Kekuli Café, Merritt, BC, it is ‘leading by example’. He does this by being out front with his staff. He says, “I’m not afraid to clean a toilet, go on the floor or make the bannock.”

Empower your people to make them want to stay.

⁹ “Indigenous Tourism Labour Research: Roots to a Future – Research Findings.” Indigenous Tourism BC. May 2021.

The Workplace Environment

Create a great place to work with the following traits.

- ❑ **On-the-Job training and Succession Planning** – employers that provide strong internal training programs with the intention of promoting employees to new positions indicated that they have excellent results in employee retention.
- ❑ **Ongoing Development Support** – provide ongoing training support for employees, regardless of whether the training is directly related to the job. Focus on building their skills and knowledge in many fields – these can boost employee self-esteem and greater career prospects.
- ❑ **LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Program** – prepare an action plan developed with LGBTQIA2S+ people which creates the right healthy workplace that welcomes, supports, and enables career building for and conversations with LGBTQIA2S+ people. (See Pride at Work Canada website for their online training program <https://education.prideatwork.ca/>)
- ❑ **Outside Support – Job Coaches** – sometimes an employee is unable to communicate with their supervisors or managers due to fear or lack of experience. A job coach can help bridge that gap.
- ❑ **Welcome Feedback** – encourage and welcome employee feedback and ideas on operations, business ideas, customer service.
- ❑ **Incorporate Indigenous Culture** – understand, practice, and live the Indigenous culture. Empower employees to share their language and culture with all staff – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – through scheduled “cultural orientation” sessions. This activity can build teamwork and help build the business brand.
- ❑ **Performance Reviews** – companies with good employee retention provide clear expectations of their employees; provide monthly, semi-annual, and annual performance reviews. If a seasonal business, performance reviews should be done more frequently and at the end of the season.
- ❑ **Conflict Resolution** – conflict can occur amongst co-workers and between various levels of leadership. These matters must be processed immediately to ensure they do not have an adverse effect on the workplace and fester ill-will. If an employer or manager / supervisor lacks the skills to manage workplace conflicts, an external conflict resolution mediator may be brought in. Also offer management training in workplace conflicts.
- ❑ **Violence, Bullying, Racism, Harassment** – related to lateral violence, racism and gender inequality are sensitive matters that have great ramifications on the workplace and business. These can become legal, human rights complaints, and insurance claims if not handled properly. Consult an HR consultant and / or HR lawyer, do not leave these to staff to settle or expect them to resolve themselves.
- ❑ **Whistle Blower Policy** – have the policy in your HR Policies and manual to protect employees from supervisors and colleagues that are doing wrong. Whistler Blowers can help your business clean up problems which could become serious financial and legal issues.

What is a Job Coach?

The Job Coach is a liaison between the employer and employee. They primarily exist for the employee with preparing for the interview and job, and on-the-job providing guidance and supporting the employee with setting up for workplace success, coaching on communication with supervisors and co-workers, and assisting with getting additional training and certification.

Workplace Diversity – Indigenizing the Workplace

Non-Indigenous employers who employ Indigenous people must build a workplace that is more than meeting a goal of workplace diversity. 'Indigenizing' the workplace means creating a setting where Indigenous people are able and encouraged to practice and share their cultural knowledge and skills. Ideas for Indigenizing the Workplace are:

- ❑ **Cultural space** – create space for Indigenous employees to conduct personal prayers, bless the business or a site at the beginning of a season or daily with a prayer, a cleansing ceremony, or a smudge.
- ❑ **Develop a workplace cultural program** – bring in Elders and traditional Knowledge Keepers to share stories, deliver demonstrations and provide interactive activities. Recognize these people as expert and financially compensate them at an expert pay rate.
- ❑ **Meals** – coordinate potluck dinners or host meals sharing traditional foods.
- ❑ **Events** – celebrate the Indigenous people's historical events, dances, holidays, and special events. Of significance to the Indigenous community is June – it is Indigenous History month and includes National Indigenous Day on June 21.
- ❑ **Culture and Language** – feature Indigenous language in signs and greetings. If you are uncertain how to respectfully include culture and language in your business, connect with the local First Nation for guidance.



In Vancouver, BC, in February, the Nisga'a Nation annually celebrates the crescent moon of the new year by hosting a large Indigenous cultural gathering called "Hobiyee". This event hosted by the Nisga'a Ts'amiks Vancouver Society brings together many Indigenous Nations who honor the Nisga'a by sharing their culture through dance, song and food. (<https://tsamiks.com/>).



“At Kekuli Café, we pride ourselves in offering the living wage as an incentive. We also do gift cards for birthdays with birthday cakes. We believe in celebrating. We celebrate people who have been with us for even one month to five years.”

– Sharon Bond, Kekuli Café, Kelowna

Benefits, Bonuses, and Incentives

Incentives can inspire better quality service and commitment from employees to be long-term and attract more qualified employee which strengthens your business reputation, so your business is the place to be. In tourism these incentives can offset lower wages that cannot compete with other industry employers. **“Any organization with a reputation for having more enthusiastic employees will benefit from better recruitment options.** People are far more attracted to work somewhere that they will feel motivated.” (<https://www.peoplegoal.com/blog/101-motivational-quotes-for-employees>) When an organization has a good reputation it attracts better workers and has better overall organizational performance.

- ❑ **Rewards and High Value Incentives** – for employees who attain employment milestones such as duration of employment, return to employment after season, cultural or educational achievement, achieving customer accolades, provide a reward or incentive.
 - **Bonus Structure** – based on year-end or season-end net profits so employees are encouraged to self-regulate each other to deliver high quality customer service and adhere to cultural and business standards.
 - **Signing Bonus** – for returning to employment to start a new season (so a good employee has incentive to return to your business instead of another employer).
 - **Long-term Employment Incentives** – paid vacation or cash bonuses – at various years of service such as 5, 10 and 20 years.
- ❑ **Employee Motivation and Needs** – know what the employee is looking for by working in your business, better yet ask them. Recognizing top performing employees with incentives regularly, i.e., weekly, or monthly gift

certificates or event tickets, can be a quick and easy way to motivate employees and offset wages. An employer who was experiencing high absenteeism gave annual bonuses and high-value gifts to people who did not miss work.

- ❑ **Cultural Activities and Recognition** – know the cultural practices that Indigenous employees join and are required to fulfill in their community, such as cultural ceremony, hunting and gathering, Big House responsibilities, attending pow-wows, or seasonal gatherings. Employers need to plan for these “interruptions” to their operations as simply what “should be expected” at times throughout the year. There may be sufficient notice for some cultural practices, while others like fulfilling cultural roles for end-of-life may be next day requirements.
- ❑ **Pay a Living Wage at Minimum** – you are competing with other employers who are either paying at least minimum wage, and other industries that pay more for work of equal or lesser requirements. If you want to set your business apart to attract and retain the right employee, you must be the place to be. Pay is one way of showing an employee their value and worth.
- ❑ **Cultural Days Off** – Indigenous people who are engaged in their Indigenous culture may also have a formal role in their community for ceremony, be actively involved in seasonal activities such as harvesting, hunting, trapping, pow-wow dancing, canoe races, etc. And if there is a traumatic event, such as a funeral, the Indigenous employee may require several days-weeks-months to fulfill their role in the family and community for the memorial service. Band government offices often close so employees can attend funerals.

Set the stage for an employee-employer friendly workplace by promoting a mutually respectful workplace based on reciprocal respect rather than the common hierarchical, boss-subservient, work setting.”

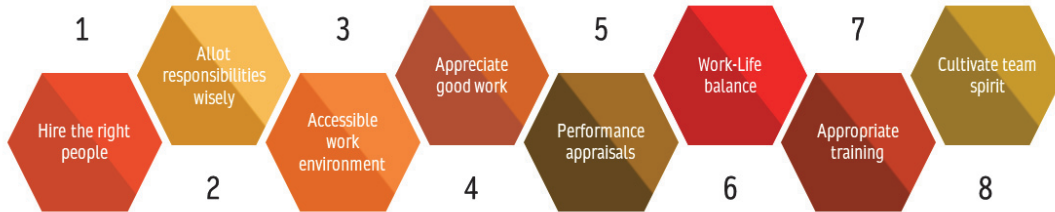
Other Employment Benefits and Activities

- ❑ Mental health support is often overlooked but is emerging as an area that requires dedicated expertise for workers that are combating stress, depression, loss, and other mental health matters.
- ❑ When you have a seasonal business, set it up so employees can accumulate at least the minimum number of insurable hours so they can qualify for Employment Insurance at the end of the tourism season. Remain connected with employees during off-season and explain how they can apply to come back for the next season, including offering signing bonuses upon return.
- ❑ Offer sponsored Indigenous cultural and other fun activities. If these events are intended for team building, then choose activities where all employees can participate. For example, an afternoon of golf can be good if there is at most four employees and all employees like to golf. Team building could be an afternoon of Cooking like Kukum (Grandma) where people learn how to make bannock and Indian Ice Cream from soapberries, another could be a Learn to Traditional Dance with teams challenging in the fancy dance.

“We’re all equal here, and we all strive for success. My success is just as much as their success because I couldn’t do this without them.”

– Eli Mack, Owner, Kekuli Café, Merritt

8 EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES



Source: "8 Employee Retention Strategies that Reduce Attrition." <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/employee-retention-strategies/>

Human Resources and Workplace Policies

Your workplace policies must comply with the corresponding government jurisdiction employment standards laws. On reserve, these are federal employment standards and off-reserve they are provincial employment standards. The Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC (AFOABC) has a template of Human Resources policies along with other training materials that you could use to customize to your business.

Employment Standards

Employment standards provide the minimum standards that are allowed; though there are employers who choose to exceed these standards to improve their competitiveness against other employers and as a strategy for retaining employee talent. Operate your business within this frame to ensure your employees are treated equitably and that you understand your obligations under the *BC Employment Standards Act* for dealing with labor issues.

BC Employment Standards

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/forms-resources/igm>

Performance Review, Praise, Discipline, Dismissal and Giving Notice – The Human Relationship Stuff

Performance reviews, praise, and discipline are all measures for the employee and employer to assess of the quality of work and their relationship. Both praise and discipline are best delivered immediately, while performance reviews should be done at least annually and consistently.

Performance Reviews – can create uneasiness for both the employee and employer. Employees may be worried the review will leave them feeling worthless and without a job, or if they do not feel the review was fair, it can result in workplace dissatisfaction. Conversely, employers may be reluctant to complete performance reviews as it can lead to an employee expectation of a wage or salary increase that they cannot provide.

Praise – should be given regularly, and not so often that it feels disingenuous to the employee and erodes its value and the character of the person offering it. Discipline, whether it be verbally or in writing, must be managed in accordance with the applicable Employment Standard and Human Rights legislation, and ideally tracked and detailed in the employee file.

Discipline – is used to correct undesired behavior and if delivered in the wrong way can quickly go side-ways. Be certain to maintain professionalism and be in compliance with Employment Standards and Human Rights legislation.

A typical approach to progressive discipline approach has four steps –

- 1) Verbal warning
- 2) Written warning
- 3) Suspension
- 4) Termination

Dismissal – like discipline, a dismissal is a difficult decision for an employer. In an Indigenous tourism business, it can be more so when you know the person outside of the workplace, you may be friends or family, and you are aware of personal matters in their life, though not making the decision to dismiss an employee can affect other employees' behavior, and the overall business success in lost customers and reduced profits. Someone who is not working out does not mean they will not be ideal for another job elsewhere. Keep in mind, adjustments to the job may enable the employee to fulfill the job responsibilities. For example, if the job has fixed hours and there are tasks that are not critical to be done during that period, and the employee frequently arrives late yet completes the duties, it may be better to change the work hours instead of replacing the person.

Disciplinary Procedures

- 1) Gain an initial understanding of the matter.
- 2) Investigate thoroughly – record and track results in detail.
- 3) Invite the employee to a disciplinary meeting.
- 4) Conduct the disciplinary meeting.
- 5) Decide on action to take.
- 6) Confirm the outcome in writing.
- 7) Keep a copy of the facts, details, and report in the employee file.
- 8) Offer a right to appeal.

Keep a Good Employee by Adjusting the Job

An Indigenous employment agent tells of a Band member who was excellent on-the-job but wouldn't show up to work after each payday. The employer was unaware that the employee returned to the land to conduct cultural activities for his family and community; subsequently the job duties were changed to accommodate the employee.

Investigate what caused an employee behavior, and determine if the person, situation, work setting, or job requires modification. Do not dismiss a good employee over an incident that can be rectified in another manner.

Temporary and Permanent Business Closures, Emergency Interruptions and Furlough and Layoff – a Human Resources plan should include staffing plans for managing temporary closures due to emergency interruptions, like a forest fire, flood, natural disaster, road closures, or global pandemic. Plans also require re-opening strategies which outline what order people will be rehired, and if there are incentives for people to return.



Retaining Indigenous Employees During Layoff Can Create Opportunity

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic when tourism businesses were closing, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre made it a priority to retain as many Indigenous staff as possible. Indigenous staff gained the opportunity to work in other positions that may not have been accessible to them so soon.

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, Whistler, BC

Key Terms

In the development and implementation of any working relationship and strategy with Indigenous people it is important to understand the terminology used – terms have different meaning.

- > **Indigenous** is an all-encompassing term referring to all people of Indigenous ancestry – First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples. Indigenous is a more-recent term; prior to this the common phrases used were Aboriginal, Native, First Nation and Indian.
- > Indian is also a legal term defined by the Government of Canada in the *Indian Act*.
- > Only people of Indigenous ancestry that satisfy the *Indian Act* definition are 'legally' entitled by Canada to be registered as Indians. Continued court challenges to this definition have enabled more Indigenous people to be registered and recognized; in recent years Métis people have been able to apply for registration.
- > Not all people of Indigenous or Métis ancestry are registered Indians. Registered Indians are also called status Indians, while non-registered are non-status Indians.
- > Up until 1983 when the federal Bill C-31 was passed, when a non-Indigenous woman married a status Indian man, she became a registered Indian despite not being of Indigenous ancestry. Consequently, their children were registered as 'fully' status Indians with full ability to pass status to their children. Marriage to a status Indian no longer entitles the non-Indigenous spouse to become a registered / status Indian. Also prior to 1983, when a status Indian woman married a non-Indian man she was removed from the Indian Registry and was no-longer entitled to any benefits associated with being a registered Indian, thus she became disenfranchised; any children she had after being disenfranchised were unable to register as Indians. After Bill-C31, any Indian disenfranchised were able to apply to be re-enlisted, so did their children; however, with limitations to passing status to their own children.
- > **Status Indians** are also entitled to be members of their ancestral Indigenous communities, commonly called Bands.
- > **Bands** are the Indigenous villages of Indigenous Nations, while **Tribal Councils** are political entities that administer programs for their members who are typically Bands of the same Indigenous ancestry. Legally, a Tribal Council is not a nation, though at times it is empowered to speak on behalf of its Bands as a collective nation.
- > **Reserves** are lands assigned to a Band by the federal government. A Band may have more than one reserve; these reserves are typically of varying sizes. In Yukon, NWT and Nunavut, there are no reserves, instead their villages are called settlements.
- > Indigenous Nations have traditional territories. In British Columbia, nearly all First Nations are non-treaty. In the early 1990s, roughly 140 of the 203 Bands entered the British Columbia-made modern-day treaty making process (www.bctreaty.ca). To date, there are eight constitutionally entrenched modern treaties in the province when the Nisga'a¹⁰ treaty is included. First Nations still recognize their entire traditional territory, and

¹⁰ Nisga'a initiated treaty negotiations in the early 70s under the former treaty negotiation process.

their inherent *Aboriginal Rights and Title* (AR&T) to govern all their traditional lands is more frequently being determined and recognized in the courts.

- > A status Indian may or may not reside in their reserve community or another reserve; those who do live on-reserve are less mobile than other Canadians. Status Indians who live outside their reserve are more mobile, they are also more likely to move more frequently than other Canadians.



APPENDIX A: Resources and References

RESOURCES

5 Main Functions of Human Resource Management

<https://www.poppulo.com/blog/functions-of-human-resource-management/>

Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC (AFOABC) – Financial Management and Human Resource Manuals

<https://www.afoabc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/4.-Financial-Management-HR-Manuals.pdf>

Are Hard Skills or Soft Skills More Important To Be An Effective Leader?

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nazbeheshti/2018/09/24/are-hard-skills-or-soft-skills-more-important-to-be-an-effective-leader/?sh=7c4776062eb3>

Canada Career Handbook

<https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/CareerHandbook/ChWelcome/52b031e6343b4f74b2bc6e53dc6ed752>

Canada Long Term Job Vacancies

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2018001/article/54917-eng.htm>

Canada Revenue Agency Employee vs Self-Employed

https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/rc4110/employee-self-employed.html#mpl_slf_mpld_wrkr

Employee Retention

<https://www.peoplekeep.com/blog/employee-retention-the-real-cost-of-losing-an-employee>

Employment of First Nations

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2019004-eng.htm>

go2HR

<https://www.go2hr.ca/>

HR Planning

<https://www.template.net/business/strategy-templates/sample-hr-strategy-template/>

Insights on Canadian Society: Long-term Job Vacancies in Canada – Manon Langevin, February 20, 2018.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2018001/article/54917-eng.htm>

National Job Bank

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home>

Ojibwe Seven Grandfather Teachings

<https://ojibwe.net/projects/prayers-teachings/the-gifts-of-the-seven-grandfathers/>

SkillPlan – Essential Skills

<https://skillplan.ca/essential-skills/>

Top 10 Soft Skills in Customer Service Jobs

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/top-soft-skills-for-customer-service-jobs-2063746>

Tourism HR Canada

<https://tourismhr.ca/>

WorkBC

<https://www.workbc.ca>

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www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=4110001401&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.9&pickMembers%5B1%5D=3.1&pickMembers%5B2%5D=5.2&pickMembers%5B3%5D=6.2
2. Top 10 Most Challenging Indigenous Tourism Positions to Fill – Indigenous Tourism BC Labour Market Research – Foothills to a Future 2020-21, survey findings, Exhibit 42.
3. Most Challenging Factors to Filling Jobs by Indigenous Tourism Employers – Indigenous Tourism BC Labour Market Research – Foothills to a Future 2020-21, survey findings, Exhibit 41.
4. TABLE: Barriers to Unemployed and Out of the Workforce Indigenous Canadians. Source: Stats Canada. 2018. Labour Market Experiences of First Nations people living off reserve: Key findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2018003-eng.htm>
5. LGBT+ Travel Seminar – <http://tourismhr.ca/author/heather/>
6. “Why Everything Breaks when you Reach 25 Employees” <https://getlighthouse.com/blog/company-growth-25-employees/>
7. “Doing it Right. A Best Practices Guide to Attracting, Training, Employing, and Retaining Aboriginal People in the Trades Best Practices.” Industry Training Authority of BC. O’Neil, Beverley, and Michael Izen.
<https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/info/GUIDE-ITA%20AI%20LMA%20Review%20Pt2-Best%20Practices%20Final.pdf>

APPENDIX B: Indigenous Employment Support

Indigenous Skills Employment Training (ISETs) Agencies

| Tourism Region ¹¹ | Indigenous Group | Delivery Organization & Location | Program |
|------------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Provincial (BC) | Women | British Columbia Native Women's Association (BCNWA) Kamloops, BC www.bcnwa.weebly.com | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment training support for Indigenous women BC-wide |
| Provincial (BC) | Métis | Métis Nation of British Columbia (MNBC) Surrey, BC https://www.mnbc.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Métis Employment and Training Program |
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast | First Nations | Cariboo Chilcotin Aboriginal Training Employment Centre Society CCATEC Williams Lake, BC http://www.ccatec.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full compliment of ISET programs |
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast | First Nations | Mid Coast First Nations Society (MCFNTS) Bella Bella, BC http://www.mcfnts.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Course Purchase Program • Job Development Program • Summer Student Work Experience Program (SSWP) • Work Experience Program (WEP) • Workplace Based Training Program • Aboriginal Transitions Student Handbook |
| Kootenay Rockies | First Nations | Ktunaxa Nation Council Cranbrook, BC http://www.ktunaxa.org | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Student Program • BladeRunners • Ktunaxa / Kinbasket Aboriginal Training Council (KKATC) • Discretionary • Industry training • Educational sponsorship |

¹¹ See BC tourism regions map.

| Tourism Region ¹¹ | Indigenous Group | Delivery Organization & Location | Program |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| Northern BC | First Nations | Nisga'a Employment Skills and Training (NEST) New Aiyansh, BC http://nisgaaworks.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Board • Job Seekers Programs • Personal Success Planning • Resume Writing • Interview Skills • Mentorship • Job Matching • Coordinates Training • Group Training • Workplace Training • Trades Training • Upgrading • Employer Services • Wage Subsidies • Job Matching • Workplace Training • Partnerships |
| Northern BC | First Nations | North East Native Advancing Society (NENAS) Fort St. John, BC http://www.nenas.org/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Skills to Employment Training Strategy • Sas Natsadle Aboriginal Head Start Program • Infant and Child Development Program • Skills and Partnership Fund Initiative • Rising Spirit Aboriginal Youth Centre • Aboriginal Centre for Innovation and Leadership |
| Northern BC | First Nations | Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association (PGNAETA) Prince George, BC http://pgnaeta.bc.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trades Access Program (TAP) • Customer Care Program (CCP) • Information Technology Program |
| Northern BC | First Nations | Tribal Resources Investment Corporation (TRICORP) Prince Rupert, BC http://www.tricorp.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tricorp Employment, Skills & Training Services (TESTS) • Workplace Essential Skills Trades Training (WESTT) • The Northwest Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs™ (NW-ACE) • BladeRunners |
| Thompson Okanagan | First Nations | Okanagan Training and Development Council (OTDC) Kelowna, BC https://www.otdc.org/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course/Seat Purchase • Youth/Student Development • Workplace Training • Job Development Wage Subsidy • Employment Services Program • Human Resource Investment Fund • Disability Program |
| Thompson Okanagan | First Nation | Shuswap Nation Tribal Council Kamloops, BC http://shuswapnation.org/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment matching • Job postings • Training and education support • Employer support • Summer Student Program • Direct Purchase/Demand Driven • Target Wage Subsidy Program |
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | Urban / Non-affiliated | Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS) West Vancouver, BC http://www.accessfutures.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Student Employment Program • Electrical Foundation Program • Metal Fabrication Foundation Program |

| Tourism Region ¹¹ | Indigenous Group | Delivery Organization & Location | Program |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | First Nations | Lilwat Nation Mount Currie, BC https://lilwat.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare • School • Post-Secondary Education and Training Opportunities at Home |
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | First Nations | Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (MST) Vancouver, BC http://mstdevelopment.ca/about-us/the-partners/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and training programs primarily for Band members • Development / partnering in training programs • ITA approved trades training centre for Level 1 Carpentry • Training and education support • Direct Course Purchase Program • Summer student placements |
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | First Nations | Sechelt First Nation Sechelt, BC https://shishalh.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Programs • Housing Department • Social Development Program • Education Programs: • The shishálh Nation Education Department's mena (baby) program • Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Post-Secondary Studies Support Program |
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | First Nations | Sto:Lo Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training (SASET) Chilliwack, BC http://www.saset.ca/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Services • BladeRunners • Culinary Arts |
| Vancouver Coast and Mountains | First Nations | Tsawwassen First Nation Tsawwassen, BC http://tsawwassenfirstnation.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment matching • Job postings • Training and education support • Employer support |
| Vancouver Island | First Nations | Coast Salish Employment & Training Society (CSETS) Duncan, BC http://csets.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment matching • Job postings • Training and education support • Youth initiatives • Employer support • BladeRunners • Sub-agreements with childcare providers |
| Vancouver Island | First Nations | North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society Campbell River, BC http://www.nviats.com/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BladeRunners • Community Partnership Program • Fresh Start Program • Ready to Work Program • Rent Smart • Summer Student Program • Wage Subsidy Program • Walk in Client Program • Workshop Series |

Wise Ways: Smart Practices to Finding and Retaining Indigenous Talent

| Tourism Region ¹¹ | Indigenous Group | Delivery Organization & Location | Program |
|------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| Vancouver Island | First Nations | Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program (NETP) Port Alberni, BC https://nuuchahnulth.org/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Programs • Child Welfare • Economic Development • Education, Employment Training • Financial Administrative Support • Fisheries • Health Benefits • Community Infrastructure and Housing Development • Nursing, Mental Health • Membership • Newspaper (Ha-Shilth-Sa) • Social Development |



Indigenous Funding Sources

The following list of organizations provide funding programs and support, or development tools. Many are exclusive to Indigenous Bands, Tribal Groups, organizations, and people, while others are known supporters of Indigenous initiatives. Some funders, such as First Peoples, support culture, language, and heritage development, while others focus on women or youth. There are programs for community development including planning, infrastructure and childcare which can improve conditions that prevent or deter someone from maintaining employment.

All Nations Trust Company – First Citizens Fund

SECTOR: Business / Economic Development
Forgivable loans/grants for Aboriginal business enterprises. Business equity fund for starting or expanding an Aboriginally owned business.
<http://www.antco.bc.ca/services/grants>

Aviva Community Fund

SECTOR: Social & Community
To promote Community Resilience, Community Health, and Community Development. Grant selections are by votes from project supporters.
<https://www.aviva.co.uk/services/more-from-aviva/aviva-community-fund/>

BC Arts Council – Community Arts and Culture Grants

SECTOR: Arts & Culture
Project assistance grants, individual art award grants, Indigenous Arts Program.
<https://www.bcartscouncil.ca/bcartscouncil/Indigenous-arts-program-now-accepting-applications/>

BDC Business Development Bank

SECTOR: Business
Capital startup or expansion improvements for existing businesses as well as working capital.
<https://www.investnwt.com/funding/mines-and-minerals/bdc-%E2%80%93-growth-capital-Aboriginal-business>

Columbia Power Corporation – Community Sponsorship Grant

SECTOR: Social & Community
First Nation and Community Sponsorship programs such as arts and cultural events, Educational and youth centred projects, etc.
<http://columbiapower.org/partners/community/community-sponsorship/>

Community Futures

SECTOR: Business Development
Financing and Business Equity Program and NRT Equity Match Grant.
<https://www.communityfutures.ca>

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, The

SECTOR: Youth
This is a non-for mal education and learning framework operating worldwide, through which young people's achievements outside of academia are recognized and celebrated.
<https://www.dukeofed.org/>

Economic Diversification Infrastructure

SECTOR: Capital Infrastructure
Program provides funding to support to development of infrastructure that has direct impact on the diversification of the economy.
<https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/economic-diversification-infrastructure/>

Entrepreneurship and Business Development (EBD)

SECTOR: Economic Development

Business Advisory and entrepreneurship development activities. Planning and research, business, and financial planning, developing skills and capacity, commercial ventures.

<http://www.cannor.gc.ca/eng/1396123434848/1396123576050#q1>

First People's Cultural Council

SECTOR: Culture & Heritage

Funding to support First Nation's language, arts and culture.

<http://www.fpcc.ca/Grants/>

First Peoples' Cultural Council - Language

SECTOR: Language / Culture

Digitization Grant, Language Nests, Mentor-Apprentice Funding, Silent Speaker, Language Revitalization, Aboriginal Languages Initiative, BC Language Initiative.

<http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Programs/>

Ford Family Foundation

SECTOR: Children & Youth

Annual RFP's for grants that demonstrate improving the quality of life for children and youth.

<https://foordfamilyfoundation.org>

Fortis BC – Community Investment Program

SECTOR: Social & Community

Any type of focus on safety, education, the environment and Indigenous initiatives.

<https://www.fortisbc.com/in-your-community/community-investment>

Futurepreneurs

SECTOR: Youth

Start-up funding and mentoring for youth ages 18-39 years with customized focus for Indigenous youth.

<https://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/>

Government of Canada – Apprenticeship Incentive Grant & Apprenticeship Completion Grant

SECTOR: Education / Training

Ongoing grants to encourage career development for people acquiring a trade (Journeyman).

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding.html>

Government of Canada – Jordan's Principle

SECTOR: Children & Family

Health, Education, Social funding for children under 16 years of age for various factors.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/Indigenous-services-canada/services/jordans-principle/submit-request-under-jordans-principle-step-1.html>

Government of Canada – Local Festivals – Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage

SECTOR: Arts & Culture / Heritage

Funding for local groups for recurring festivals that present the work of local artists, artisans, or heritage performers.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities.html>

Government of Canada – Sustainable Development Goals

SECTOR: Socio / Economic Development

Up to 100k for projects not exceeding 12 months.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/sustainable-development-goals.html>

Government of Canada – Young Canada Works

SECTOR: Employment

Internships and Employment giving students and graduates opportunity to work with organizations in an industry related to their field of study.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/young-canada-works/students-graduates.html>

Government of Canada – Youth Accessibility Fund

SECTOR: Youth

Youth innovation funding for people with disabilities, youth and students.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding.html>

Heritage BC – Heritage Legacy Fund

SECTOR: Heritage & Culture

Conservation Program, Heritage Awareness Program, Heritage Planning Program, Indigenous Partnership Program.

<https://heritagebc.ca/heritage-legacy-fund/>

Indian Business Corporation (IBC)

SECTOR: Business Development

Business lending for agriculture, heavy equipment, transportation, service and hospitality industries.

<http://www.indianbc.ca/index.php>

Indigenous Services Canada – Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program (AEP)

SECTOR: Economic Development

Up to \$99k in funding meant for individuals and small businesses.

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1375201178602/1375202816581>

Indigenous Services Canada – Community Opportunity Readiness (CORP)

SECTOR: Economic Development

Looks at financial needs of Aboriginal communities when they are in pursuit of economic activity.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033414/1100100033415>

Indigenous Services Canada – Education Partnerships Program

SECTOR: Education

Promotes collaboration between First Nations, Provinces, Indigenous Services Canada, and other stakeholders to support capacity development for First Nations organizations to deliver Education programs.

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033760/1100100033761>

Indigenous Services Canada – Elementary and Secondary Education Program

SECTOR: Education

To help eligible students living on reserve reach similar educational outcomes to other Canadian students in the same province. **Based on a nominal roll.*

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1450708959037/1531319458607>

Indigenous Services Canada – First Nations and Inuit Skills Link

SECTOR: Education

To help support youth make transition from school to work. Skills link and summer work experience programs.

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033627/1533125289674>

Indigenous Services Canada – First Nations and Summer Work Experience Program

SECTOR: Education

To enable First Nations secondary and post-secondary students to obtain summer employment to prepare for entry to labour market.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1436191420868/1436191651704>

Indigenous Services Canada – High-Cost Special Education Program

SECTOR: Education

For First Nations students with high cost special needs to access quality programs and services.

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033697/1531317695726>

Indigenous Services Canada – Lands and Economic Development Services Program (LEDSP)

SECTOR: Economic Development

Enable First Nations to deliver community economic development, services, which includes community planning and capacity development initiatives.

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1386549231377/1386549271233>

Indigenous Services Canada – Post Secondary Partnerships Program

SECTOR: Education

Funding for eligible Canadian post-secondary institutions to design and deliver university and college level courses tailored for First Nations students. 2-year program running from 2018 to 2020.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033691/1100100033692>

McConnell Foundation – Reconciliation Initiative

SECTOR: Social / Residential School

Funding sources to coordinate tackling persistent social challenges in Indigenous communities, such as safe housing, clean water, access to education, innovation platforms.

<https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/initiative/reconciliation/>

Mountain Equipment Coop – Community Grants

SECTOR: Social & Community

Identify and reduce barriers to outdoor activity and increase activity within the community outdoor enthusiasts. To teach responsible outdoor recreation practices and environmental stewardship.

<https://www.mec.ca/en/explore/spring-and-fall-grants>

New Relationship Trust

SECTOR: Education

First Nations Schools can apply for funding for education projects for K-12 students that are within English & Literacy, Science and Math.

<http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/k-12-education/>

New Relationship Trust

SECTOR: Language

Youth Language Grant for language revitalization on project per year.

<http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/language/>

New Relationship Trust

SECTOR: Social & Community

Direct Support – to build capacity within your Nation. Larger funding availability to groups of three nations doing projects.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/Indigenous-peoples/new-relationship-trust>

New Relationship Trust

SECTOR: Youth Group

Youth group initiative to assist with youth group priorities at the community level.

<http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/youth-grants/>

Nuu-cha-nulth Economic Development Corporation

SECTOR: Business Development

Forgivable loans / grants for Aboriginal business enterprises. Business equity fund for starting or expanding an Aboriginally owned business.

<https://www.nedc.info>

Province of BC – Child Care BC New Spaces Fund

SECTOR: Education / Daycare

Supports creation, expansion and relocation of childcare facilities proposing to create new childcare spaces. Multi age infant – preschool.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool-childcare-new-spaces-fund>

Province of BC – Child Care Space Creation Program

SECTOR: Education / Daycare

To create new license childcare spaces in your own community. Priority will be given to infant and toddler projects.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/community-child-care-space-creation-program>

Province of BC – First Citizens Fund Business Loan Program

SECTOR: Economic Development

Administered through All Nations Trust Company – Economic Development Program, Business Equity Fund Grant, NRT Equity Match Initiative.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/Indigenous-peoples/economic-development/business-loan-program>

Province of BC – Rural Dividend Program

SECTOR: Small Local Economies

To assist rural communities to strengthen and diversify their local economies.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-organizations-community-partners/rural-economic-development/rural-dividend/program-details2>

TACC – Tale'awtxw Aboriginal Capital Corporation

SECTOR: Business Development

Financing and Business Equity Program and NRT Equity Match Grant.

<https://tacc.ca/Funding/>

TriCorp

SECTOR: Business Development

Forgivable loans / grants for Aboriginal business enterprises. Business equity fund for starting or expanding an Aboriginal owned business.

<http://www.tricorp.ca>

Vancouver Foundation – Community Grants

SECTOR: Social & Community

System Changes, Participatory Action Research, Youth Engagement, Neighbourhood, DTES Small Arts grants. Various sectors.

<https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/grants>

Walmart Canada – Community Giving & Grants

SECTOR: Social & Community

Support Canadian families in need, focusing on the following areas: Hunger Relief, Food Access, Healthy Eating, Disaster Preparedness and Relief and Building Strong Communities.

<https://www.walmartcanada.ca/community-giving/corporate-giving>

Western Economic Diversification Canada

SECTOR: Business / Community / Technology

Business support for entrepreneurs, funding for not for profits, Economic opportunities to connect with business and research, support to advance communities facing economic challenges.

<https://www.wd-deo.gc.ca/eng/home.asp>



www.Indigenoustbc.com

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