



Indigenous Engagement Charter



Introduction

Saskatchewan has many positive attributes that make it a great place to live, work, and invest. This includes the innovation and energy of its people, its four distinct seasons, as well as its natural bounty afforded from the land, make Saskatchewan an incredible place. However, the province also has opportunities that must be championed to reach its full potential.

Perhaps most importantly, this includes the opportunity to fully engage the Indigenous Peoples in the economy. In his 2011 report, University of Saskatchewan Professor Eric Howe reported that the value, beyond any social or moral purpose, of bridging the Indigenous education gap and bringing the Saskatchewan Indigenous population to the same economic level as the broader population is a \$90 billion opportunity. There is little doubt that this is the most important economic opportunity on Saskatchewan's horizon. To that end, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce (SCC) formed a Task Force which resulted in an Indigenous Engagement Charter that is specifically designed for Saskatchewan business. The Charter has been developed with expertise and cultural sensitivity and will be enhanced over time.

Saskatchewan will be a leader in enhancing the level of engagement with Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous-owned businesses, and Indigenous communities. The Indigenous Engagement Charter will support the important work and Calls to Action put forth in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 2015 report.

The Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action are a call to all Canadians; signing on to the Indigenous Engagement Charter reinforces the business community's commitment to Reconciliation.

The Charter mission is twofold, it serves as a roadmap to provide businesses with the tools to achieve engagement and assists the business community in demonstrating the role it must play in reconciliation.

Saskatchewan businesses signing the Charter are committing to the following actions:

- A. Develop an internal Indigenous engagement strategy;
- B. Educate their workplace on Indigenous history and culture through training;
- C. Enhance HR practices to attract, hire and retain more Indigenous workers;
- D. Implement procurement practices, actions and partnerships;
- E. Reinforce relationships and support Indigenous communities through community involvement; and
- F. Provide clear annual reporting of actions undertaken in the Indigenous Engagement Charter Program.

The Saskatchewan Chamber recognizes that not all businesses have the same capacity and resources to develop, implement, and measure an Indigenous engagement strategy. As such, Charter signatories will be provided with the resources required to fulfill their engagement strategy:

- A. Directory of Indigenous-owned businesses to facilitate procurement and partnerships;
- B. Hiring resources- skilled worker directories, hiring best practices;
- C. Training opportunities- list of trainers and online tools to train staff
- D. Assistance with Indigenous strategy- including sample elements, key performance indicators; and
- E. Measurement- provide easy to use online tracking tools to confirm the businesses commitment to Indigenous Engagement Charter Program and to measure its success and progress against its peers.

Elements

Saskatchewan business are invited to participate by signing the Indigenous Engagement Charter. Participants will set benchmarks for their inclusion efforts in order to build more effective and targeted strategies year over year. The program requirements and benchmarks will be self-declared but must be incremental and show clear commitment.

The success of participating businesses will be measured and celebrated on an annual basis.

Cost

Signatories will commit to the Indigenous Engagement Charter for a three-year term. The participant investment is \$750 (\$250 in year 1, \$250 in year 2, \$250 in year 3).

Initial Program Requirements

A. DEVELOP AN INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

With guidance from the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, develop a written Indigenous Engagement Strategy with clearly defined goals. The strategy should consider statements or actions on the following:

- Employment
- Governance or leadership structure
- Community investment
- Education
- Procurement models
- Culture of your organization
- Relationships- business and community
- Overall commitment to reconciliation
- Resources
- Partnerships and alliances
- Key performance indicators

B. EDUCATE THE WORKPLACE ON INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND CULTURE

Implement a training plan to educate the workforce on Indigenous history and culture to create an organizational culture where all levels of the organization are working toward developing positive and flourishing relationships based on fact.

Numerous organizations deliver this type of training, a list can be found in your Indigenous Engagement Charter Resource Guide.

Requirement:

Arrange Indigenous Engagement/Awareness Training at all levels of the participating organization.

Targets will be set by the participating organization, but some suggested goals are included below:

- Year 1: 25% of staff
- Year 2: 50% of staff
- Year 3: 75% of staff

New staff should receive the training within the first year of hiring.

C. ENGAGE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE THROUGH HIRING

To succeed, businesses must commit to an inclusive and diverse workforce that is representative of Saskatchewan's population. The Indigenous population is growing quickly in Saskatchewan, it is in the interest of shareholders, employees, and the communities in which you operate to increase Indigenous representation in your operations. In

order to achieve the full potential, Saskatchewan businesses must embrace the talents of all people in the community.

Requirement:

Participating businesses must establish targets to increase representation of Indigenous people in their operations. Charter participants will create and enforce policies and procedures regarding hiring Indigenous Peoples. Each participating business will be provided with resources to develop policy and procedures as well as resources to assist with achieving hiring goals. An example of reporting may be the hiring and retention of a certain percentage of employees who self-identify as Indigenous. It may also consist of promoting from within or providing training to secure more meaningful employment.

D. IMPLEMENT PROCUREMENT PRACTICES, ACTIONS, AND PARTNERSHIPS

Indigenous-owned businesses need to have opportunities to build and grow their operations the same as any other Saskatchewan business. This requires that participating businesses in the Indigenous Engagement Charter be active in their efforts to procure supplies services and/or establish partnerships and sub-contract using Indigenous-owned businesses.

Three quarters of Canadians believe supporting Indigenous businesses is an important pathway to healing Canada's relationship with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. (2017 Sodexo Canada Indigenous Business Survey) And 81% agree that Canadian Corporations should include Indigenous owned and operated businesses in their supplier networks whenever possible.

Requirement:

Charter Signatories must set targets to promote and increase supplier diversity in their operations. Considerations for increasing supplier diversity include:

- Indigenous sub-contracting
- Incentivizing/reward suppliers and contractors that have Indigenous strategies
- Joint ventures with Indigenous communities
- Joint ventures with independently owned Indigenous businesses
- Procure supplies and services from businesses listed in the Indigenous Engagement Resource Guide.

Initial Program Requirements

E. REINFORCE RELATIONSHIPS AND SUPPORT INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Saskatchewan businesses, in order to reinforce or establish relationships and to achieve the trust and support of the surrounding Indigenous communities must endeavor to support and make a difference in those communities. Reinforcing relationships means operating in a truthful and transparent way, but also may include strategic community investments that deliver long-term benefits to the community.

Requirement:

As part of their Indigenous Engagement strategy, charter participants must provide support for initiatives that benefit and enhance the surrounding Indigenous communities. Areas will be identified by signatories based on their priorities but could include education, community building, sport, mentorship programs, sponsorship of community or cultural events. Support may include dollars spent, in-kind support attendance at Indigenous events and volunteer hours.

F. PROVIDE CLEAR AND HONEST REPORTING OF ALL ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN THE INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT CHARTER PROGRAM

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce will develop an annual reporting process so progress can be easily measured. It is not enough just to want to make a difference, it is important to measure progress, while recognizing that progress is not always a direct line from A to B.

Requirement:

Charter Signatories must agree to participate in the annual reporting process and also should encourage employees to complete the annual Culture and Attitudes survey.

Program Tools and Annual Reporting

Once a company signs the Indigenous Engagement Charter, the SCC Indigenous Engagement Charter staff person will assist the signatory in the development of their Indigenous engagement strategy within 60 days of signing. The Indigenous Engagement Charter Resource Guide will be provided to Charter signatories. The resource guide

will include an Indigenous Engagement strategy guide; links to a directory of Indigenous-owned businesses; hiring resources; training opportunities; measurement tools and more.

Measuring Impact

The hiring and retention progress, of Charter signatories will be measured, and the overall impact will be reported and celebrated.

Annual Charter Celebration

An Annual Celebration will be planned to bring participating organizations and new signing members together to recognize success and share unique and innovative approaches.

Contact

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