

The Representative Workforce Strategy

A Results Based Solution

Overview

In 1995, Aboriginal Employment Development (AED) Branch officials initiated innovative formal bilateral partnership agreements with employers in the health sector in promoting a representative workforce where “*Aboriginal people are employed in all classifications at all levels in proportion to their representation in the working age population*”. The formal agreements provided a high level vision for employers based on three key deliverables: employment, education (for the demand side and supply side) and economic development.

Resulting from this dialogue and collaboration between AED and partnership agreement holders was the evolution of representative workforce language from a concept to a strategy.

The Representative Workforce Strategy (RWS) was born with clearly articulated language as a broad, sustainable and focused approach to Aboriginal employment development and the engagement of demand side and supply side partners.

The RWS is an evolving process that grows over time through partnership collaboration. Partners are committed to certain key deliverables as outlined below.

Demand Side Partners

The Representative Workforce Strategy is a change management approach that commits employers to provide leadership to prepare the workplace for the potential to become representative over the long term. Successfully implementing a RWS is contingent upon employers incorporating the following elements in a consistent approach:

- a. Assessment of the workplace culture, attitudes and management values. Ensuring employer policies and practices (i.e. operational, procurement, hiring, collective agreement language, etc) do not give an unfair advantage to one community over another in employment and economic opportunities.
- b. Conduct workplace audits that provide information on the minimum skill requirements and employment needs that can be shared with the Aboriginal community.
- c. Establish a positive working environment through initiatives such as myth and misconception training.
- d. Identify and address specific integration barriers through workforce planning, succession planning initiatives, such as career pathing, and enhancing collective agreement language.
- e. Develop and implement workplace initiatives to improve employee support services and working conditions for the retention and successful integration of Aboriginal employees.
- f. Collaboration and dialogue with partners that will lead over the long-term to the establishment of fair workplaces and a representative workforce.

Supply Side Partners

The Representative Workforce Strategy links the Aboriginal community to the demand side by providing information to First Nations and Métis communities on skill requirements for employer demand. Aboriginal communities are then responsible to prepare themselves through formal learning and education. They are responsible to encourage youth to achieve the maximum knowledge and skills in order to participate in the identified employment and economic opportunities. All training institutes are responsible for the results of the education and training provided to youth by ensuring they are receiving the education and achieving the standards that will make them competitive.

For more information, contact the Aboriginal Employment Development Branch at (306) 787-6250 or visit our website www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca.



**Saskatchewan
Ministry of
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