

IW Intro Video

0:00
The Indigenous Work Ways tool kit is designed to introduce employees and organizations in Canada to the world views and workplace experiences of Indigenous employees in Canada.

0:10
Through online interactive learning modules and organizational resources, employees and managers will gain knowledge and learn skills to build trusting relationships and cultures of trust that can provide more equitable, inclusive and supportive work environments for Indigenous employees.

0:37
By way of introduction, we'd like to share the foundations of the Indigenous Work Ways collaborative research project that created this toolkit.

0:46
It began in 2016 and 2017 when we held a 2-day knowledge sharing conference at Vancouver Island University's Ketchikan Campus.

0:57
It was attended by over 60 Indigenous students, employees and employers who shared both what they've experienced and what they wished they could experience working in mainstream Canadian workplaces.

1:11
And here's where the theme of building trust emerged as the central focus of our work.

1:35
We continued those conversations on 2018, discussing ideas for research on building trust at annual meetings of the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers and also the Canadian Psychological Association.

1:55
In 2018, we partnered with Indigenous Student Centers and applied for Ontario Research Fund Research Excellence funding as well as from York, and we formed our Advisory Council.

1:50
In 2018, the leadership team completed UBC's Reconciliation in Education online course as well as O-CAPS online training courses as one of the beginnings of many, many learnings we did over the course of this project.

2:08
In 2019, we began a student team training for our teams of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students working together collaboratively coming up with our research agenda and initial timelines and the bulk of the research was done between 2018 and 2020.

2:37
The research is guided by Indigenous voices to benefit current and future Indigenous post-secondary students, career pathways and employment experiences.

2:45
One practice we aimed to follow was a two-row Wampum Covenant chain model of Indigenous and non-Indigenous research partnerships.

2:54
Rick Hill and Daniel Coleman write about the treaty formed between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Dutch merchants arriving near Albany, NY in 1614.

3:04
The treaty represented promises of friendship and peace for all time.

3:10
The Dutch represented this agreement on paper with three silver chains, hence the silver Covenant chain of friendship.

3:17
The Haudenosaunee made a belt of wampum shells to record the agreement.

3:22
2 purple rows represent 2 boats travelling on a river represented by the white shells.

3:28
The Haudenosaunee canoe runs parallel to the Dutch ship, each maintaining and respecting their own ways of life while sharing the water in peace and friendship.

3:39
As Hill and Coleman explain, this model of navigating the research waters in separate but parallel boats can help guide university and Indigenous partnerships.

3:49
For the non-Indigenous researchers on our team, this helped us understand that not all collaborative work needs to be done together.

3:57
Rather, our Indigenous partners might be working on one initiative, for example, building an alumni database while the Canadian partners were working on a conference submission paper.

4:12
We recognize that Indigenous peoples refer to over 630 First Nations communities, the Inuit and the Métis people in Canada.

4:22
And while Indigenous peoples represent diverse groups with unique and rich cultures that in general share values that are more holistic, spiritual, traditional, egalitarian, and other oriented than non-Indigenous populations.

4:38
Holistic values and relationality assist in understanding the meaning of work and workplace experiences of Indigenous employees, many of whom strive for balance across intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional states, as well as equilibrium in their relationships with the self, family, community and Creator.

5:00
These values may translate into distinct ways of relating to people and work that non-Indigenous Canadian organizations struggle to understand.

5:11
Rather than just teaching about Indigenous cultures, the Indigenous Work Ways Tool Kit provides pathways to build trusting relationships and trustworthy workplaces.

5:23
So our 4 guiding principles are that we focus on trust, moving beyond mandated cultural competency training that increases awareness but can also cause resentment and disavowance.

5:36
We bring Indigenous voices to lead organizations in adapting existing systems to make space for Indigenous employee well-being and success.

5:47
We emphasize changing organization systems to support Indigenous employees, complementing cultural training efforts aimed at shifting majority group employee attitudes, and we work to build trust, respectful relationships, cultural safety, and networks of trust.

6:05
Employee trust increases engagement, job satisfaction, performance, and commitment.

6:16
You may wonder why the term workways?

6:20
The term workways was created from the word fulways that is used to characterize a social group's norms, customs, and ways of being.

6:30
Indigenous workways refers to characteristics broadly applicable to the way Indigenous peoples relate to work and engage with work.

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Here, work refers to modern, industrialized forms of work in Canadian organizations.

6:47
We recognize that what we've learned won't apply to all Indigenous employees or all Canadian organizations.

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Rather, it provides a general understanding.

6:58
Painting a Landscape.

7:02
The Indigenous Work Ways toolkit consists of 6 online employee training modules and three organizational resources.

7:12
The topics covered in each of the approximately 30 minute online training modules include an introduction to Indigenous world views, relational communication, microaggressions in the workplace, understanding stereotype threat, holistic conflict management, and psychological safety and cultural safety in the workplace.

7:18
The organizational resources provided include an Indigenous Employee Mentorship framework manual, an organizational cultural safety assessment tool and manual, and Indigenous youth career camp or career day documents.

8:02
We would like to say a big **Megat**, thank you to the many partners that helped us along the way throughout this project where you will find more about our partners as well as the students that helped work on this project as faculty members and Indigenous Student Center directors in the acknowledgments section.