talent4energy

OPIMOYASO GROUP

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Building Indigenous Pathways in Energy

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Table of Contents

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Acknowledgements

In partnership with an all-Indigenous Steering Committee comprised of Indigenous leaders, workforce champions, community representatives, and advisors with lived experience in the energy sector.

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Community reflections were gathered during engagement sessions. Comments and quotes were provided anonymously with consent and are used to ground system analysis in lived experience.

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Report designed by Saltmedia

Canada Alberta

About the Artist

Paige Boivin is an Anishinaabe-Métis artist and graphic designer with deep family roots in Treaty 1 territory, Manigotagan, and currently resides in Treaty 2 territory (Roblin, MB). A self-taught creative, Paige has been drawing and creating since she was a young girl, and has been working professionally in design for the past two years — guided by a strong connection to Spirit.

Through her work, Paige aims to bring life, story, and spirit to every design. Her art reflects the strength and beauty of Indigenous identity — centering voices, teachings, and experiences that deserve to be seen and heard. She believes creativity is not only a form of expression but also a form of care — a way to honour Spirit, inspire healing, and nurture community wellness through visual storytelling.

Rooted in both tradition and contemporary design, Paige's work highlights and embodies a deep respect for the relationships that connect us all.

About Saltmedia

From Angie Saltman, President at Saltmedia

Saltmedia is honoured to have had the opportunity to select the Indigenous artist for this report and to lead the report design.

As an Information Design Expert, I'm grateful to Talent4Energy for trusting Saltmedia to collaborate on this work and to practice reconciliation through action. Thank you. We value opportunities to share our expertise and Indigenous worldviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations in meaningful, respectful ways.

We deeply believe in collaborative advantage and in embracing diverse perspectives and lived experiences. When we do this well, we can cultivate honest and safe spaces for learning; spaces that recognize different ways of being and draw on the strengths of many viewpoints to support real, lasting change.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity, and truth, we acknowledge that this work was developed on the traditional territories of the Peoples of Treaty 7 in southern Alberta. These Peoples include the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani), the Stoney Nakoda Nations (Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), and the Tsuut'ina Nation.

We acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, now known as Calgary, as a significant gathering place, travel route, and home to Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial.

We also recognize that this land is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3, within the historical Northwest Métis homeland.

We further acknowledge all Nations, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who live, work, and care for this land. May we move forward together in meaningful, reciprocal, and responsible relationships grounded in respect, relational accountability, and a shared commitment to reconciliation.

This Framework was developed in partnership with Indigenous Nations whose lands continue to sustain community, ceremony, governance, and economic life. We recognize that the energy sector operates on Indigenous territories across Turtle Island, and that workforce participation cannot be separated from land, rights, and responsibility.

This work is offered in recognition that Indigenous Peoples are not stakeholders in the energy sector; they are Rights and Title Holders whose governance, consent, and leadership shape the conditions under which development occurs.

This Framework is intended to guide organizational systems change and shared understanding. It neither creates, modifies, extinguishes, nor reinterprets Treaty rights, constitutional protections, Indigenous legal orders, or Nation-specific governance authority.

Acknowledgement of Two-Eyed Seeing (Etuaptmumk)

Two-Eyed Seeing, or Etuaptmumk, is a guiding principle introduced by Mi'kmaw Elders Albert Marshall and Murdena Marshall of Eskasoni First Nation in Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia).

Elder Albert Marshall, a respected Mi'kmaw knowledge holder, has shared this teaching across academic, environmental, and community settings. With him, Elder Murdena Marshall, a Mi'kmaw Elder, educator, and fluent language speaker, has grounded this principle in lived experience, cultural continuity, and the need for balance between different knowledge systems.

Two-Eyed Seeing refers to seeing with one eye the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing and, with the other, the strengths of Western ways of knowing, and using both together for the benefit of all. This teaching is both a principle and a responsibility, one that calls for respect, reciprocity, and the weaving together of knowledge systems without diminishing either.

This Framework is rooted in this teaching. We respectfully acknowledge the contributions of Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, whose guidance continues to influence how this work is understood and carried forward.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Introduction

Why *Shared Energy, Shared Futures* Was Developed

The attraction and retention of Indigenous talent is essential to Canada's energy industry, serving economic, legal, social, and strategic priorities. As Canada pursues market diversification and energy transition while maintaining its role as a leading global energy producer, Indigenous engagement is not optional, it is fundamental. Numerous major energy projects, including oil and natural gas production, pipelines, wind and solar installations, mining operations, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities, are situated on or adjacent to Indigenous territories.

Canada's energy industry is facing talent shortages due to an aging workforce, and skilled trades, engineering and technical talent gaps. At the same time, Indigenous people represent one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in Canada. Attracting Indigenous talent will help fill those critical talent gaps, build long-term talent pipelines, and strengthen regional economies. Retention matters because symbolic hiring without advancement undermines credibility.

Our work emerged from a clear need: Indigenous workforce participation in the energy sector has too often been approached through short-term hiring targets, isolated training initiatives, or symbolic engagement.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures: Building Indigenous Pathways in Energy was developed to respond to these realities. Its purpose is to shift workforce participation from transactional engagement to relational systems change.

It would be a mistake to view Indigenous People and communities only as a talent pool. Blending of Western engineering with Indigenous knowledge improves energy project outcomes, environmental stewardship and risk mitigation. Indigenous Nations are also increasingly participating as owners and equity partners in the energy sector.

For Canada's energy industry to remain globally competitive, socially responsible, and economically sustainable, Indigenous leadership must be embedded at every level of the industry and organizations, from apprenticeships to boardrooms.

Two Companion Documents

To support understanding and usability, *Shared Energy, Shared Futures: Building Indigenous Pathways in Energy* is organized into two companion documents. These complementary documents are intended to be used together: foundational understanding must come first, followed by practical application within organizational systems.

The first document:

- Foundation for Systems Design supports organizations in developing the foundational understanding required to shift systems. It addresses worldview, governance considerations, structural barriers, cultural safety, and relational accountability, identifying what must change within organizational systems to make Indigenous relationships, partnerships, and workforce inclusion safe, ethical, and sustainable.

The second document:

- Seasonality Framework demonstrates how these commitments translate into practice, through recruitment models, mentorship systems, advancement pathways, procurement inclusion, and other practical employer tools that support attraction, retention, and advancement of Indigenous talent.

What *Shared Energy, Shared Futures* Is – and Is Not

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

A Living Document

This Framework is not static.

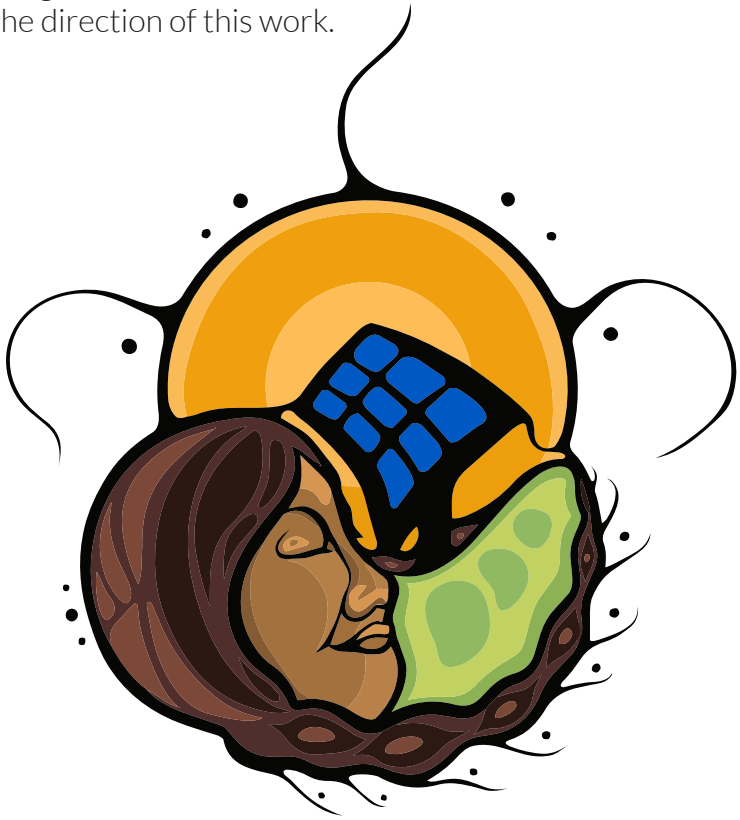
Its strength depends on:

- Continued Indigenous leadership
- Transparent implementation
- Honest measurement and reflection
- Willingness to shift power where necessary
- Long-term relational commitment

Further iterations will evolve as relationships deepen, lessons emerge, and communities continue to guide the direction of this work.

It is an invitation to redesign workforce systems that honour Indigenous governance, safety, and long-term participation. Indigenous workforce participation must be safe to enter, sustainable to remain within, and possible to return to across life stages and responsibilities.

Indigenous workforce inclusion is not achieved through intention alone. It requires governance, accountability, courage, and a sustained relationship.



Setting the Foundation - Walking Together in a Good Way

Shared Energy, Shared Futures was created to support stronger, more respectful, and more effective partnerships between Indigenous Peoples and the energy sector. It is built on the understanding that true success is relational, not transactional, and that Indigenous Peoples must be centred not as stakeholders, but as Rights and Title Holders, Knowledge Keepers, innovators, and leaders in this work.

This resource is not a technical manual. It is a relational guide, shaped through:

- The lived experience of Indigenous workers and leaders
- The wisdom of Elders and community advisors
- The insights of Indigenous Steering Committee members
- Guidance from Indigenous workforce champions
- Lessons learned from decades of community and industry engagement

Through Two-Eyed Seeing, this work weaves together:

- The Indigenous eye, which sees connections, systems, relationships, ancestors, land, and long-term wellbeing.
- The Western Eye, which sees structure, policy, timelines, accountability, and operational systems.

Both perspectives are needed for systems transformation.

The Seasonality Framework honours Indigenous worldview by grounding it in:

- Kinship
- Cultural Safety
- Relationship
- Context
- Governance
- Ceremony
- Reciprocity
- Future Generations
- Collective wellbeing

Both perspectives are needed for systems transformation.

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This Seasonality Framework was specifically designed to enhance attraction, retention, and advancement of Indigenous talent, while equipping industry partners with the required understanding, tools, and practices:

- An understanding of Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous worldview
- A Seasonality framework mapped to attraction, retention, and advancement of Indigenous talent
- Implementation strategies to applying cultural competency in workplace systems
- Practical approaches to applying Two-Eyed Seeing in workforce practices
- Measurable indicators to support accountability and continuous improvement
- Practical tools and step-by-step approaches
- Organizational commitments
- Structural change pathways

It is an invitation:

- To act with humility
- To engage with courage
- To build trust with intention
- To walk slowly where needed
- To share power where appropriate
- To listen deeply
- To lead ethically
- To transform systems
- To ensure that Indigenous Peoples thrive

This is how we walk together, in a good way

Two-Eyed Seeing

Understanding how Indigenous and Western systems can work together in a good way

Two-Eyed Seeing is one of the Framework's core guiding principles. It teaches us to see the strengths of both Indigenous and Western worldviews, without asking one to dominate the other. It provides a foundation for working together in ways that honour Indigenous knowledge systems while navigating Western structures, policies, and organizational realities.

It is a relational practice shaped by humility, balance, respect, shared responsibility, and long-term thinking. Two-Eyed Seeing prepares organizations to hold complexity with care rather than collapsing everything into Western logic.

Two-Eyed Seeing, or *Etuaptmumk*, is the guiding principle introduced by Mi'kmaw Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall that teaches us to see with one eye the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing and with the other eye the strengths of Western ways of knowing, for the benefit of all. It is a practice of holding multiple truths at once: recognizing the relational, land-based, spiritual, and intergenerational dimensions of Indigenous knowledge while also acknowledging the structural, procedural, and technical strengths of Western systems. Two-Eyed Seeing does not blend worldviews into sameness; it respectfully weaves them together in ways that uphold relational accountability, ethical decision-making, and long-term community wellbeing.

The Western Eye is how Western systems have been taught to see the world: through structure, policy, timelines, measurement, and organizational accountability. It focuses on what can be organized, documented, and quantified, such as performance indicators, budgets, regulations, and procedures. These tools can support clarity and consistency, but when the Western Eye operates on its own, it can overlook relationships, history, land, and spirit, and can unintentionally produce colonial patterns by centring only Western forms of knowledge and authority.

Tensions can appear across workforce systems, consultation processes, HR practices, performance reviews, engagement timelines, and governance structures, not due to ill intent, but because the Western worldview was never designed with the Indigenous worldview in mind.

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Two-Eyed Seeing calls upon organizations to use the strengths of the Western Eye, of structure, clarity, planning, and measurement, in service of the Indigenous worldview, including relationship, community wellbeing, and long-term responsibility.

Without relational accountability, the Western Eye becomes extractive. With relational accountability, it becomes a tool for equity, reciprocity, and long-term partnership.

What Two-Eyed Seeing Makes Possible

Two-Eyed Seeing creates the conditions for people, communities, and organizations to work together in a way that honours both worldviews without forcing either one to shrink. It opens space for ethical relationships, shared learning, and collective problem- solving that would not be possible if one knowledge system dominated the other.

Through Two-Eyed Seeing, organizations are able to:

Create Ethical Space for Collaboration

Two-Eyed Seeing invites both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems to meet in a space of mutual respect rather than hierarchy. This "ethical space" allows partners to explore ideas, decisions, and responsibilities without positioning one worldview as the default or the authority.

Strengthen Decision-Making

Two-Eyed Seeing enhances decision-making by ensuring they consider community wellbeing, impacts on future generations, land and water responsibility, technical requirements, structural feasibility, and timeline and implementation systems.

This supports more stable, sustainable outcomes, not just efficient ones.

Guide Systems Transformation Rather Than Quick Fixes

Western systems often respond to challenges with policies, training, or procedural adjustments. Two-Eyed Seeing shifts this approach by emphasizing relational accountability, context, and deeper historical and cultural roots of issues.

This shift prevents shallow or token solutions, reveals root causes of barriers, and helps organizations redesign systems rather than adjust symptoms.

It is what allows change to take root.

Two-Eyed Seeing connects what is counted with what is felt.

Reduce Unintentional Cultural Harm

When decisions are made solely through Western logic, they can accidentally reproduce colonial patterns, such as centring efficiency over readiness, or privileging written policy over Indigenous protocol. Two-Eyed Seeing mitigates this by ensuring that the Indigenous worldview guides decision-making, determines who should be involved, establishes appropriate timelines, and establishes accountability.

This protects relationships, community trust, and cultural safety.

Enhance Learning and Leadership Across Both Worlds

Two-Eyed Seeing helps individuals and teams develop cultural humility, self-awareness, and the ability to move across worldviews with integrity. This is essential for working with Indigenous Nations and also strengthens leadership overall.

Leaders become more relational, more reflective, more patient, more thoughtful, and more balanced in their use of power.

This improves workplace culture and team dynamics.

Build Stronger, More Trustworthy Partnerships

Trust is built through consistency, respect, and shared understanding. By recognizing the validity of both worldviews and honouring Indigenous governance and decision-making patterns, Two-Eyed Seeing creates the relational foundation for long-term partnership.

Partnerships deepen when Indigenous People see that their worldview is respected, their leadership is valued, their governance processes are upheld, and their knowledge is treated as equal, not supplemental.

Support Accountability and Measurable Change

Two-Eyed Seeing explicitly supports the creation of success metrics that honour both Indigenous and Western ways of evaluating impact. This ensures that organizations measure not only numbers but also belonging, safety, trust, cultural grounding, relationship quality, and long-term benefit.

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Less Spoken Realities

Through conversations with Indigenous leaders, it is clear that systems break down when organizations try to solve relational issues with technical tools or when they rush processes that require ceremony, protocol, or time. Two-Eyed Seeing protects against these harms, reminding organizations to pause, reflect, and honour Indigenous rhythms alongside Western structures.

Indigenous Worldviews & Value Systems

Kinship, Ceremony, Time, Governance, Intergenerational Responsibility

Indigenous worldview is not an "add-on" to Western systems; it is a complete knowledge system with its own laws, ethics, governance, protocols, and sciences. While each Nation is distinct, shared values across many Indigenous worldviews include relational accountability, reciprocity, kinship, ceremony, stewardship, and responsibilities to future generations.

Understanding these principles is essential for culturally grounded engagement, ethical decision-making, meaningful partnership, community safety, relationship building, and trauma-informed practice.

Core elements of the Indigenous worldview that shape how Indigenous Peoples relate to the land, each other, systems, time, and work, include:

Kinship and Relational Identity

In many Indigenous worldviews, kinship extends far beyond the Western concept of family. It refers to a network of relationships that connect people to community, ancestors, land and water, plants and animals, spirit, and responsibility.

Kinship forms the foundation of Indigenous identity and shapes how individuals understand themselves in relation to the world. Kinship also influences decision-making, leadership roles, communication styles, responsibilities at home and work, emotional labour carried by workers, and expectations around care for others.

Why does this matter?

Kinship responsibilities may shape when someone can travel, accept a job, be away from the community, or participate in important roles. These responsibilities are not optional; they are cultural obligations.

Failing to recognize kinship as a valid responsibility can lead to misunderstandings, shame, or unintended harm.

Kinship, Ceremony, Time, Governance, Intergenerational Responsibility

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Ceremony and Connection to Spirit

Ceremony is a central part of many Indigenous worldviews. It is not a "special event." It is a way of living that renews relationships, restores balance, and maintains spiritual, emotional, and communal wellbeing.

Ceremony influences when decisions can be made, how leaders prepare for responsibilities, what support individuals need, how communities heal, and how teams ground themselves.

A ceremony also creates clarity, connection, humility, purpose, and alignment in community.

Why does this matter?

Ceremony brings forward teachings that guide decision-making and relational responsibility. Many Indigenous workers need space to participate in ceremony, grieve, fast, pray, or gather during times of loss or transition.

Supporting ceremony supports identity, belonging, and safety.

Indigenous Concepts of Time

Indigenous concepts of time are cyclical, seasonal, relational, and grounded in land-based rhythms. Time is experienced as movement through cycles, responding to the seasons, honouring community readiness, aligning with ceremony and protocol, and pacing decisions relationally, not urgently.

Western systems value speed, efficiency, deadlines, and predictability.

Indigenous systems value readiness, alignment, relational clarity, and community pacing.

This does not mean Indigenous Peoples "move slowly." It means decisions are made in a way that respects relationships, spirit, and community responsibility.

Why does this matter in partnerships?

When communities do not respond quickly, it is not a lack of interest. It is respect. It is a process. It is governance. It is a responsibility.

Misinterpreting Indigenous time through a Western lens leads to pressure, mistrust, and harm.

Supporting ceremony supports identity, belonging, and safety.

Governance and Collective Decision-Making

Indigenous governance systems are relational, consensus-based, protocol-driven, inter-generational, land-based, and accountable to the community.

Leadership is not individualistic; it is relational, humble, and service-oriented.

Indigenous governance considers community priorities, spirit and ceremony, relational impacts, future generations, and collective wellbeing.

This is different from Western governance, which centres on formal authority, speed, risk management, documentation, and individual responsibility.

Why does this matter?

When companies pressure Indigenous leadership to "sign quickly," skip protocol, or collapse timelines, they unintentionally violate foundational governance practices. Consultation may take time because Elders must be consulted, the community must be informed, relationships must be strengthened, ceremonies must be held, and consensus must be reached.

This is a strength, not a barrier.

Land, Water, and Place-Based Knowledge

For Indigenous Peoples, land and water are not resources; they are relatives, teachers, and living relations.

Place-based knowledge includes teachings from land and water, stories tied to place, medicine knowledge, environmental stewardship, responsibilities to protect, ecological cycles, and land-based skill development.

Why does this matter?

Because energy development affects land and water, it shapes identity, governance, safety, and community wellbeing. Understanding place-based knowledge is essential for ethical partnership.

Intergenerational Responsibility

Many Indigenous Nations make decisions with seven generations in mind, which means honouring ancestors and preparing for those yet to come.

This worldview influences environmental decision-making, workforce decisions, timelines, consultation, leadership choices, and community priorities.

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Why does this matter?

Western systems often ask, "What is the fastest and most efficient solution?"

Indigenous systems ask, "What is the most responsible and relational solution for the long-term?"

These are not competing priorities; they are different forms of accountability.

Reciprocity and Balance

Reciprocity is a core moral principle across many Indigenous worldviews: what is taken must be returned in a way that sustains balance, respect, and relationship. This includes land-based reciprocity, relationship reciprocity, economic reciprocity, and emotional and cultural reciprocity.

Reciprocity is not charity; it is obligation, relationship, and ethics.

Why does this matter?

Communities feel when partnerships are extractive, one-sided, or transactional. Reciprocity ensures balance, fairness, trust, and long-term alignment.

> ***"My voice is never heard in places I want to explore."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Less Spoken Realities

Many misunderstandings, harms, and broken relationships occur because the Indigenous worldview is treated as "context," while Western systems are treated as "the default." When organizations ignore worldview, Indigenous Peoples often carry shame, misunderstanding, invisibility, emotional labour, and pressure to translate or justify their worldview. Understanding worldview reduces harm, deepens trust, and prepares organizations to work in ways that honour Indigenous Peoples as Rights and Title Holders, not stakeholders.

To learn more about **Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Worldview** refer to *Foundation for Systems Design* Module 1.

Systemic Patterns Impacting Indigenous Pathways into Energy

What's consistently not working across the system

Across communities, industries, and individuals, several recurring barriers appear.

Key Barriers

- Short-term, transactional engagement
- Overreliance on a single individual to manage all Indigenous relationships, creating bottlenecks, burnout, and fragile, one-person-dependent partnerships
- Western HR models that gatekeep Indigenous applicants
- Misaligned governance and decision-making timelines
- Lack of culturally safe workplaces
- Limited advancement pathways for Indigenous workers
- Community burnout and capacity strain
- High turnover within industry roles that maintain relationships
- Lack of succession planning for key relationship-holding roles leads to repeated relationship breakdowns, loss of trust, and constant restarts when staff turnover occurs
- Persistent information gaps between communities and companies

Understanding these systemic patterns is critical to understanding where shifts are needed.

Reciprocity is a core moral principle across many Indigenous worldviews: what is taken must be returned in a way that sustains balance, respect, and relationship.

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Short-term, transactional engagement.

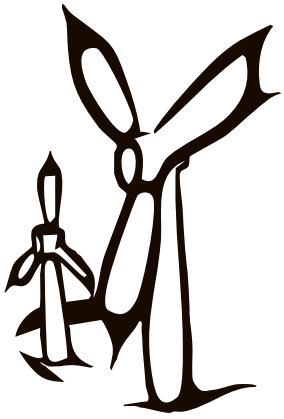
Across the energy sector, Indigenous communities often experience industry engagement as short-term and transactional. Research shows that short-term, project-based engagement undermines trust and reinforces extractive patterns, particularly when companies disengage once immediate needs are met. Many companies appear only during project phases, then disappear once approvals, data, or labour needs are met. This inconsistency erodes trust and creates a cycle in which relationships never mature beyond surface-level exchanges.

Misaligned governance and decision-making timelines

Governance misalignment also emerges early and often. Corporate decision-making moves quickly, follows linear timelines, and prioritizes efficiency over relationships. Indigenous governance is relational, community-driven, and honours protocols, consensus, and long-term impacts. When companies push for quick decisions, communities feel pressured, unheard, or disrespected, deepening the gap between the two systems.

Overreliance on a single individual to manage all Indigenous relationships, creating bottlenecks, burnout, and fragile, one-person-dependent partnerships

Much of the relationship work is carried out quietly and without recognition by a single individual within the organization. This person becomes the “bridge” between two worlds, expected to translate culture, hold history, navigate conflict, and manage expectations for everyone else. When the entire system relies on one person, the work becomes emotionally heavy, structurally fragile, and deeply unfair to both the worker and the community. Overreliance on a single relationship-holder is a well-documented structural issue in Indigenous-industry relations. When organizations fail to distribute relational responsibility, the emotional and cultural burden falls disproportionately on Indigenous Relations staff or a single point of contact, resulting in burnout and fragile partnerships.



Community burnout and capacity strain

Capacity strain within communities further complicates these system gaps. Nations juggle consultations, training requests, community needs, emergencies, and limited staff capacity. Burnout is common, not because communities lack commitment, but because they are asked to shoulder disproportionate responsibility without adequate support.

Persistent information gaps between communities and companies

Information gaps reinforce the perception that engagement is one-sided. Communities are often asked for input but receive little follow-up, no context, or last-minute requests. When industry fails to share information transparently or consistently, it signals that Indigenous partners are included only when it is convenient, rather than as true collaborators.

High turnover within industry roles and a lack of succession planning for key relationship-holding roles lead to repeated relationship breakdowns, loss of trust, and constant restarts when staff turnover occurs

The absence of succession planning exacerbates this relationship fragility. When a key relationship-holding employee leaves, takes leave, or becomes overwhelmed, the partnership often collapses, not because trust was lacking but because responsibility was never shared across departments or leadership. High turnover intensifies this fragility. Indigenous communities must repeatedly re-explain governance, protocols, history, and commitments to new company representatives. This dynamic is widely noted in Indigenous governance and engagement literature as a primary factor undermining long-term relational continuity. This repetition feels disrespectful and reinforces a long memory of industry inconsistency.

Understanding worldview reduces harm, deepens trust, and prepares organizations to work in ways that honour Indigenous Peoples as Rights and Title Holders, not stakeholders.

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Western HR models that gatekeep Indigenous applicants

Western HR systems add another layer of exclusion. Digital portals and applicant tracking systems (ATS) are built on Western Worldviews. Credential requirements, rigid communication, and inflexible timelines often screen out Indigenous applicants before they can demonstrate their strengths. These systems rarely consider Indigenous realities, such as limited connectivity, community obligations, land-based expertise, or alternative pathways to skill development. What is interpreted as a "talent gap" is often a design flaw in the system itself.

Lack of culturally safe workplaces

In workplaces, cultural and psychological safety remain inconsistent. Indigenous workers often assess, within the first moments of onboarding, whether they feel safe, seen, or merely tolerated. When racism, microaggressions, or identity pressures surface, even subtly, advancement pathways narrow, workers may withdraw or leave entirely, and retention declines sharply. The emotional toll of being "the only one" in unsafe environments is rarely acknowledged but deeply felt.

Limited advancement pathways for Indigenous workers

Indigenous advancement requires environments where people feel safe enough to lead authentically. Without cultural safety, Indigenous workers may never reach their full potential, not because they lack talent but because the system does not yet make space for their gifts.

Within Western corporate structures, leadership is often hierarchical, individualistic, and performance-driven. These systems reward assertiveness, visibility, and self-promotion, which can conflict with Indigenous values of humility, quiet strength, consensus-building, and collective recognition.

Advancement pathways must support Indigenous employees' growth without requiring them to suppress their identity or disconnect from their community.

These realities show that the challenges are not the result of individual shortcomings but of systems designed without Indigenous Peoples in mind. Real transformation requires organizations to build structures, not just relationships, that distribute responsibility, embed cultural safety, honour governance, share information transparently, and create stable, long-term pathways for Indigenous workers and communities.

What Is Working Across the System

Strengths, successes, and pathways to amplify

Across communities, companies, and Steering Committee organizations, clear patterns of success have emerged.

Community-Led Models

- Nation-owned economic development corporations and joint ventures
- Community-based training and employment centres
- Indigenous-led stewardship and monitoring programs
- Local workforce access programs (e.g., amplifying these programs established by Maskwacis Employment Center, Siksika, & Doig River First Nation)

Less Spoken Realities

Community-led models succeed because they reflect Indigenous governance, relational accountability, and local priorities. These initiatives honour community autonomy and the intelligence within Nations.

Advancement pathways must support Indigenous employees' growth without requiring them to suppress their identity or disconnect from their community.

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Practical Barrier Removal

- Transportation supports, shuttles, and mobile onboarding
- PPE/tool support and financial bridging
- Safety ticket programs delivered in the community
- Employer-provided mentoring
- Work-ready materials

Less Spoken Realities

These concrete supports deliver immediate, meaningful improvements in participation and retention. Community members emphasized the importance of access to safety certifications and information, noting:

> ***"Offer the Indigenous Awareness ticket and more info."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Long-Term Relationships

- Multi-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs)
- Consistent engagement with Nation leadership
- Deep relational trust built through presence, humility, and accountability

Less Spoken Realities

Trust is built on predictability, presence, and actions, not words. Long-term relationships thrive when organizations move at the speed of trust.

Indigenous Leadership as System Shifters

Indigenous leaders across communities and industries demonstrate:

- Cross-cultural fluency
- Values-based leadership
- Systems navigation
- Alignment-building between worlds

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous leaders walk in two worlds, constantly translating, mediating, and aligning cultures. This work requires immense emotional and relational labour.

Western organizations often undervalue Indigenous leadership styles, yet these very approaches of humility, collective care, consensus, and long-term responsibility are what shift systems.

Indigenous leaders shoulder responsibilities that their non-Indigenous counterparts rarely experience, including representing their entire Nation. Their ability to bridge worldviews is often key to partnership success.

Recognizing Indigenous Rights is not an accommodation; it is a legal, ethical, and relational obligation.

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Youth Driven Pathways

Programs that invest early in youth through mentorship, land- and water-based learning, and exposure to trades are effective and sustainable.

Early investment in youth through mentorship, land- and water-based learning, cultural teachings, and meaningful exposure to the trades creates pathways that are grounded, effective, and long-lasting. Research supports the importance of culturally grounded, community-based youth programming, which strengthens identity, belonging, and long-term success in education and employment. From an Indigenous worldview, supporting youth means supporting the whole circle around them, including family, community, land, water, and identity. Water holds teachings of movement, clarity, flow, and renewal that help youth navigate transitions, responsibilities, and future pathways.

Less Spoken Realities

The quieter realities many young Indigenous people carry, such as stepping into adult roles early, supporting extended family, navigating housing or financial pressures, or walking between the worlds of community and industry. Programs that honour these truths and adapt to youth's lived context offer more than skills; they provide belonging, dignity, and a path that strengthens the community for generations to come.

Studies show that Indigenous youth often face layered responsibilities, including caregiving, financial pressures, and navigating both community and Western systems, all of which significantly influence education and career pathways. These lived experiences echo what many communities have long expressed: that youth need relational, culturally safe supports that honour their realities.

Programs that honour these truths and adapt to youth's lived context provide more than skills; they foster belonging, dignity, and long-term community well-being.

To learn more about **systemic barriers faced by Indigenous People and communities** refer to *Foundation to Systems Design* Module 2.

Cultural Competency

A relational and values-based foundation for ethical Indigenous industry partnership

Cultural competency is not training. It is not a checklist. It is not a certificate.

Cultural competency is a lifelong commitment to relational accountability, grounded in humility, respect, reciprocity, and the understanding that the Indigenous worldview is not an add-on; it is a fundamentally different way of relating to people, land, time, decision-making, and responsibility.

Foundational Principles of Cultural Competency

These principles must guide every system, policy, and interaction

Move at the Speed of Trust

Trust is the cornerstone of Indigenous-industry relationships. Indigenous communities have endured generations of broken promises, extractive development, and harm disguised as "opportunities". Trust develops through consistent presence, follow-through, and relational transparency. It cannot be rushed to meet project timelines or funding conditions. Trust grows through everyday actions: returning calls, attending funerals, showing up in community, honouring commitments, and speaking truthfully, especially when it's uncomfortable.

Less Spoken Realities

Communities remember every time an outsider made promises and then disappeared when funding dried up or leadership changed. Trust is slowly rebuilt through actions that show, "We will stay even when it is inconvenient." Many Indigenous leaders quietly test organizations, observing whether they show respect in small moments. When companies push for speed, they disrupt the natural rhythm of trust-building and risk repeating historical harm.

Trust develops through consistent presence, follow-through, and relational transparency.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Indigenous Peoples Are System Thinkers

The Indigenous worldview holds that everything is interconnected, including land, water, community, governance, spirituality, economy, and relationships. No system stands alone. Every decision affects multiple layers of community life. Strategies, workforce initiatives, and partnerships must be designed with, not for, Indigenous Peoples, as their systemic understanding reveals impacts and opportunities that Western systems overlook.

Less Spoken Realities

Western systems often try to separate issues: HR handles hiring, Indigenous Relations handles relationships, and Operations handles work. The Indigenous worldview sees no such divisions. When organizations design programs in silos, communities feel the fragmentation immediately. They see the gaps, the discounts, and the lack of relational coherence. This is why Indigenous Peoples must be involved from the beginning. They are the ones who can see how all parts of the system intersect on their land, in the community, and in the lives of their people.

Indigenous Peoples are Rights and Title Holders – NOT Stakeholders

This distinction is fundamental. Stakeholders have interests. Rights and Title Holders have inherent jurisdiction.

Success requires organizations to recognize Indigenous sovereignty, uphold Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and honour Treaty and inherent rights across all interactions.

Cultural competency begins with humility, "Teach me. I'm here to listen."

Less Spoken Realities

When companies treat Indigenous Nations as stakeholders, they inadvertently perpetuate centuries of marginalization. These framing signals that Indigenous voices are optional rather than foundational. Communities feel the weight of this disrespect deeply, as it touches on identity, survival, and the ongoing fight for recognition. Cultural competency requires organizations to shift from "consulting" Indigenous Peoples to sharing decision-making power with them. Ultimately, meaningful partnership requires honouring the principles long expressed by Indigenous Peoples and justice movements alike: nothing about us, without us.

Relationship, Reciprocity, and Relational Accountability

Relationships come before tasks. Reciprocity comes before transactions.

The Indigenous worldview teaches that relationships must be nurtured with care, humility, and continuity. Reciprocity means giving back what you take, including time, resources, support, opportunities, knowledge, and presence.

Relational accountability means that once a relationship is formed, you are responsible for how your decisions affect that person or community.

Less Spoken Realities

Communities can sense when an organization shows up only for its own benefit. They also sense when someone arrives with sincerity and heart. Many Indigenous leaders carry relational responsibilities that span multiple Nations, clans, and families. When companies treat relationships as business transactions, they break cultural law. Success requires honouring relationships as living beings, worthy of protection, nourishment, and long-term care.

Relationships come before tasks.
Reciprocity comes before transactions.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Long-Term Thinking (Seven Generations)

Indigenous leadership is guided by responsibility to ancestors and future generations.

Decisions must support the wellbeing of those yet unborn. Employment, projects, and partnerships must strengthen:

- Land & Water
- Language
- Culture
- Community
- Economic sovereignty

This is long-horizon thinking that guides ethical decision-making.

Less Spoken Realities

Western timelines demand urgent decisions, rapid onboarding, and quarterly milestones. Indigenous leaders bear a different responsibility, one anchored in safeguarding their nation's future. When pressured, leaders often feel compelled to choose between immediate opportunity and long-term well-being. Cultural competency recognizes that "no" is sometimes an act of protection, not resistance.

Cultural Safety and Respect

Cultural safety is a felt experience, not a policy.

A culturally safe workplace is one where Indigenous workers feel:

- Valued
- Respected
- Recognized
- Free from racism
- Able to be fully themselves

Supported in identity, community roles, and cultural practices

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous employees often enter workplaces bracing for harm because they have experienced it before. A single disrespectful comment, joke, or assumption can cause deep emotional injury. Cultural safety requires more than tolerance; it requires courage, accountability, and action. Workers leave when they feel unseen or disrespected, long before HR metrics reflect an issue.

Trauma-Informed HR

Trauma is not an excuse. It is a reality. It lives in bodies, families, and communities.

Trauma-informed HR practices:

- Recognize intergenerational trauma
- Avoid punitive responses to distress
- Understand Indigenous communication patterns
- Provide compassionate flexibility
- Build trust through predictability and presence

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous workers make decisions from a place shared by trauma, not because they want to, but because trauma lives in the nervous system. When HR misreads trauma responses as "unprofessional," "disengaged," or "unreliable," it reinforces colonial harm. Trauma-informed approaches prevent workers from being punished for wounds they did not choose.

Context Matters – Territory, Protocol, and Governance

Every Nation is different. Cultural competency requires understanding:

- Territory
- Protocols
- Leadership structure
- Internal governance
- Kinship systems
- Community priorities
- Local history
- Current realities

Less Spoken Realities

Communities often feel disrespected when companies assume pan-Indigenous sameness. Protocol mistakes can fracture relationships built over years. When organizations don't take the time to understand the context, they signal that the relationship isn't worth the effort. Cultural competency begins with humility, "Teach me. I'm here to listen."

Cultural Competency in Practice

These abilities must be cultivated across the organization. Cultural competency is not training; it is a practice lived through behaviour, consistency, and relational accountability.

Context Matters – Territory, Protocol, and Governance

Every Nation is different. Cultural competency requires understanding:

Relational Competency

- Showing up consistently
- Following up respectfully
- Communicating with clarity and humanity
- Listening more than speaking
- Understanding kinship responsibilities
- Approaching conflict relationally, not defensively

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous people assess trustworthiness through quiet observation, noting how you speak, how you act under pressure, and how you treat others. Relational competency is not taught; it is lived. Organizations that build relational strength see smoother projects, deeper loyalty, and stronger partnerships.

Community Competency

- Plain language
- Avoiding jargon, acronyms, and overly technical explanations
- Telling the whole story, not only the Western perspective
- Ensuring candidates understand what is required
- Using multiple communication formats (phone, in-person, community meetings)

Less Spoken Realities

Western communication often relies on emails, apps, and portals that many Indigenous workers cannot access consistently. Communities appreciate phone calls, face-to-face meetings, and personal follow-up because these methods align with a relational worldview. Communication competency means honouring how Indigenous Peoples prefer to receive information, rather than imposing Western methods on them.

Leadership Competency

- Practicing humility and self-awareness
- Sharing decision-making
- Addressing racism and sexism immediately
- Understanding Indigenous governance and protocols
- Supporting Indigenous leadership development
- Empowering rather than controlling

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous employees often watch leaders closely, assessing whether they truly walk in good ways. A leader's ego, avoidance, or insensitivity can undermine entire initiatives. Conversely, a leader who listens deeply, admits mistakes, and acts with humility can transform a workplace into a safe space where Indigenous talent can thrive.

HR Competency

- Recognizing Indigenous Rights (bereavement, harvesting, hunting, taxation)
- Eliminating resume "black holes"
- Trauma-informed responses to behaviour
- Multiple forms of mentorship (not only 1:1)
- After-hours support capacity
- Removing isolation (pairing workers)
- Supporting workers without devices, data, or internet

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous workers fall out of recruitment pipelines for reasons unrelated to ability. Rather, it's about no phone minutes, no laptop, no transportation, and no follow-up. These systemic barriers are invisible to Western HR but deeply felt by Indigenous candidates. Cultural competency requires HR to step outside traditional processes and build humane, practical pathways.

Organizational Competency

To practice cultural competency, organizations must commit to:

- Moving at the speed of trust
- Building programs and strategies with Indigenous Peoples
- Trauma-informed and relational HR
- Recognizing Indigenous Rights
- Transparent communication and accountability
- Eliminating digital and bureaucratic barriers
- Ensuring cultural safety at all levels
- Investing in long-term relationship and reciprocity
- Creating space for Indigenous leadership

To learn more about **building cultural competency** refer to *Foundation to Systems Design* Module 2

Cultural competency is not training; it is a practice lived through behaviour, consistency, and relational accountability.

The Seasonality Framework

A living model rooted in Indigenous worldview

The Seasonality Framework reflects the cyclical nature of growth, reflection, and renewal. Each Season teaches us about workforce development, relationship building, and organizational responsibility. The cycle is continuous, not linear.

In many Indigenous traditions, the seasons reflect stages of life, learning, and growth. Aligning the attraction, retention, and advancement of Indigenous talent with this cycle offers a culturally grounded, intuitive visual representation of Two-Eyed Seeing. The cycle is not linear; each season flows into the next, just as attraction leads to retention, retention to advancement, advancement to reflection, and reflection to renewal, with the cycle repeating.

Through the Framework, we see the visual blending of Indigenous and Western perspectives: seasonality, land- and water-based teachings, animals, cycles of growth, energy systems, innovation, and measurable outcomes. These are expressed through natural elements such as land, water, air, and minerals, which transform into energy structures such as solar panels, wind turbines, pipelines, and drilling rigs, to name a few.

Each season is guided by core principles that connect cultural teachings to practical application. These principles ground the Framework's development and ensure that each phase reflects Indigenous values and relational accountability. The following framework shows how cultural teachings translate into practical implementation steps for organizations.

Season	Cultural Theme	Talent Phase	Symbolic Meaning	Guiding Principles
Spring	Renewal & Awakening	Attraction	Growth, Curiosity, and Connection	Relationship & Trust
Summer	Growth & Strength	Retention	Energy, Belonging, and Balance	Participation & Representation
Fall	Harvest & Transformation	Advancement	Learning, Leadership, and Empowerment	Advancement & Empowerment
Winter	Reflection & Renewal	Reflection	Wisdom, Ceremony and Healing	Safety, Ceremony & Wellbeing
Center (All Seasons)	Reciprocity	Reciprocity	Return, Balance and Continuation	Reciprocity & Community Benefit

Spring - Renewal & Attraction

Guiding Principles: Relationship & Trust

Spring teaches us that new beginnings must be rooted in trust, clarity, transparency, and relational connection.

Recruitment is often the first point of contact between Indigenous Peoples and an organization. When recruitment processes are overly rigid, opaque, or culturally disconnected, they can exclude qualified candidates before employment begins.

Common attraction and recruitment barriers include:

- Overemphasis on formal credentials over lived experience
- Jargon-heavy job postings
- Resumes disappear into HR "black holes", with no follow-up
- Credential-heavy requirements undervalue lived experience
- Siloed departments (HR, Indigenous Relations, Operations, Procurement) create inconsistent approaches
- Overreliance on apps, portals, and digital systems
- Corporate language and technical jargon create misunderstandings
- No coordinated structure for trainees moving from workforce development programs to employment
- Online-only application systems that disadvantage rural or remote communities where internet access is limited or unreliable
- Interview processes that privilege Western communication styles

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous candidates enter Western hiring systems that seem designed to keep them out. When an application goes unanswered, it is not merely inconvenient, it confirms a lifelong pattern of being overlooked. Research on Indigenous labour market participation consistently highlights how rigid HR systems, credentialism, and digital-first recruitment practices disproportionately exclude Indigenous applicants.

Community members consistently report that recruitment events without clear, available roles erode trust; ethical attraction requires that opportunities presented are real, resourced, and intended to lead to employment. As one community participant stated:

> ***If companies do job fairs, commit to hiring from the community.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Online systems that assume digital literacy inadvertently punish those without stable internet or experience navigating these tools. Inside companies, Indigenous Relations may be trying to build trust while HR unknowingly undermines it with rigid processes. These misalignments reflect broader systemic patterns identified across Indigenous workforce literature, where policies and practices do not account for the lived realities of Indigenous applicants.

Workers fall through cracks not because they are unqualified, but because the system was never built with them in mind. These underlying disconnects erode confidence and reinforce the belief that Western workplaces are unwelcoming or unsafe. The complexity and rigidity of HR and procurement systems often signal to Indigenous candidates that the workplace was not designed with them in mind, discouraging entry before a relationship can even begin.

> ***"I would like to know where I can get training for the oil and gas industry."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Less Spoken Realities

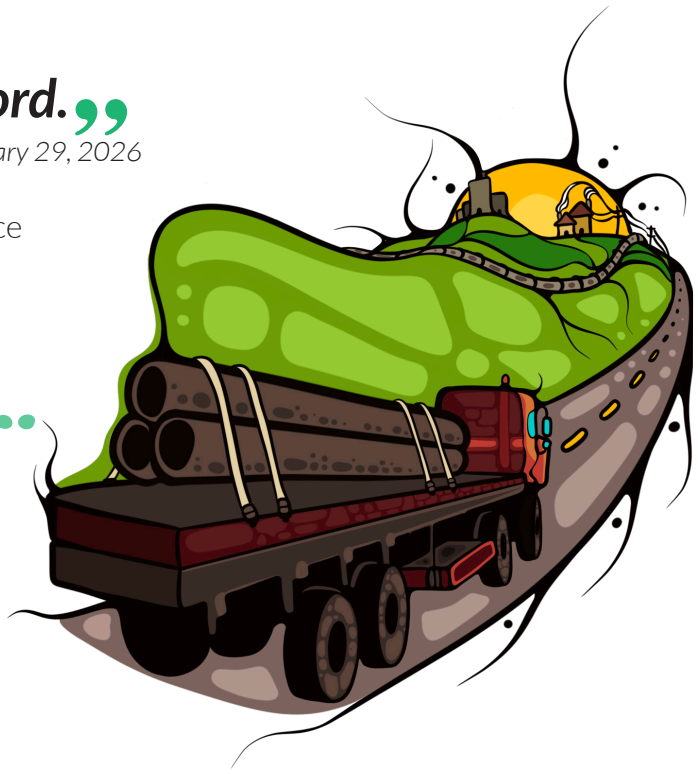
During community engagement, participants identified how exclusion compounds across identity and circumstance. One participant wrote:

> ***"Being a woman trying to work a man's job."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Another shared:

> ***"Having a criminal record."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

These reflections highlight that workforce exclusion is rarely a single-issue phenomenon. Gender, criminalization, Indigeneity, and access to opportunity intersect within hiring systems.



Cultural Competency in Practice

Ways organizations can demonstrate cultural competency and a commitment to relational accountability.

Before Recruitment

- Respect for community readiness and consent
- Build trust through relationships, not branding, before opportunities appear
- Understand Nation context deeply
- Clarify job expectations honestly
- Co-design postings with communities
- Plain-language job descriptions that clearly explain roles and expectations
- Clarify job expectations honestly
- Offer resume and technology support
- Make hiring processes relational and accessible

Less Spoken Realities

Communities see through performative outreach. They also notice when an organization invests time in understanding their realities before asking for workers. Recruitment is successful when trust is established first; otherwise, it feels extractive.

During Recruitment

- Flexible application pathways (e.g., in-person, supported, and community-based)
- Interview processes that are relational, transparent, and respectful
- Valuing transferable skills, community experience, and lived knowledge
- Face-to-face engagement
- Phone calls instead of relying on apps
- Clear explanation of job duties, risks, and expectations
- Immediate follow-up in all resumes
- Paired or group interviews when culturally appropriate

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous candidates feel deep anxiety during recruitment, not because they lack capabilities, but because they have previously been dismissed or misunderstood. Human connection reduces that fear. When candidates experience relational respect, they lean in. When they encounter silence or bureaucracy, they withdraw.

Onboarding

- Clear explanation of workplace expectations and supports
- Introduction of safe points of contact (HR, mentors, and Indigenous Relations)
- Early check-ins that focus on wellbeing, not just performance
- Explicit permission to ask questions and seek support
- Include ceremony if appropriate
- Introduce Indigenous Relations early
- Offer mentorship teams (not only 1:1)
- Support with phone/data access if needed
- Provide work-ready materials and supplies, or pre-employment financial support

Less Spoken Realities

Onboarding is often the moment when Indigenous workers subconsciously decide whether they belong. Cultural cues, tone, and warmth matter deeply. A welcoming ceremony, such as a short opening prayer, a smudge (if appropriate), an Elder offering words, or simply acknowledging the worker's Nation and inviting them to share what they are comfortable with, can create a sense of safety and recognition. Likewise, a clear introduction to Indigenous Relations staff can make the difference between staying and leaving.

Human-centred recruitment approaches do not compromise quality. They expand access and reduce bias by recognizing multiple ways to demonstrate competence and readiness.

Two-Eyed Seeing in Practice

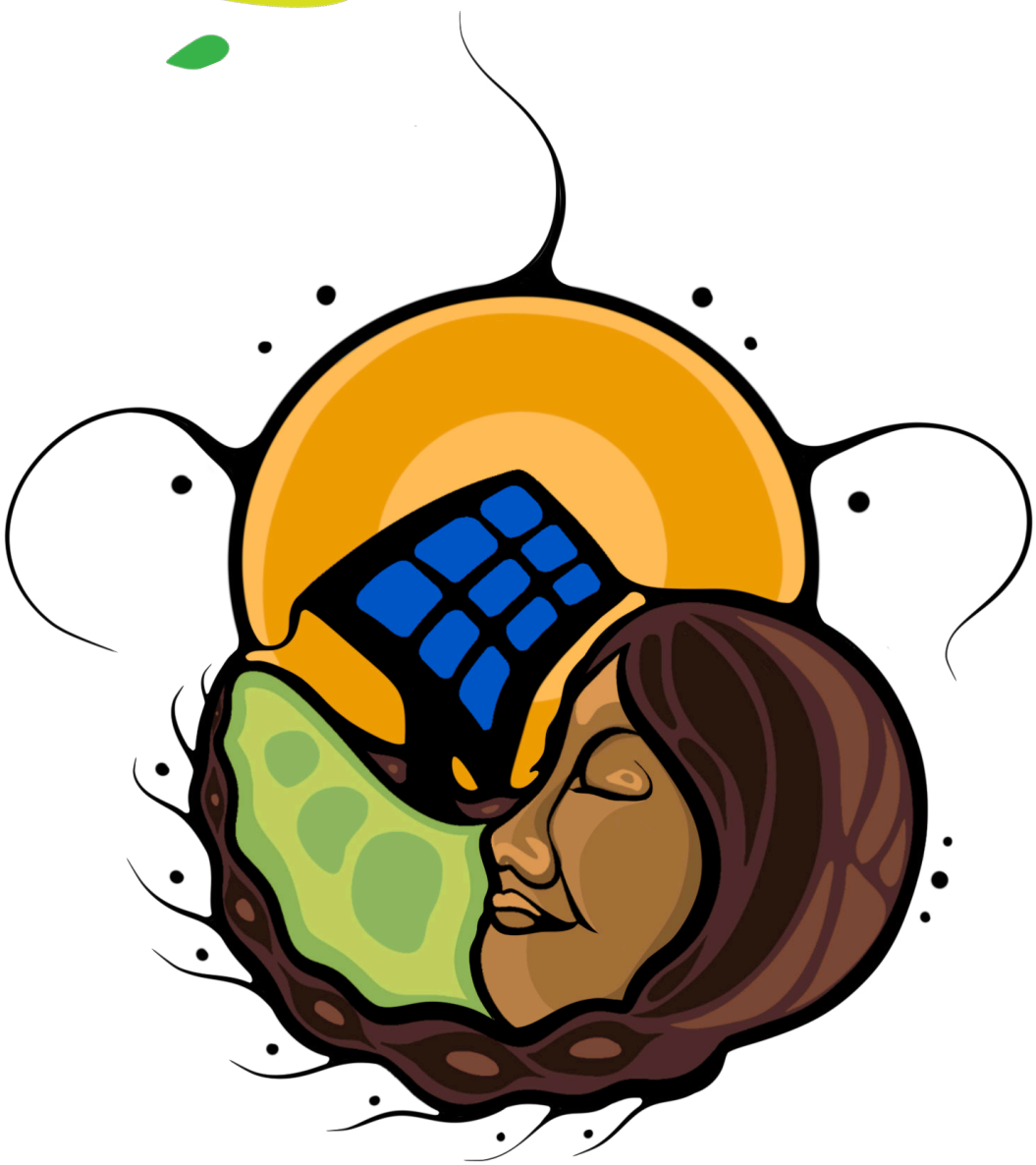
Ways organizations can hold Indigenous and Western perspectives simultaneously.

- Create paid internships, co-ops, and mentorship pairings that connect youth with Elders or Knowledge-holders within energy organizations
- Integrate capstone or co-op projects on real assets (e.g., microgrid maintenance, site remediation, land-based monitoring, etc.) that apply Two-Eyed Seeing rubrics, technical and land-based learning side by side
- Establish a presence in the community before recruitment begins
- Include community representatives on hiring panels and recognize land-based learning and cultural leadership as valued qualifications
- Encourage organizations to hold onboarding circles that introduce Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff through shared protocols and stories
- Humanized recruitment (face-to-face, follow-up, storytelling)
- Companies demonstrate authenticity by ensuring job postings and recruitment events reflect real, available opportunities

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous candidates carry past experiences where recruitment felt extractive or dismissive. They have seen resumes disappear, promises evaporate, and opportunities turn into disappointment. Some have attended career fairs or job events where companies present themselves as eager to hire Indigenous workers, only to discover afterward that no real positions exist. These experiences feel disrespectful and reinforce the belief that engagement is more about public image than genuine opportunity.

For Indigenous candidates, attraction is not about posting jobs; it is about showing up consistently, demonstrating integrity, and making sure opportunities are real and accessible. It is about ensuring candidates feel respected long before they enter the workforce, not used as part of a corporate perfomance. When organizations over-promise and underdeliver, the impact is lasting; trust erodes, participation declines, and communities become protective of their people.



Summer - Growth & Retention

Guiding Principles: Participation & Representation

Summer teaches us that growth requires nourishment, balance, and an environment in which plants and people can stand tall.

Retention barriers in the energy sector often stem not from ability or interest but from whether workplaces are psychologically, culturally, and relationally safe enough for Indigenous Peoples to stay.

A "safe workplace" is not defined by the absence of formal complaints or by the existence of policies on paper. Safety is defined by Indigenous employees' experience.

Common retention barriers include:

- Respected and dignity
- Absence of racism, microaggressions, and tokenism
- Consistent protection from harm and isolation
- Supported cultural identity, kinship and community responsibilities, and community obligations
- Clear pathways for addressing conflict, harm, and repair

Common retention barriers include:

- Racism, discrimination, and microaggressions
- Lack of cultural and psychological safety
- Pressure to mask identity
- Emotional and mental burnout tied to being "the only one"

In workplaces, cultural and psychological safety remain inconsistent. Indigenous workers often assess, within the first moments of onboarding, whether they feel safe, seen, or merely tolerated. When racism, microaggressions, or identity pressures surface, even subtly, advancement pathways narrow, workers may withdraw or leave entirely, and retention declines sharply. The emotional toll of being "the only one" in unsafe environments is rarely acknowledged but deeply felt.

Indigenous workers often enter workplaces bracing for harm, sometimes unconsciously, sometimes from lived experience passed down through generations. They may carry trauma from family histories, prior workplaces, or personal experiences that shape how they navigate conflict or authority. Research shows that racism, microaggressions, and cultural invalidation directly contribute to psychological distress, workplace withdrawal, and reduced retention among Indigenous employees. When expected to perform under pressure without acknowledging these realities, they may withdraw, shut down, or disconnect emotionally.

Cultural safety is not a preference; it is a requirement for Indigenous workers to thrive. Without it, even the most skilled workers eventually leave. Many Indigenous employees have learned to scan their environment quickly, assessing whether a workplace feels culturally safe or whether masking parts of themselves is necessary for survival. Cultural safety literature emphasizes that harm occurs not only through overt discrimination but also through subtle interpersonal dynamics, silence, or the erasure of identity. The emotional toll of being "the only one" in a department or team is well recognized across Indigenous workforce studies. Isolation, vigilance, and the pressure to represent an entire people create burnout that Western HR systems rarely account for.

Safety Across Different Workplace Contexts

Indigenous employees experience safety differently depending on where and how they work. Safe workplace guidelines must be adaptable across contexts.

Corporate and Office Environments

In office settings, harm often manifests as exclusion from decision-making, performative inclusion, cultural misunderstanding, and pressure to educate others. Safety requires clear expectations for respectful communication, shared responsibility for learning, and leadership accountability.

Field, Site, and Camp-Based Work

In field and camp settings, Indigenous employees may face heightened risks from isolation, hypervisibility, or a lack of culturally informed supervision. Safety in these contexts requires clear behavioural standards, trained supervisors, culturally informed incident response, and zero tolerance for harassment or racism.

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous employees do not report harm through formal processes. They may fear retaliation, being labelled as difficult, or being seen as the problem rather than the harm being recognized as the issue. Some have experienced systems where complaints were minimized, investigators lacked cultural understanding, or outcomes prioritized reputation over people.

In many cases, Indigenous employees leave quietly rather than fight a system that has historically failed to protect them.

Organizations may interpret this as "turnover" or "lack of fit," but it is actually a signal of a lack of cultural unsafety.

When Indigenous employees must mask their identity to stay safe, the system is unsafe.

As one participant stated plainly:

> ***My voice is never heard in places I want to explore.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

This statement reflects not only exclusion from opportunities, but also the psychological cost of feeling invisible within systems that claim to be inclusive. Cultural safety requires more than tolerance; it demands courage, action, and shared responsibility.

Some individuals describe exhaustion from continually evaluating the safety of disclosing their identity, addressing misinformation, or confronting inappropriate conduct. Over time, this emotional labour can lead to burnout, disengagement, and attrition.

Organizations often misinterpret Indigenous turnover as a recruitment problem rather than a safety issue. Without systemically addressing workplace safety, hiring more Indigenous employees simply increases the number of people exposed to harm.

Cultural Competency in Practice

Ways organizations can demonstrate cultural competency and a commitment to relational accountability.

Workplace Cultural Safety

- Understand Indigenous worldview
- Address racism and microaggressions immediately
- Provide Elders or cultural advisors
- Honour kinship responsibilities
- Allow flexibility for cultural ceremony
- Create space for cultural practices, kinship, and community obligations
- Pair workers to prevent isolation

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous workers feel isolated in Western workplaces, navigating systems that neither see nor celebrate them. When cultural safety is absent, workers often leave quietly. When it is present, they blossom into leaders.

HR Cultural Competency

- Recognize Indigenous Rights in policy (bereavement, harvesting, hunting, taxation)
- Eliminate resume “black holes”
- Trauma-informed policy and responses to behaviour
- Multiple forms of mentorship (not only 1:1)
- After-hours support capacity
- Remove isolation (pairing workers, buddy system)
- Support workers without devices, data, or internet

Two-Eyed Seeing in Practice

Ways organizations can hold Indigenous and Western perspectives simultaneously.

- Co-design safety and operations meetings using both Indigenous and Western risk lenses, ensuring ceremony, story, and technical evidence share equal space
- Establish procurement and contracting gates that prioritize Indigenous-owned suppliers and local capacity building
- Maintain decision logs or reflection journals that document how Indigenous Knowledge and Western evidence are braided together in project planning
- Provide professional development rooted in relationship building and ongoing cultural safety learning, helping to create culturally safe workplaces
- Trauma-informed HR practices
- Mentorship that happens during and after work hours
- A buddy or support system that prevents Indigenous workers from being isolated during training, onboarding, or early employment
- Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous Relations support
- Policies that honour Indigenous Rights (bereavement, harvesting, hunting, kinship)
- Indigenous Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and other culturally grounded supports that create belonging, elevate Indigenous perspectives, and strengthen organizational learning

Less Spoken Realities

Retention is not about whether Indigenous workers can adapt; it is about whether the workplace is safe enough for them to stay. Many Indigenous employees leave not because they lack skill or commitment but because the environment signals, sometimes subtly, sometimes directly, that they do not fully belong. Experiencing racism, microaggressions, pressure to mask their identity, or being the only Indigenous person in a department all take a cumulative psychological and emotional toll.

Belonging must be built intentionally. Participants also expressed fear of being placed in training environments that feel unsafe or invalidating:

> ***When we get training, please make sure it is legit, and we don't get embarrassed.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Structures such as mentorship, buddy systems, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous Relations support help reduce isolation and foster connection. Indigenous Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) further strengthen this by creating culturally grounded spaces where Indigenous employees can gather, share experiences, and support one another. These groups are not merely internal networks; they are sources of community, cultural affirmation, and collective safety.

ERGs also offer organizations something essential: truthful, lived insight into how Indigenous staff experience policies, practices, and workplace culture. When companies listen to these insights, retention improves not because employees toughen up, but because the workplace becomes a place where Indigenous People feel respected, represented, and valued.

Ultimately, retention depends on whether Indigenous employees can bring their full identity to the workplace without fear of harm, tokenism, or misunderstanding. When belonging is intentionally fostered and culturally grounded supports are embedded in organizational systems, Indigenous employees are far more likely to stay, grow, and lead.

To learn more about **creating safe, inclusive workplaces and systems** refer to *Foundation to Systems Design* Module 3.

Fall – Harvest & Advancement

Guiding Principles: Advancement & Empowerment

Fall teaches us that transformation is possible when people are supported, mentored, and recognized for their gifts.

Advancement pathways must support Indigenous employees' growth without requiring them to suppress their identity or disconnect from their community. Advancement and growth without assimilation.

Common advancement barriers include:

- Limited advancement pathways
- Unionized seniority systems often require Indigenous apprentices to begin at entry-level positions at each job site, limiting continuity and advancement
- Challenges balancing community responsibilities and work schedules
- Under recognition of lived, land-based, or cultural expertise
- Limited access to mentorship, especially during evenings and after hours, when most support needs arise
- Training programs that do not translate into employment
- Indigenous women shoulder a disproportionate leadership load in communities
- Indigenous employees expected to act as cultural interpreters
- Limited Indigenous role models in technical and leadership roles
- Indigenous leadership styles are rooted in relational, consensus-based, community-centred approaches that are undervalued or misunderstood in hierarchical Western corporate systems, limiting recognition and advancement

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous workers are eager to advance but are repeatedly placed in entry-level positions despite their skills, experience, and motivation. In unionized environments, seniority rules often require apprentices to start at the bottom at each new work site. Research on Indigenous apprenticeships and labour mobility shows that rigid seniority and jobsite rules disproportionately affect Indigenous workers, particularly those entering trades later in life or moving between regions. As a result, Indigenous workers can restart their careers multiple times, watching their earnings, confidence, and opportunities reset again and again. These repeated restarts feel less like new beginnings and more like being held in place. Over time, they can erode confidence and create a sense of stagnation rather than growth. This dynamic is also reflected in broader labour market studies, which highlight how systemic barriers, rather than individual capability, shape Indigenous mobility and advancement.

Training programs can also create a cycle of "false hope." Workers complete certificates and meet all expectations, only to find no job available to them. This experience reinforces the belief that the system was never designed to help them succeed.

Mentorship is one of the most important supports for career growth, yet it is rarely available in ways that align with the realities Indigenous workers face. Many issues requiring guidance arise after hours, on evenings, or weekends when workers are navigating family responsibilities, community crises, transportation challenges, or unfamiliar work environments. Without after-hours support, workers face these challenges alone, and small issues become major barriers.

At the same time, Indigenous workers are balancing ceremony, caregiving, kinship obligations, and community responsibilities that Western schedules do not accommodate. When pathways do not honour these realities, advancement becomes a distant possibility rather than an achievable goal. The result is not a lack of talent or ambition; it's a misalignment between the system and the lived experience of Indigenous workers.

Many Indigenous workers enter corporate roles without seeing themselves reflected in leadership. Research shows that Indigenous leadership is often relational, humble, community-oriented, and grounded in collective responsibility, qualities frequently undervalued within Western corporate hierarchies. They often come from communities where leadership is relational, humble, and service-oriented, where decisions are made collectively, accountability flows in all directions, and leaders are measured by how well they support their people.

Within Western corporate structures, leadership is often hierarchical, individualistic, and performance-driven. These systems reward assertiveness, visibility, and self-promotion, which can conflict with Indigenous values of humility, quiet strength, consensus-building, and collective recognition. In corporate environments that prioritize visibility, individual performance, and competitive advancement, Indigenous leaders may find their leadership approach overlooked or misunderstood. This mismatch between governance worldviews is well documented in Indigenous leadership literature, which highlights how Western workplaces often fail to recognize or support Indigenous leadership approaches.

As a result, Indigenous employees may be overlooked for leadership roles, not because they lack capacity, but because their leadership style does not align with Western expectations. Their strengths in patience, listening, community accountability, and long-term thinking often go unnoticed by those unfamiliar with Indigenous governance.

Indigenous employees carry an additional weight; they know that when they fail, the system may interpret it as a reflection on all Indigenous Peoples. When they succeed, they often do so within a structure that neither recognizes nor creates space for Indigenous leadership approaches. This pressure is exhausting, rarely acknowledged, and deeply tied to the absence of Indigenous leaders across corporate spaces.

Cultural Competency in Practice

Ways organizations can demonstrate cultural competency and a commitment to relational accountability.

- Recognize cultural and land-based strengths
- Create Two-Eyed Seeing leadership pathways
- Provide cohort-based mentorship
- Celebrate Indigenous innovation and leadership
- Access to training and skill development
- Transparent promotion processes
- Leadership pathways that value Indigenous knowledge
- Recognition of diverse forms of expertise

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous advancement requires environments where people feel safe enough to lead authentically. Without cultural safety, Indigenous workers may never reach their full potential, not because they lack talent, but because the system does not yet make space for their gifts.

Two-Eyed Seeing in Practice

Ways organizations can hold Indigenous and Western perspectives simultaneously.

- Develop cohort-based mentorship programs that include recognition or certification for Indigenous youth as they advance through stages of professional responsibility
- Design learning ladders that move participants from intern → junior → project lead, with competencies reflecting Two-Eyed principles (a balance of technical skills and cultural integrity)
- Advancement ladder that recognizes land-based knowledge, cultural experience, and relational or "soft" skills that Indigenous employees often contribute
- Track career progression, retention over 24 months (or over a course of time), and leadership representation among Indigenous employees
- Opportunities for Indigenous employees to lead projects, not just join them
- Highlight and celebrate stories of Indigenous innovation, governance, and community-led infrastructure/projects

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous workers often watch others be promoted while they remain stagnant, despite equal or greater ability. Advancement requires more than technical training; it also requires dismantling the biases and blind spots that prevent Indigenous employees from being recognized as leaders. Fall teaches us to harvest not only skills but also confidence, identity, and empowerment.

Winter – Reflection & Renewal

Guiding Principles: Safety, Ceremony & Wellbeing

Winter teaches us that true growth requires rest, reflection, accountability, and renewal. Renewal recognizes that Indigenous workforce participation may include pauses, transitions, or returns influenced by life stage, ceremony, governance, or community needs.

Cultural Competency in Practice

Ways organizations can demonstrate cultural competency and a commitment to relational accountability.

- Develop an Inclusion Scorecard as a core accountability and reflection tool that helps organizations assess whether Indigenous inclusion is experienced rather than merely stated
- Review scorecard findings with Indigenous advisors, employees, or partners, and to treat the results as invitations to adjust systems rather than as opportunities to defend existing practices

Less Spoken Realities

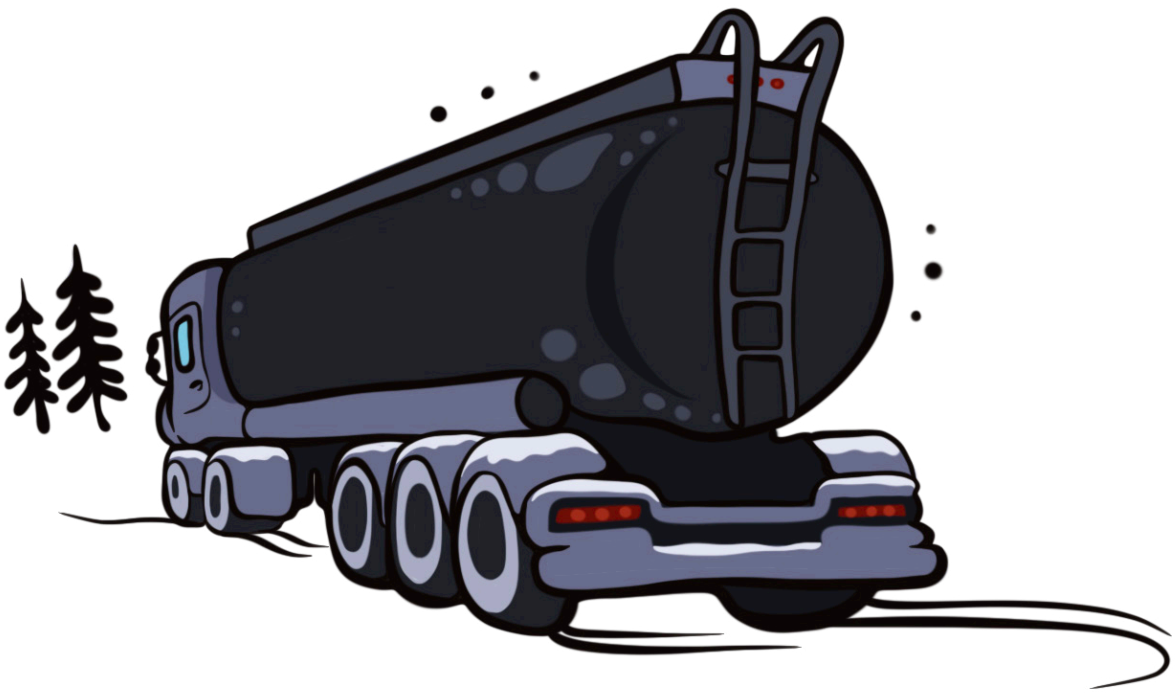
Indigenous workers often describe being counted but not supported. They may be celebrated in recruitment materials, even as they face racism, isolation, or pressure to educate others. When inclusion is measured only by numbers, these experiences remain invisible.

Poorly designed metrics risk harming Indigenous employees through surveillance, shifting feedback burdens onto them, or using their experiences to bolster organizational reputation rather than drive meaningful change. Implementing a culturally grounded Inclusion Scorecard requires careful, consensual, and relationally accountable approaches. An Inclusion Scorecard is intended as a learning and accountability tool, not a compliance exercise.

It should be applied:

- Over time, not as a one-time assessment
- With Indigenous participation and guidance
- Alongside qualitative stories and lived experiences
- In ways that support reflection, dialogue, and change

When used well, the Inclusion Scorecard can surface truths that organizations need to hear. It can make visible what has long been felt but unmeasured, and it can foster more honest conversations about power, responsibility, and transformation.



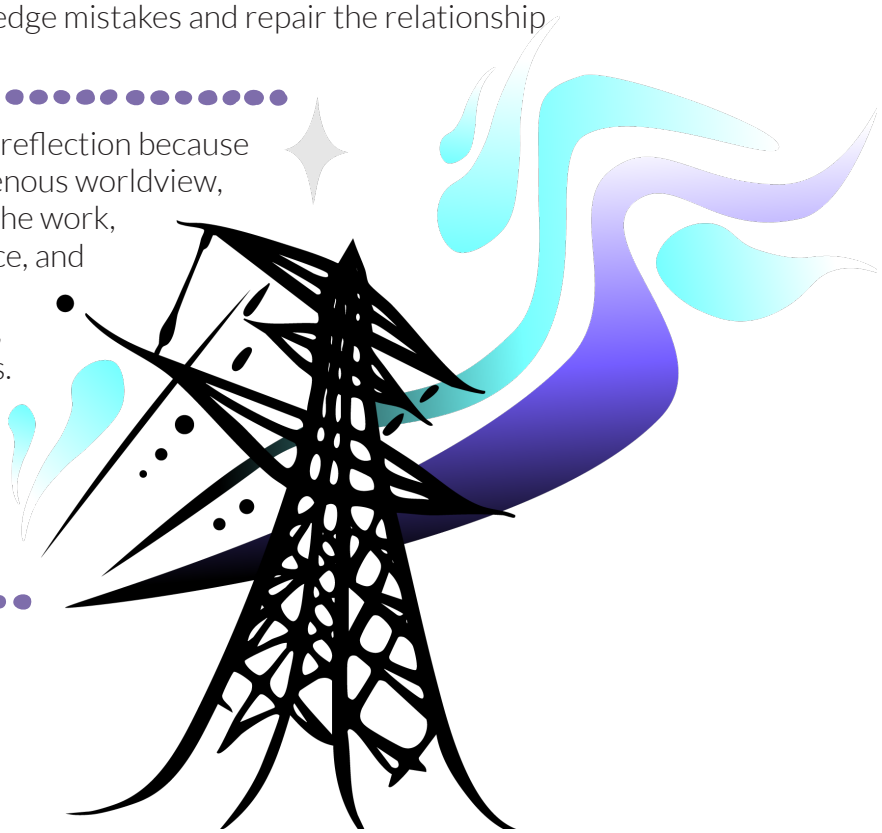
Two-Eyed Seeing in Practice

Ways organizations can hold Indigenous and Western perspectives simultaneously.

- Hold seasonal reflection circles with staff and community partners to share learnings, evaluate metrics, and renew commitments
- Integrate ceremonial closure and renewal (smudging, prayer, storytelling) as part of project cycles, ensuring emotional and relational wellbeing are measured alongside deliverables
- Evaluate both quantitative indicators (retention, advancement) and qualitative measures (belonging, trust, community impact)
- Prepare findings collaboratively with the organization's Oversight/Steering Committee or equivalent governance body created to inform the next cycle of attraction and growth
- Transparent reporting back to communities
- Time and space to acknowledge mistakes and repair the relationship

Less Spoken Realities

Many Western systems avoid reflection because it slows progress. In the Indigenous worldview, however, reflection is part of the work, a time to pause, restore balance, and renew commitments. When organizations skip this season, they repeat the same mistakes. Winter creates space for humility, apology, and realignment with community values. This is where real change begins.



Without tools that meaningfully measure inclusion, organizations tend to reproduce the very systems they claim to change. Inclusion Scorecard helps disrupt this pattern by aligning accountability with Indigenous values, lived realities, and long-term wellbeing.

By grounding measurement in Two-Eyed Seeing, organizations can ensure that what is counted reflects what is felt and that progress is defined not only by presence but also by safety, respect, and shared responsibility.

To learn more about **Inclusion Scorecard** refer to the Pathways, Practices and Tools section of this document and *Foundation to Systems Design* Module 3.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Centre – Reciprocity (All Seasons)

Guiding Principles: Relationship Before Resource

At the centre of the cycle is reciprocity, not as a gesture but as a governance principle. Reciprocity ensures that attraction, retention, advancement, and renewal do not become extractive cycles. It anchors workforce systems in shared responsibility, shared benefit, and long-term balance.

In Indigenous governance systems, reciprocity is not optional. It is how relationships remain ethical and sustainable over time.

Without reciprocity, workforce strategies risk replicating extractive patterns under new language.

At the centre of the cycle:

- Benefits must flow both ways
- Relationship must be balanced
- Giving and receiving must be continuous
- Power must be examined and recalibrated

This principle is foundational to Indigenous governance, ethics, relational accountability, and worldview.

Cultural Competency in Practice

Reciprocity is not seasonal; it must be visible across all workforce systems.

Ways organizations can demonstrate reciprocity in practice:

- Ensure communities see tangible benefits from workforce initiatives (not just consultation or participation)
- Compensate Indigenous knowledge holders, Elders, and advisors appropriately and consistently
- Share decision-making authority, not just feedback opportunities
- Build procurement pathways alongside employment pathways

- Create community-informed success metrics and report back transparently
- Reinvest in community priorities identified by the Nations themselves
- Establish long-term agreements rather than project-by-project engagement(s)
- Build mechanisms for relational repair when harm occurs

Reciprocity means organizations do not only ask:

- "How do we recruit Indigenous talent?"

But also:

- "How does this workforce strategy strengthen the Nation?"

Less Spoken Realities

Reciprocity is often the first principle named and the first one abandoned.

Many workforce initiatives extract Indigenous participation, stories, culture, labour, and identify without returning structural power, economic opportunity, or governance voice. Communities notice when engagement is one-directional, with reporting flowing upward but not back to them, industry timelines overriding relational timelines, and benefits remaining symbolic rather than material.

Without reciprocity, the cycle collapes.

This principle is foundational in Indigenous governance, ethics, and worldview.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Without reciprocity, trust erodes quietly, and once it is, rebuilding it is costly, both relationally and reputationally.

What Structural Reciprocity Looks Like

Ways organizations can embed reciprocity by holding Indigenous and Western governance principles simultaneously:

- Allocate defined budget lines for Indigenous workforce development and community reinvestment
- Establish multi-year agreements rather than project-based engagements
- Share decision-making authority on workforce and procurement initiatives
- Embed Indigenous representation in governance structures with real influence
- Track Indigenous supplier development alongside employment metrics
- Report back to the Nation with the same rigour used in shareholder reporting
- Build relational repair processes when harm occurs

Reciprocity asks a different executive question:

Not only:

"How does Indigenous employment support our workforce's needs?"

But also:

"How does this strategy strengthen Nation sovereignty, economic stability, and future generations?"

Less Spoken Realities

Many Western systems are designed to extract efficiency, values, and return. Indigenous governance systems are designed to maintain balance, relationships, and continuity. When reciprocity is filtered solely through Western performance logic, it becomes philanthropy or risk mitigation rather than shared governance. True reciprocity requires organizations to move assumptions about control, ownership, and authority.

Without structures that hold both lenses, reciprocity becomes symbolic. Two-Eyed Seeing ensures that what counts as "benefit" reflects not only corporate gain but also community strength, cultural continuity, and long-term relational balance.

By grounding reciprocity in Two-Eyed Seeing, organizations shift from engagement strategies to shared stewardship. Stewardship sustains the cycle through all seasons.

Two-Eyed Seeing in Practice

In practice, Two-Eyed Seeing shapes decision-making long before outcomes are measured. It asks leaders to consider not only operational efficiency but also relational consequences. Before launching a workforce initiative, executives pause to ask: Who was consulted? Whose priorities shaped this design? Who benefits immediately, and who benefits over time? Decisions are tested not only against quarterly performance targets but also against long-term relationship health and community impact. When both lenses are active, reciprocity becomes embedded in everyday governance, including budgeting conversations, procurement approvals, leadership appointments, and strategic planning, ensuring that workforce growth strengthens shared futures rather than short-term gain.

Less Spoken Realities

Reciprocity is often strongest when projects are approved and weakest once operations stabilize.

Public commitments can quietly erode over time. Budget lines shift. Leadership changes. Reporting slows. Engagement becomes reactive rather than sustained.

When reciprocity is treated as discretionary rather than structural, Indigenous partners feel the shift right away.

Trust is not eroded by a single decision. It is eroded by inconsistency. True reciprocity is tested when it is inconvenient, not when it is strategic.

Success Metrics

A dual lens for measuring what matters

Success must be measured through two sets of indicators:

- Indigenous-Centred Measures (relational, emotional, cultural, qualitative). They capture the felt experience of Indigenous employees and communities.
- Western/Industry Measures (quantitative, trackable, operational). These measures are quantifiable and can be integrated into HR and sustainability reporting frameworks used across the industry.

Both are essential. One without the other is incomplete.

Less Spoken Realities

While Western metrics offer clear, quantifiable indicators, they often obscure the lived experiences behind the numbers. An increase in Indigenous applicants may reflect strong outreach efforts, but it does not reveal whether candidates felt respected, welcomed, or genuinely considered throughout the process. High turnover rates may signal retention challenges, but they rarely capture the deeper reasons Indigenous employees leave, such as the exhaustion of being the only Indigenous person in a department, subtle racism, a lack of cultural safety, or the absence of mentorship during critical moments. Promotion statistics show who advances, but they do not show who stays silent in meetings, who feels unseen, or who carries leadership qualities that Western systems overlook. Even engagement scores can mask the reality that many Indigenous employees do not feel safe sharing honest feedback in surveys or corporate settings.

Numbers can tell part of the story, but they cannot measure belonging, cultural identity, emotional wellbeing, or the weight of navigating two worlds. They do not show whether Indigenous employees feel valued, heard, or supported, nor whether organizational systems have truly shifted to accommodate Indigenous worldviews. These measures become meaningful only when interpreted alongside Indigenous-centred insights, community feedback, and relational understanding. On their own, the numbers risk creating the appearance of progress without addressing the conditions that make progress real and sustainable.

Seasonality Framework Metrics

Pairing the Indigenous worldview with Western key performance indicators to keep the balance.

Spring - Renewal & Attraction

Guiding Principles: Relationship & Trust

Spring teaches us that new beginnings must be rooted in trust, clarity, transparency, and relational connection.

Recruitment is often the first point of contact between Indigenous Peoples and an organization. When recruitment processes are overly rigid, opaque, or culturally disconnected, they can exclude qualified candidates before employment begins.

Examples of Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Measuring Success

Advancement

- Western KPI
  - Percentage increase in Indigenous applicants year over year
  - Number of Indigenous hires per year
- Indigenous Measures
  - Are job postings co-designed with Indigenous communities, and do candidates feel they are approached with respect?
- How to Track
  - Recruitment data & Indigenous partner feedback on process

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Summer - Growth & Retention

Guiding Principles: Participation & Representation

Summer teaches us that growth requires nourishment, balance, and an environment in which plants and people can stand tall.

Retention barriers in the energy sector often stem not from ability or interest but from whether workplaces are psychologically, culturally, and relationally safe enough for Indigenous Peoples to stay.

Examples of Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Measuring Success

Retention

- Western KPI
  - Percentage of Indigenous employees retained for 3+ years
  - Turnover rates of Indigenous employees compared to non-Indigenous employees
  - Average length of tenure for Indigenous employees
  - Indigenous employee satisfaction scores from engagement surveys
- Indigenous Measures
  - Do employees feel safe staying without sacrificing their cultural identity, family obligations, or values?
  - Stories of Indigenous employees feeling valued, respected, and able to bring their whole identity into the workplace
  - Opportunities for employees to connect to the community, Elders, language, and land
  - Employer practices that recognize Indigenous holidays, culture, ceremonies, and kinship responsibilities without penalty
  - Employers supporting cultural ceremony and wellness
- How to Track
  - Combine HR retention data with Indigenous employee surveys/storytelling

Less Spoken Realities

Behind each of these measures are lived experiences that Western metrics often overlook. Belonging and cultural safety are not abstract; they are felt immediately in the first moments an Indigenous employee enters a workplace. Many Indigenous workers have learned to scan for safety by noticing tone, body language, humour, who holds leadership roles, and whether their identity will be respected or questioned. When workplaces fail to recognize ceremony, kinship responsibilities, or connections to land and community, employees often carry quiet stress, guilt, or a sense that they must choose between their job and their identity.

Fall – Harvest & Advancement

Guiding Principles: Advancement & Empowerment

Fall teaches us that transformation is possible when people are supported, mentored, and recognized for their gifts.

Advancement pathways must support Indigenous employees' growth without requiring them to suppress their identity or disconnect from their community. Advancement and growth without assimilation.

Examples of Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Measuring Success

Attraction

- Western KPI
  - Percentage of Indigenous employees promoted within 2-3 years
  - Percentage of Indigenous employees participating in training or leadership development
  - Percentage of Indigenous employees in supervisory, management, or executive roles
- Indigenous Measures
  - Are Indigenous leaders empowered to lead through Indigenous worldviews, not just assimilated into corporate culture?
- How to Track
  - Track promotions & qualitative feedback from Indigenous leaders on cultural safety in leadership

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Winter – Reflection & Renewal

Guiding Principles: Safety, Ceremony & Wellbeing

Winter teaches us that true growth requires rest, reflection, accountability, and renewal.

Examples of Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Measuring Success

Reflection & Renewal

- Western KPI
  - Number of Indigenous hires per year
- Indigenous Measure
  - How are Indigenous employees/leaders engaged in decision-making?
  - How has Indigenous employment translated into community wellbeing (e.g., ability to participate in ceremony, family stability, youth inspiration)?
- How to Track
  - HR data & storytelling circles with Indigenous employees and their communities

Western KPIs cannot measure the emotional and cultural weight of leading in two worlds at once.

Centre – Reciprocity (All Seasons)

At the centre of the cycle is reciprocity, the principle that:

- Benefits must flow both ways
- Relationship must be balanced
- Giving and receiving must be continuous

Without reciprocity, the cycle collapses.

Examples of Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Measuring Success

Reciprocity

- Western KPI
  - How do benefits from employment ripple into families and communities?
  - How are Indigenous employees represented in leadership and decision-making roles?
- How to Track
  - HR data & storytelling circles with Indigenous employees and their communities

Less Spoken Realities

Two-Eyed Seeing reminds us that numbers alone cannot capture the lived reality of Indigenous employees, leaders, or communities. A workforce retention rate may indicate stability on paper, but it cannot reveal whether Indigenous employees feel safe, respected, or able to show up without having to mask parts of their identity. Many Indigenous workers do not stay because conditions are ideal, but because they feel a responsibility to their families or hope that things will improve. Others leave quietly, carrying the emotional weight of being misunderstood or unsupported, experiences that metrics rarely highlight.

Leadership representation metrics also tell only part of the story. An increase in Indigenous leaders does not automatically mean they are empowered to lead through their own worldview. Many Indigenous leaders work in environments where relational decision-making, humility, and accountability to community are undervalued. They often shoulder the hidden labour of educating colleagues, translating between cultures, or softening organizational practices that may harm community relationships. Western KPIs cannot measure the emotional and cultural weight of leading in two worlds at once.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Less Spoken Realities

Recruitment numbers may reflect growth, but they do not reveal whether Indigenous candidates felt respected, informed, or genuinely welcomed. Many have long memories of outreach efforts that looked promising but led nowhere. For communities, co-designing a job posting is not a procedural step; it is a signal of whether the employer is truly committed to partnership or simply seeking applicants to fill targets. Respect is felt, not counted.

Community impact metrics can also be misleading when taken alone. A company may report a high number of Indigenous hires, yet communities may not experience meaningful benefits. The true impact shows up in the wellbeing of families, the pride of youth who see role models in industry, and the ability of workers to participate in culture, ceremony, and community life without penalty. These outcomes are relational and long-term. They cannot be fully expressed through annual reports.

Two-Eyed Seeing reminds us that success is not a straight line, but a cycle shaped by relationship, reciprocity, and reflection. When Western KPIs are understood alongside Indigenous measures, the picture becomes both complete and more honest. This balance naturally leads to the Seasonality Framework, where attraction, retention, advancement, and renewal are guided not only by numbers but also by the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

Ultimately, Two-Eyed Seeing requires organizations to interpret Western KPIs through the relational, cultural, and emotional truths carried by Indigenous Peoples. When both eyes are honoured, metrics do more than demonstrate progress; they reveal whether that progress is being felt, lived, and sustained.

Two-Eyed Seeing reminds us that success is not a straight line, but a cycle shaped by relationship, reciprocity, and reflection.

Systemic & Structural Metrics

Systemic and structural measures show how well the employer is embedding reconciliation into their systems, making clear that they are not just talking about "having a strategy" but about measurable, structural change within their HR and corporate policies. This balances Western accountability systems (metrics) with Indigenous priorities (cultural safety, reciprocity, and representation).

Policy Integration

- Number of organizational policies formally updated to include Indigenous cultural safety, anti-racism, and reconciliation commitments
- Presence of a dedicated Indigenous employment or reconciliation strategy that anchors these commitments into corporate practice
- Policy areas that can be tracked:
  - Recruitment & hiring (inclusive postings, Indigenous outreach)
  - Leave policies (cultural/ceremonial leave options)
  - Anti-racism & harassment (explicit recognition of anti-Indigenous racism)
  - Training & development (mandatory Indigenous cultural competency)
  - Procurement (targets for Indigenous-owned businesses)

Governance

- Representation
  - Percentage of governance bodies (boards, committees, advisory groups) with Indigenous representation
  - Decision-making: existence of a formal mechanism for Indigenous voices to guide decisions (not just "consultation")
  - Accountability: clear process for reporting back to Indigenous partners on decisions that affect them

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Supplier & Economic Inclusion

- Spend Tracking
  - Percentage of annual procurement spend directed to Indigenous-owned businesses
  - Supplier Development: number of Indigenous suppliers engaged in capacity-building partnerships
  - Policy Commitment: existence of a procurement policy that prioritizes Indigenous vendors and contractors

Transparency & Reporting

- Public Accountability
  - Annual reporting on Indigenous workforce and procurement outcomes
- Community Reporting
  - Mechanisms for reporting back directly to Indigenous communities (not just shareholders)
- Validation
  - Indigenous Steering/Advisory groups review reports before release

Leadership & Capacity Building

- Leadership Representation
  - Number and percentage of Indigenous people in supervisory, management, and executive roles
- Development Pathways
  - Existence of formal mentorship and training programs for Indigenous employees, from internships to the Board
- Board/Committee Training
  - Percentage of leaders and managers who have completed Indigenous cultural competency training

Less Spoken Realities

System-level change often looks clean and straightforward on paper, with updated policies, oversight/steering committees, procurement targets, and training programs. Yet behind these measures lie deeper truths that Western systems rarely acknowledge. Policy integration, for example, may signal progress, yet Indigenous employees and communities often wait years for those policies to translate into consistent practice. A cultural leave policy means little if workers still fear judgment for using it. Anti-racism commitments fall flat when racist incidents go unaddressed, and mandatory cultural competency training is only meaningful when it shifts behaviour, not just checkboxes.

Governance metrics may show Indigenous representation on committees or advisory groups, but that representation does not necessarily translate into influence. Many Indigenous leaders have sat at tables where decisions were already made, with their role symbolic rather than meaningful. Without mechanisms to ensure shared decision-making, accountability to the community, and continuity through turnover, representation risks becoming performative rather than transformative.

Supplier and economic inclusion metrics can signal significant investment, yet communities often see the gap between transactional contracting and true economic partnership. A procurement policy might prioritize Indigenous vendors, but if contracts remain small, short-term, or administratively burdensome, the policy has not shifted the underlying imbalance. Community members stressed the importance of formalizing local hiring expectations in contracts:

> ***"When communities hire companies to do work on the reserve, they should put in the contract that they use locals for labour and other positions."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Similarly, supplier development programs may exist, but without long-term commitment, they do not build real capacity or economic sovereignty.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Less Spoken Realities

Transparency and reporting structures can also mask quiet tensions. Communities often receive information late, inconsistently, or in technical language that obscures impacts. Reporting "to shareholders" is not the same as reporting to the people most affected. When Indigenous oversight bodies are asked to validate outcomes without being involved in the process that shaped them, the relationship is strained, not strengthened.

Leadership and capacity-building measures often report the number of employees trained or promoted, yet they rarely capture how supported Indigenous leaders feel. Many Indigenous employees are asked to lead within systems that continue to undervalue Indigenous governance principles, relational leadership, or community accountability. Training programs help, but they do not remove the emotional weight of navigating workplaces not designed with Indigenous Peoples in mind.

These realities remind us that structural change is not only about what systems say but also about what they do. Progress becomes real when policies, governance, procurement, and leadership practices consistently honour Indigenous rights, worldviews, and self-determination. Metrics can signal progress, but lived experience reveals whether it is truly felt.

Progress becomes real when policies, governance, procurement, and leadership practices consistently honour Indigenous rights, worldviews, and self-determination.

Process Metrics (The "How" of the Work)

Measuring the integrity of the journey, not just the outcome

Inclusion in Design

- Metric
  - Number of Indigenous voices included in project design and decision-making
- Indigenous Measure
  - Did Indigenous worldviews meaningfully shape the project design, rather than being consulted as an afterthought?
- How to Track
  - Meeting notes, advisory committee participation logs, Indigenous review sign-offs

Governance & Oversight/Steering Committee Accountability

- Metric
  - Level of satisfaction among Oversight/Steering Committee members (measured quarterly)
- Indigenous Measure
  - Do Indigenous members feel their guidance is prioritized over industry convenience?
- How to Track
  - Short posting-meeting reflection or anonymous check-ins

Timeliness & Transparency

- Metric
  - Percentage of milestones shared with Indigenous partners within agreed timelines
- Indigenous Measure
  - Do communities feel informed, respected, and not "last to know"?
- How to Track
  - Track reporting dates & gather community feedback on timeliness/clarity

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Knowledge Reciprocity

- Metric
  - Number of meetings/events that include Indigenous protocols (opening/closing, Elder involvement, land acknowledgement with depth)
- Indigenous Measure
  - Do participants feel safe, respected, and grounded in culture?
- How to Track
  - Meeting agendas/logs & reflections from Indigenous member

Less Spoken Realities

Process is where Indigenous partners feel the truth of an organization's intentions long before any outcomes are reported. Inclusion in design, for example, may appear strong in meeting notes, yet Indigenous participants often know instantly whether their worldview shaped the work or whether they were brought in to validate decisions already made. Being consulted late or superficially can feel dismissive, and these experiences accumulate over years of engagement, making it difficult to rebuild trust.

True success cannot be counted in numbers alone; it is seen in the faces of those who feel safe, included, and proud of who they are. When trust, belonging, growth, safety, and reciprocity are all present, the circle is complete.

Taken together, these measures show that meaningful progress requires more than hiring targets, compliance checklists, or policy updates. It requires a balanced approach that honours Indigenous definitions of wellbeing, centres on cultural safety and belonging, strengthens relationships, and ensures systems evolve in response to community leadership. When organizations measure not only outcomes but also the integrity of the journey, including how decisions are made, how people feel, how relationships are tended, and how culture is respected, they move beyond transactional change toward transformation. These metrics remind us that reconciliation is lived through everyday actions that build trust, uphold rights, and create spaces where Indigenous employees and communities can thrive.

To learn more about **Indigenous Success Metrics** refer to *Foundation to Systems Design* Module 2.

Pathways, Practices, & Tools

Trauma-Informed HR & Human-Centred Recruitment

Hiring, onboarding, mentorship, and communication pathways.

Trauma-informed practices recognize that systems, policies, and power dynamics can unintentionally cause harm and seek to design processes that reduce re-traumatization while maintaining accountability.

Redesigning human resources systems to be trauma-informed, relational, and human-centred, rather than procedural, extractive, or surveillance-based. It builds directly on the need for psychological and cultural safety and responds to the reality that many Indigenous Peoples have experienced harm through institutional systems, including education, employment, child welfare, health, and justice..

In the workplace, trauma is often misunderstood as an individual issue rather than a systemic and historical reality. Trauma-informed HR recognizes that policies, processes, and workplace cultures can either reduce harm and support healing or, unintentionally, perpetuate colonial patterns of control, exclusion, and punishment.

Human-centred recruitment and HR practices do not lower standards or expectations. Instead, they remove unnecessary barriers, increase fairness, and create conditions that enable Indigenous workers to enter, remain, and advance in workplaces without sacrificing identity, dignity, or wellbeing.

When trust, belonging, growth, safety, and reciprocity are all present, the circle is complete.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Understanding Trauma in Indigenous Workforce Contexts

Trauma experienced by Indigenous Peoples is neither accidental nor isolated. It is the result of a colonial system that disrupted families, governance, land-based livelihoods, languages, and identities through policies such as residential schools, forced relocations, the forced adoption of Indigenous children into non-Indigenous families known as the Sixties Scoop, and ongoing overrepresentation in child welfare and justice systems.

These histories continue to shape how Indigenous Peoples experience institutions today. Workplace systems, particularly HR processes, can trigger trauma by:

- Relying heavily on surveillance, rigid compliance, or punitive responses
- Requiring individuals to repeatedly justify or disclose personal circumstances
- Dismissing cultural responsibilities as unprofessional or inconvenient
- Assuming workplace systems are neutral, despite evidence that they reinforce inequities and disadvantage Indigenous employees

Trauma-informed HR does not require organizations to become therapeutic spaces. Instead, it calls for recognizing power, history, and impact, and for designing systems that minimize harm while strengthening trust, clarity, and support.

Two-Eyed Seeing and Trauma-Informed HR

Through the Western Eye, HR systems are designed to ensure the following:

- Consistency (often equated with fairness)
- Risk management and compliance
- Documentation and defensibility
- Clear performance expectations

These goals are legitimate and necessary in organizations.

Through the Indigenous Eye, HR systems are perceived as:

- Gatekeepers to opportunity or exclusion
- Sources of safety or fear
- Signals of whether the organization values relationships over control
- Reflections on whether Indigenous identity is welcome or tolerated

Two-Eyed Seeing requires organizations to hold both perspectives simultaneously. Trauma-informed HR does not abandon structure; it uses structure to uphold dignity, fairness, and relationships. When Western HR tools are guided by Indigenous values of respect, reciprocity, and relational accountability, they become mechanisms for equity rather than sources of harm.

Human-Centred Recruitment: Removing Barriers at the Entry Point

Recruitment is often the first point of contact between Indigenous Peoples and an organization. When recruitment processes are overly rigid, opaque, or culturally disconnected, they can exclude qualified candidates before employment begins.

Common barriers include:

- Overemphasis on formal credentials over lived experience
- Jargon-heavy job postings
- Online-only application systems that disadvantage rural or remote communities where internet access is limited or unreliable
- Interview processes that privilege Western communication styles

Community members expressed frustration with hiring systems that require experience without offering pathways to gain it. One participant captured this clearly:

> ***"No experience in a position; they don't offer training."***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Another participant shared:

> ***I would like to know where I can get training for the oil and gas industry.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Human-centred recruitment approaches include:

- Plain-language job descriptions that clearly explain roles and expectations
- Valuing transferable skills, community experience, and lived knowledge
- Flexible application pathways (e.g., in-person, supported, and community-based)
- Interview processes that are relational, transparent, and respectful

These approaches do not compromise quality. They expand access and reduce bias by recognizing multiple ways to demonstrate competence and readiness.

Trauma-Informed Onboarding and Early Employment

The first months of employment are critical for retaining Indigenous workers. Trauma-informed onboarding focuses not only on policies and procedures but also on relationship-building, clarity, and support.

Effective onboarding practices include:

- Clear explanation of workplace expectations and supports
- Introduction of safe points of contact (HR, mentors, and Indigenous Relations)
- Early check-ins that focus on wellbeing, not just performance
- Explicit permission to ask questions and seek support

Onboarding should avoid overwhelming new employees with excessive documentation or assumptions about prior institutional knowledge. For Indigenous workers who may have experienced exclusion or punishment within systems, early relational safety is essential.

Participants emphasized that training environments must feel legitimate and safe, not humiliating or performative:

> ***When we get training, please make sure it is legit, and we don't get embarrassed.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

Training that undermines dignity or confidence can re-trigger past experiences of institutional harm and erodes trust before employment stability is achieved.

Performance Management Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Performance management systems can be a significant source of harm when they prioritize punishment over development or overlook systemic barriers.

Trauma-informed performance management includes:

- Clear expectations communicated early and often
- Feedback that is specific, respectful, and growth-oriented
- Recognition of structural or contextual barriers
- Opportunities for learning and connection before discipline

This approach does not eliminate accountability. Instead, it ensures that accountability is fair, transparent, and grounded in a relationship rather than fear.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous employees have learned to navigate workplaces by staying quiet, avoiding visibility, or leaving rather than raising concerns. Past experiences of being retaliated against, labelled a problem, or not being believed inform these choices..

There is also a less-spoken reality that trauma-informed language can be misused, applied superficially without changing power dynamics, or decision-making. When organizations adopt the language of care without altering systems, Indigenous employees may perceive it as performative rather than protective.

True trauma-informed HR requires courage. It requires organizations to reflect on how their systems may cause harm and to accept discomfort as part of the growth process.

Indigenous Rights in Employment & Policy Integration

Bereavement, land-based activities, kinship, taxation, free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), and leave structures.

In employment contexts, Indigenous Rights refer to collective, inherent responsibilities and governance obligations that exist independently of organizational policies.

FPIC requires transparency, sufficient time, the ability to decline without consequence, and respect for collective decision-making.

Indigenous Rights must be reflected in employment policies, benefits, and organizational governance. It affirms that Indigenous Rights in employment contexts are not discretionary benefits or cultural accommodations but legal, ethical, and relational obligations. It supports organizations in integrating Indigenous Rights into workplace policies, benefits, governance, and decision-making in ways that are consistent, respectful, and accountable.

Workplace safety, inclusion, and trauma-informed practice cannot be sustained if Indigenous Rights are treated as exceptions or managed informally. Without structural embedding, Indigenous employees are left vulnerable to inconsistent interpretation, discretionary approval, or retaliation.

This section is grounded in Indigenous governance systems, Canadian and International legal frameworks, and lived workforce experience. It affirms that respecting Indigenous Rights in employment is the responsibility of organizations, not of individual Indigenous employees to negotiate or justify.

Recognizing Indigenous Rights is not an accommodation; it is a legal, ethical, and relational obligation.

Indigenous Rights integration should be treated as an ongoing responsibility, not a one-time compliance exercise.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

Indigenous Rights and Employment: Foundational Understanding

Indigenous Rights predate and exist independently of employment contracts or organizational policies. These rights stem from Indigenous Peoples' inherent sovereignty, governance systems, and relationships to land, community, and future generations.

In employment contexts, Indigenous Rights may intersect with:

- Cultural and ceremonial responsibilities
- Kinship and caregiving obligations
- Governance participation and leadership roles
- Land-based practices, harvesting, and seasonal activities
- Collective decision-making responsibilities

When workplaces fail to recognize these responsibilities as legitimate, Indigenous employees are often forced into impossible choices between employment and identity. Therefore, policy integration is essential to prevent harm and inequity.

Two-Eyed Seeing and Rights Integration

Through the Western Eye, organizations manage rights as follows:

- Policies and procedures
- Collective agreements and benefit structures
- Legal compliance and risk management
- Documentation and consistency

These tools are necessary to ensure fairness and predictability.

Through the Indigenous Eye, rights are understood as follows:

- Responsibilities to family, community, land, and Nation
- Relational obligations rather than individual entitlements
- Collective rather than purely individual in nature
- Ongoing and intergenerational

Two-Eyed Seeing requires organizations to use Western policy tools to support Indigenous governance and responsibility, not to dominate them. When policies are flexible, transparent, and grounded in respect, they protect employees and organizations while upholding Indigenous Rights (Marshall, Marshall, & Bartlett, 2015; Wilson, 2008).

Core Areas of Indigenous Rights Integration in Employment

The following areas highlight common points of tension where Indigenous Rights intersect with workplace systems. They are offered as guidance for policy integration, not as an exhaustive list.

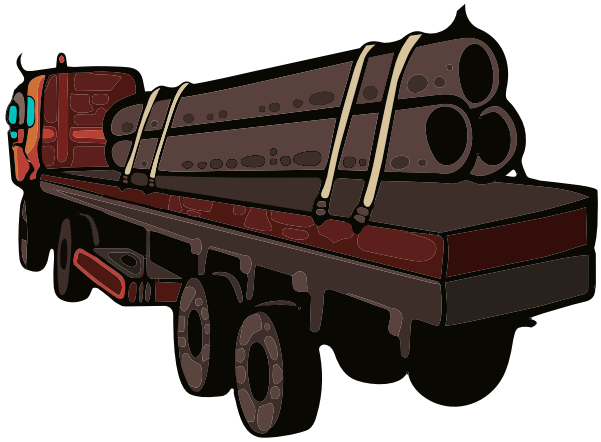
Bereavement, Grief, and Ceremony

Indigenous concepts of grief and loss often extend beyond the immediate family to include community members, Elders, and collective loss. Ceremonies, gatherings, and extended periods of mourning may be required to restore balance and fulfill responsibilities.

Policies that narrowly define bereavement leave can unintentionally harm Indigenous employees by forcing them to choose between cultural responsibility and job security.

Rights-respecting approaches include:

- Broad definitions of family and community
- Flexible leave structures that recognize ceremony and mourning
- Clear communication that these leaves are legitimate and protected



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Kinship and Caregiving Responsibilities

Kinship systems create responsibilities that extend beyond nuclear family models. Indigenous employees may serve as caregivers for children, Elders, extended family, and community members.

Organizations can uphold these rights by:

- Recognizing kinship-based caregiving in leave and flexibility policies
- Avoiding assumptions about availability or commitment
- Designing policies that accommodate collective responsibility

Harvesting, Land-Based Practices, and Seasonal Responsibilities

For many Indigenous Peoples, harvesting, hunting, fishing, and other land-based practices are not hobbies; they are rights, responsibilities, and sources of sustenance, identity, and wellbeing.

Employment policies should:

- Recognize land-based practices as legitimate reasons for leaves
- Align flexibility with seasonal cycles where possible
- Avoid penalizing employees for fulfilling these responsibilities

Governance Participation and Leadership Obligations

Indigenous employees may hold governance roles within their Nations or communities, including council positions, committee roles, ceremonial responsibilities, or leadership roles related to land, language, or cultural continuity.

These responsibilities are expressions of Indigenous self-determination, not extracurricular activities. In many cases, governance obligations require preparation, travel, confidentiality, and extended time commitments.

Rights-respecting workplaces:

- Recognize governance participation as legitimate and protected leave
- Avoid penalizing employees for fulfilling leadership responsibilities
- Respect confidentiality, protocol, and collective decision-making timelines
- Understand that governance obligations may not align with Western meeting schedules or notice periods

Taxation and Status-Related Considerations

Some Indigenous employees are affected by distinct tax rules related to Indian Status, reserve - based income, treaty rights, or specific employment arrangements. Misunderstanding or mishandling these considerations can cause financial harm and erode trust.

Organizations should:

- Ensure HR, payroll, and finance teams have accurate information
- Avoid placing the burden of explanation solely on employees
- Seek appropriate expertise rather than relying on assumptions
- Communicate clearly and respectfully about taxation practices

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) in Employment Contexts

While FPIC is often discussed in relation to land and resource development, its principles also apply in employment contexts when Indigenous Peoples are asked to participate in initiatives related to Indigenous knowledge, community relationships, or representation.

This includes:

- Participation in pilots or programs linked to the Indigenous worldview
- Use of Indigenous stories, lived experience, or cultural knowledge
- Requests to represent Indigenous Peoples or Nations

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

FPIC requires transparency, sufficient time, the ability to decline without consequences, and respect for collective decision-making. A participant asked:

> ***When you go to other reserves, does this help their voice?"–***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

This question underscores that engagement must strengthen collective voice, not extract input for isolated projects.

Embedding Rights into Systems, Not Exceptions

To uphold Indigenous Rights ethically and consistently, organizations must:

- Embed rights into formal policies, collective agreements, and benefit structures
- Train leaders and supervisors on Indigenous governance and rights
- Ensure HR systems support flexibility without excessive disclosure
- Review policies with Indigenous advisors, partners, or Nations

Embedding rights into systems reduces uncertainty, prevents harm, and shifts responsibility from Indigenous employees to organizational structures.

Mentorship, coaching, and after-hours support are especially important...

Less Spoken Realities

Many Indigenous employees have learned to navigate workplaces by staying quiet, avoiding Indigenous employees are often required to disclose personal, cultural, or community responsibilities to request flexibility or leave. This requirement can feel invasive or unsafe, especially when managers lack cultural understanding or discretion. There is also a less-often-acknowledged reality that Indigenous Rights are sometimes framed as "special treatment," which can create resentment or backlash. When policies are unclear or inconsistently applied, Indigenous employees may face increased scrutiny rather than protection. When rights are negotiated informally rather than embedded in the structure, outcomes depend on individual managers rather than on shared responsibility. This places Indigenous employees at risk and undermines trust.

Mentorship, Coaching & After-Hours Support Models

Multi-layered mentorship, paired placement, Elder support, and crisis navigation

Mentorship and relational support are core conditions for Indigenous workforce success, not optional add-ons. It responds to consistent feedback from Indigenous workers and communities that retention and the ability to navigate advancement opportunities are shaped more by whether people feel supported, guided, and protected than by technical skill, particularly outside formal work hours.

Mentorship, coaching, and after-hours support are especially important in sectors such as energy, where work may involve remote sites, shift work, safety-sensitive environments, and high-pressure cultures. For Indigenous employees navigating workplace expectations and community responsibilities, the presence or absence of trusted relational support can determine whether employment is sustainable.

Mentorship is not merely about career advice; it is about multiple, interconnected relationships, accountability, and shared responsibility.

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Indigenous Worldview and Relational Support

From an Indigenous worldview, learning and growth unfold through relationships. Knowledge is transmitted through observation, storytelling, guidance, and shared experience rather than solely through formal instruction. Elders, Knowledge Keepers, family members, and community leaders have traditionally served as mentors, supporting not only skill development but also identity, responsibility, and wellbeing.

In this context, mentorship is:

- Relational rather than transactional
- Grounded in trust and reciprocity
- Responsive to life stages and responsibilities
- Oriented toward long-term wellbeing, not short-term performance

When Indigenous Peoples enter Western workforce systems that prioritize independence, competition, and self-navigation, the lack of relational support can lead to isolation and risk. Mentorship models aligned with the Indigenous worldview help bridge this gap.

Western Mentorship Models and Their Limits

Western mentorship and coaching models often focus on:

- Individual performance and advancement
- Time-bound coaching relationships
- Formalized programs with limited scope
- Support confined to work hours

While these models can be effective for some employees, they often fail to address the realities Indigenous workers face, particularly in environments where:

- Workers are geographically or culturally isolated
- Power dynamics discourage asking for help
- Racism or cultural misunderstanding may be present
- Support is needed outside of standard business hours

Without adaptation, conventional mentorship programs risk perpetuating inequity by assuming all employees have equal access to informal support networks.

A Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Mentorship and Support

A Two-Eyed Seeing approach integrates Western structures with Indigenous relational values.

Through the Western Eye, effective mentorship and support:

- Provide clarity on roles, expectations, and development goals
- Ensure accountability and consistency
- Are resourced and recognized within organizational systems
- Support safety, performance, and retention

Through the Indigenous Eye, effective mentorship and support:

- Are grounded in trust and relationships
- Recognize the whole person, not just the worker
- Allow space for cultural, family, and community responsibilities
- Include guidance through difficulty, not only success

Together, these perspectives support mentorship models that are both relational and reliable.

A Two-Eyed Seeing approach integrates Western structures with Indigenous relational values.

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Core Mentorship and Support Models

The following models reflect practices that have demonstrated positive outcomes when developed in partnership with Indigenous communities and employees. Organizations may use one model or combine several, depending on context and readiness.

Paired Placement and Buddy System Models

Paired placement connects Indigenous employees with a trusted peer or mentor from the outset of employment. This approach reduces isolation, supports early learning, and provides a safe point of contact for questions or concerns.

Effective paired models:

- Begin at onboarding and continue for more than six months
- Include clear expectations and check-ins
- Prioritize trust and confidentiality
- Are supported, not informal or ad hoc

Layered Mentorship Models

Layered mentorship recognizes that no single mentor can meet all needs. Indigenous employees may benefit from access to a:

- Technical or role-based mentor
- Cultural or Indigenous mentor
- Leadership or career development mentor

Layered models distribute responsibility, reduce burnout, and provide more holistic support.

The Inclusion Scorecard is grounded in Two-Eyed Seeing.

Elder and Knowledge Keeper Support

When appropriate and invited, Elders or Knowledge Keepers can provide guidance that fosters balance, resilience, and cultural grounding. Their role is not to resolve workplace disputes but to offer wisdom, perspective, and support.

Organizations engaging Elders or Knowledge Keepers must:

- Follow appropriate protocol
- Provide fair compensation
- Respect boundaries and confidentiality
- Avoid placing them in enforcement or HR roles

Less Spoken Realities

Indigenous employees often feel unsure about whom they can safely approach when challenges arise. Fear of being labelled as weak, difficult, or unprofessional can deter help-seeking, particularly in male-dominated or safety-sensitive environments. As one participant described:

> ***My voice is never heard in places I want to explore.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

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Less Spoken Realities

Mentorship structures must therefore not only provide guidance but also create space for Indigenous employees to be heard, supported, and advocated for within organizational systems. Participants also named gendered workplace pressures, including:

> ***Being a woman trying to work a man's job.***
>
> *Community Engagement Participant, January 29, 2026*

In environments where cultural and gender isolation intersect, layered mentorship and protective supervision become critical safeguards.

There is also a less-discussed reality that mentorship responsibilities often fall to Indigenous employees, who may be asked to support others without recognition, compensation, or protection. When mentorship is informal and lacks necessary resources, such as funding, staff, or materials, it can become a burden rather than a source of support.

Coaching and Career Navigation Support

Coaching supports Indigenous employees in navigating organizational systems, understanding expectations, and pursuing development pathways without requiring them to assimilate.

Effective coaching:

- Is strengths-based and future-oriented
- Acknowledges systemic barriers
- Supports goal setting aligned with personal and community priorities

After-Hours and Crisis Support Considerations

Many challenges Indigenous employees face, such as family emergencies, racism, isolation, and safety concerns, do not occur neatly within work hours. While organizations are not responsible for employees' personal lives, they are responsible for ensuring employees are not left unsupported during moments of risk.

After-hours support considerations may include:

- Clear points of contact in emergencies
- Protocols for responding to incidents in camps or remote sites
- Access to culturally informed supports
- Flexible responses rather than punitive action

Inclusion Scorecard

Indicators to measure belonging, equity, representation, cultural safety, anti-racism, and governance inclusion

An Inclusion Scorecard is a core accountability and reflection tool that helps organizations assess whether Indigenous inclusion is experienced rather than merely stated. While many organizations track diversity through hiring numbers, representation statistics, or training completion rates, Indigenous workers and communities consistently report that these measures do not indicate whether workplaces are safe, respectful, or culturally grounded.

The Inclusion Scorecard is grounded in Two-Eyed Seeing. It weaves together Indigenous ways of knowing, such as relational accountability, belonging, cultural safety (defined as whether a workplace is experienced as safe and respectful by Indigenous employees, rather than by organizational intent), and trust, with Western organizational tools, including indicators, measurement, and reporting. Its purpose is not to rank organizations or produce a compliance checklist but to support honest reflection, learning, and systems change over time.

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How the Inclusion Scorecard Should Be Used

The Inclusion Scorecard is intended as a learning and accountability tool, not a compliance exercise. It should be applied:

- Over time, not as a one-time assessment
- With Indigenous participation and guidance
- Alongside qualitative stories and lived experiences
- In ways that support reflection, dialogue, and change

Organizations are encouraged to review scorecard findings with Indigenous advisors, employees, or partners and to treat the results as invitations to adjust systems rather than as opportunities to defend existing practices.

Why an Inclusion Scorecard Is Needed

Many organizations believe they are making progress because they can point to Indigenous hiring targets, diversity statements, or reconciliation commitments. However, Indigenous workers often describe a different reality, one in which they may be present in the workforce yet feel unsafe, unsupported, isolated, or pressured to assimilate.

Western workforce systems tend to prioritize what is easy to quantify: headcounts, turnover rates, training hours, and compliance metrics (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Parmenter, 2015). While these measures provide useful information, they do not capture relational experiences such as belonging, respect, cultural safety, or trust. When organizations rely solely on these measures, they risk mistaking activity for impact.

From an Indigenous worldview, success is relational. It is evident in the quality of relationships, the presence of respect, the ability to bring one's whole self to work, and the strength of accountability to community and future generations. An Inclusion Scorecard is needed to bridge these worldviews, enabling organizations to evaluate inclusion in ways that are both meaningful and actionable.

Two-Eyed Seeing and Measurement

In a Two-Eyed Seeing approach, measurement is not rejected but reoriented. Western tools such as scorecards, indicators, and dashboards can support accountability when guided by Indigenous values and relational ethics.

Through the Western Eye, organizations seek:

- Clarity on progress and gaps
- Consistency across departments and sites
- Evidence to inform decision-making
- Accountability to leadership and external partners

Through the Indigenous Eye, inclusion is understood as follows:

- Feeling safe to express identity
- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Having cultural responsibilities recognized as valid
- Experiencing fair access to opportunity and support
- Seeing Indigenous knowledge, governance, and leadership valued

The Inclusion Scorecard brings these perspectives together by asking not only how many Indigenous employees are present but also how inclusion is practiced, who holds power, and whether systems are changing meaningfully.

An Inclusion Scorecard is needed to bridge world-views, enabling organizations to evaluate inclusion in ways that are both meaningful and actionable.

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Core Domains of the Inclusion Scorecard

While each organization and Nation will define indicators within their own context, the Inclusion Scorecard is structured around several core domains that reflect Indigenous lived realities and workforce experiences.

Belonging and Cultural Safety

This domain assesses whether Indigenous employees feel welcomed, respected, and safe.

Indicators may include the presence or absence of racism and microaggressions, levels of psychological safety, opportunities to participate in cultural practices, and whether Indigenous identity is affirmed rather than undermined.

Equity and Fairness

This domain examines access to opportunity, advancement, pay equity, training, and support. It asks whether Indigenous employees face barriers that others do not and whether systems actively address historical and structural inequities.

Representation and Voice

This domain looks beyond numerical representation to assess whether Indigenous Peoples have meaningful influence. It considers Indigenous participation in decision-making, leadership roles, and advisory structures, as well as whether Indigenous perspectives shape policies and practices.

Relational Accountability

This domain reflects Indigenous expectations of accountability to one another, the community, and future generations. It examines whether organizations honour commitments, respond to harm, and maintain relationships beyond individual employment transactions (Wilson, 2008). Relational accountability emphasizes responsibility to people, relationships, and commitments over time, rather than to processes alone.

Governance and Shared Power

This domain assesses whether Indigenous governance, rights, and protocols are respected in organizational decision-making. It examines how policies are developed, who is consulted, and whether Indigenous Nations are treated as Rights and Title Holders rather than stakeholders (Borrows, 2016; Smith, 2021).

Why This Matters for Systems Change

Without tools that meaningfully measure inclusion, organizations tend to reproduce the very systems they claim to change. Inclusion Scorecard helps disrupt this pattern by aligning accountability with Indigenous values, lived realities, and long-term wellbeing.

By grounding measurement in Two-Eyed Seeing, organizations can ensure that what is counted reflects what is felt and that progress is defined not only by presence but also by safety, respect, and shared responsibility.

Inclusion Scorecard helps disrupt this pattern by aligning accountability with Indigenous values, lived realities, and long-term wellbeing.

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Employer Tools & Plain-Language Templates

The following templates are designed to translate the Framework's principles into practice. Rather than functioning as checklists or compliance tools, they are structural supports that organizations can adapt to reduce ambiguity, strengthen cultural safety, and embed relational accountability into everyday processes.

Each one corresponds to a structural tension identified in the Framework, including attraction barriers, isolation risk, unclear mentorship expectations, governance obligations, and economic inclusion.

They are written primarily for employer implementation, but are intentionally adaptable for use by Indigenous Nations, community-owned enterprises, and joint initiatives.

Plain-language Job Posting Template

Position Title: _____ [Clear, jargon-free title]

Location: _____ [City / Region / Site]

Who We Are

We are committed to building respectful, safe, and inclusive workplaces grounded in accountability and relationships. We recognize Indigenous Peoples as Rights and Title Holders and value lived experience alongside formal credentials.

We recognize community-based knowledge, land-based skills, and governance experience as valuable forms of expertise.

About the Role

In the role, you will:

- [Plain description of responsibility 1]
- [Plain description of responsibility 2]
- [Plain description of responsibility 3] This role involves:
- [Travel / shift work / camp environment / physical requirements – stated clearly]

This role involves:

- [Travel / shift work / camp environment / physical requirements – stated clearly]

What We're Looking For

Required:

- [Essential skill or certification]
- [Essential competency] Assets (not required):
- [Optional skills or experience]
- [Community or lived experience]

We value transferable skills, community leadership, and lived experience.

Supports Available

We provide:

- Mentorship and onboarding support
- Cultural safety commitments
- Training pathways (where applicable)
- Points of contact for support (HR / Indigenous Relations)

How to Apply

You may apply by:

- Online submission
- Email
- In-person (where available)
- We recognize that not all experience is captured in traditional resumes. Applicants may submit alternative formats, such as community references or portfolios of work, or request an oral application process where appropriate.

If you require support during the application process, please contact: [Name / email]

Cultural Safety Leadership Reflection Prompts

Cultural Safety Leadership Reflection Prompts

(For Ongoing Use – Not a Compliance Tool)

Before onboarding a new Indigenous employee, ask:

- Have I clearly explained role expectations in plain language?
- Have I identified a safe point of contact beyond myself?
- Have I acknowledged cultural responsibilities as legitimate?
- Have I set clear expectations regarding respectful behaviour within the team?

Ongoing leadership reflection:

- Do I intervene early when harmful behaviour occurs?
- Do I check in about wellbeing, not just performance?
- Am I placing an education or mentorship burden on Indigenous employees?
- Have I ensured isolation risk is minimized (buddy systems / mentorship pipelines)?
- Do I respond consistently and predictably to concerns?

When conflict or harm occurs:

- Is the harmed person supported first?
- Is accountability clear and documented?
- Is repair considered where appropriate and safe?

These reflection prompts are intended to guide reflection and relational accountability.

Mentorship Role Clarity Agreement (Layered Model)

Mentorship Role Clarity Agreement

(Layered Mentorship Model)

Employee Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

Start Date: _____ **Review Date:** _____

Purpose of Mentorship

This mentorship relationship is intended to:

- ❑ Support technical skill development
- ❑ Support career pathway navigation
- ❑ Provide cultural or relational guidance
- ❑ Reduce isolation
- ❑ Support leadership development

Expectations

Mentor will:

- Meet regularly (specific frequency)
- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide guidance without judgement
- Escalate safety concerns appropriately

Employee will:

- Communicate goals and concerns
- Participate in scheduled meetings
- Seek clarification when needed

Boundaries

This mentorship does not replace HR processes or safety reporting structures.

Escalation Pathway

(HR, Governance Lead, Elders Council, Indigenous Relations, or designated community contact)

If concerns arise, the following contact is available:

[Name / Role / Contact] _____

Indigenous Leave & Governance Request Protocol

Indigenous Leave & Governance Request Protocol

(For Cultural, Ceremonial, or Governance Responsibilities)

This protocol recognizes Indigenous Rights and responsibilities as legitimate and protected. This protocol may also be adapted for use with Indigenous Nations or community organizations where cultural and governance responsibilities are foundational rather than exceptional.

Request Type:

- ❑ Ceremony
- ❑ Bereavement
- ❑ Governance participation
- ❑ Land-based activity
- ❑ Kinship caregiving
- ❑ Other:

Submission Process

Employees may:

- Submit request to supervisor or HR
- Provide general context without excessive personal disclosure
- Request confidentiality

Supervisor Responsibilities

- ❑ Respond promptly
- ❑ Avoid questioning legitimacy
- ❑ Clarify duration and operational needs respectfully
- ❑ Document approval consistently

Escalation Path

If concerns arise, contact:

[HR contact / Indigenous Relations]

This protocol supports dignity, clarity, and consistent application across teams.

Indigenous Procurement Inclusion Clause (Sample Language)

Indigenous Procurement Inclusion Clause (Sample Language)

The Contractor/Organization acknowledges the importance of Indigenous workforce participation and community economic inclusion.

Where work occurs on or near Indigenous territories, the Contractor/Organization agrees to:

- Make reasonable efforts to recruit local Indigenous labour
- Engage Indigenous-owned businesses where available
- Participate in community outreach where requested
- Report on Indigenous participation efforts transparently

These commitments shall be implemented in good faith and in alignment with local Indigenous governance protocols.

Failure to demonstrate reasonable efforts may be reviewed under contract performance standards.

This clause may also be adapted by Indigenous Nations, community-owned enterprises, and joint ventures to articulate expectations of reciprocal economic participation and community benefit.

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Glossary of Terms

Language as Responsibility

Language is not neutral.

In Indigenous-industry partnerships, words shape power, rights, expectations, and accountability. When language is vague, it can unintentionally minimize sovereignty, flatten cultural distinctions, or reduce Nations to stakeholders within systems that were not designed with them in mind.

This glossary exists to:

- Protect Indigenous governance language
- Clarify corporate and regulatory terminology
- Prevent pan-Indigenous assumptions
- Support shared understanding across sectors
- Ensure Indigenous worldview is not reduced to corporate vocabulary

Precision signals respect.
Clarity supports accountability. Shared language strengthens shared work.

This glossary is intended to support shared understanding and does not supersede Treaty rights, constitutional protections, or Nation-specific governance protocols.

A

Advancement (Seasonality Framework)

The Fall phase of the Seasonality Framework. Refers to growth in responsibility, leadership, skills, compensation, and influence. Advancement does not require assimilation or disconnection from identity, kinship, or community responsibilities.

Assimilation

The expectation, explicit or implicit, that Indigenous Peoples suppress language, world-view, governance, ceremony, or identity to succeed within Western systems.

Attraction (Seasonality Framework)

The Spring phase. The relational process through which Indigenous Peoples encounter employment or partnership opportunities and decide whether engagement feels safe, meaningful, and aligned with personal and community values. Attraction is not recruitment alone; it is the building of trust before opportunity.

B

Belonging

A lived experience of being welcomed, respected, valued, and safe without needing to mask identity or overperform to justify presence.

Board Governance (Western)

Formal oversight structures (Board of Directors, Executive Committees) are responsible for fiduciary and strategic direction within corporations.

C

Capacity (Community Context)

The human, financial, governance, and technical resources available within a Nation or community to engage in partnerships, workforce development, or economic initiatives.

Colonial Patterns

Persistent structures, behaviours, and decision-making approaches rooted in colonial systems that prioritize extraction, control, speed, and unilateral authority over Indigenous sovereignty, relational accountability, and shared governance. Colonial patterns may appear in modern institutions through consultation without influence, short-term engagement, imposed timelines, or policy design that excludes the Indigenous worldview.

Community / Nation / Reserve

These terms are related but not interchangeable.

Nation refers to a sovereign Indigenous government with inherent rights, jurisdiction, governance systems, and authority over its people and lands.

Community may refer to members of a Nation, including those living both on and off reserve. It is relational and social in tone.

Reserve (Canada) refers to land set aside by the federal government under colonial law. A reserve is a legal land designation and does not define the full political, cultural, or territorial scope of a Nation. Best practice:

- Use "Nation" when referring to governance, rights, agreements, or jurisdiction.
- Use "Community" when referring to people or social context.
- Use "Reserve" only when referencing legal land designation.

Cultural Competency

An ongoing practice of humility, learning, and behavioural change. It is not a one-time training, checklist, or certification.

Cultural Safety

A felt experience determined by Indigenous Peoples themselves. A culturally safe workplace or relationship affirms identity, prevents harm, and protects dignity. Cultural safety is defined by those receiving the service or engagement, not by organizational intent.

D

DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)

A Western corporate framework addressing representation and fairness. DEI initiatives often require adaptation to meaningfully address Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and governance distinctions.

E

Emotional Labour (Indigenous)

The often invisible and unpaid work Indigenous Peoples perform to educate others, translate between worldviews, absorb racism or microaggressions, carry intergenerational grief, and maintain relationships when systems fail. This labour accumulates and contributes to burnout.

Energy Sector

Industries involved in the extraction, production, generation, distribution, and transition of energy resources, including oil and gas, renewables, pipelines, power generation, and related infrastructure.

Engagement (Industry Term)

In corporate contexts, engagement often refers to consultation or outreach activities. In Indigenous contexts, engagement must include meaningful participation, shared decision-making, respect for governance, and alignment with Indigenous Rights and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

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ESG (Environment, Social, Governance)

Corporate reporting framework for measuring environmental impact, social responsibility, and governance practices. ESG metrics often need to be expanded to meaningfully include Indigenous rights and relational accountability.

Equality

The principle of treating everyone the same, regardless of context or history. Equality assumes a level playing field. In Indigenous-industry contexts, equality alone is insufficient because it does not account for structural barriers, historical harm, or sovereignty distinctions. Equity and relational accountability are required to create fair conditions.

Equity

Fairness is achieved by addressing structural and historical disadvantages. Not the same as equality.

Extractive Behaviour

Actions, engagement processes, or partnerships that prioritize information gathering, labour, land access, or reputational benefit without equitable influence, reciprocity, or long-term relational commitment. Extractive behaviour may occur when organizations consult without sharing power, disengage after immediate needs are met, or treat relationships as transactional.

F

Fiduciary Responsibility

Legal obligation of corporate leaders and boards to act in the financial interests of shareholders.

FPIC (Free, Prior, and Informed Consent)

An Indigenous right affirmed in UNDRIP requiring:

- Free – Without coercion
- Prior – Before decisions are finalized
- Informed – With full, transparent information
- Consent – The right to say yes or no

FPIC is not consultation. It is an expression of sovereignty.

I

Inclusion

More than representation. Inclusion is the lived experience of influence, safety, belonging, and equitable access to opportunity.

Identity

The lived understanding of who a person is in relation to their Nation, ancestry, language, land, culture, and community. Indigenous identity is relational and collective, not solely individual. It may include responsibilities that extend beyond workplace roles.

Indigenous Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Employee-led groups that create culturally grounded spaces of belonging, peer support, leadership development, and organizational insight for Indigenous employees. ERGs do not replace leadership accountability or systemic change.

Indigenous Rights

Inherent, collective rights held by Indigenous Peoples that predate Canada and are recognized in constitutional law (Section 35), Treaty law, and international law (including UNDRIP).

These rights include, but are not limited to:

- Self-determination
- Governance and jurisdiction
- Land and title
- Cultural continuity
- Language
- Economic participation

Indigenous rights are not corporate accommodations, consultation preferences, or social responsibility initiatives. They are legal and inherent rights grounded in sovereignty.

Indigenous Success Metrics

Qualitative and relational measures grounded in the Indigenous worldview. These assess cultural safety, belonging, reciprocity, community benefit, self-determination, and intergenerational impact.

Industry

Corporate and operational entities engaged in economic activity, particularly within the energy sector.

In a Good Way

A relational expression describing conduct that is respectful, humble, ethical, accountable, and grounded in cultural integrity.

Intergenerational

Spanning past, present, and future generations, reflecting responsibility to ancestors and descendants.

Intergenerational Grief

Grief carried across generations due to historical and ongoing harms such as displacement, residential schools, land loss, cultural suppression, and systemic discrimination. Intergenerational grief shapes lived experience, trust, communication patterns, and nervous system responses, and is often present even when not visibly expressed.

K

Kinship

A relational system defining responsibilities, roles, and connections among family, extended relations, community members, land, and ancestors. Kinship extends beyond Western nuclear family structures and shapes governance, caregiving, accountability, and identity.

KPI (Key Performance Indicator)

A quantitative performance metric used in corporate reporting (e.g., retention rate, promotion rate). KPIs alone cannot measure belonging or cultural safety.

L

Living Document

A document intended to evolve over time through reflection, community feedback, emerging learning, and relational accountability. A living document acknowledges that Indigenous-industry partnership work is ongoing and adaptive.

M

Meaningful (Indigenous Context)

In Indigenous contexts, "meaningful" engagement or inclusion means more than participation or visibility. It requires influence, shared decision-making where appropriate, relational accountability, transparency, and outcomes that reflect the Indigenous worldview and priorities. Meaningful work is felt through trust, respect, and reciprocity, not simply documented through attendance or consultation records.

P

Pan-Indigenous

The incorrect assumption that all Indigenous Peoples share identical cultures, governance systems, protocols, or experiences. Every Nation is distinct.

Procurement

Corporate purchasing systems. In this Framework, procurement includes Indigenous-inclusive practices that support long-term economic sovereignty.

Psychological Safety

The ability to speak, ask questions, or raise concerns without fear of humiliation or retaliation.

R

Relational Accountability

Responsibility to uphold commitments, integrity, and respect within relationships through humility, consistency, listening, clarity, and follow-through.

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Relational Competency

The demonstrated ability to build, maintain, and repair trust-based relationships through humility, consistency, listening, clarity, and follow-through.

Relational Repair

Intentional processes used to restore trust after harm or misalignment, including acknowledgement, apology, corrective action, and structural change.

Relationality

The understanding that all systems, land, governance, economy, community, and identity, are interconnected.

Reflection & Renewal (Seasonality Framework)

The Winter phase. A period of reflection, ceremony, accountability, recalibration, and healing before the cycle begins again.

Resume Black Hole

A commonly experienced phenomenon where job applications disappear into HR systems without acknowledgement, response, or follow-up. For Indigenous candidates, this reinforces exclusion and historical invisibility.

Retention (Seasonality Framework)

The Summer phase. Refers to sustaining belonging, safety, participation, and growth within the workplace. Retention is not simply the length of employment; it is the ability to stay without sacrificing identity.

S

Seasonality Framework

A cyclical workforce model grounded in Indigenous worldview:

- Spring – Attraction
- Summer – Retention
- Fall – Advancement
- Winter – Reflection & Renewal
- Centre – Reciprocity

Shareholder Primacy

The belief that corporations exist primarily to maximize shareholder value.

Sovereignty

The inherent authority of Indigenous Nations to govern themselves, make decisions over their lands and peoples, uphold their laws, and determine their own futures. Indigenous sovereignty predates colonization and is not granted by the state. It exists regardless of federal or provincial recognition.

Stakeholder (Western Term)

A corporate term referring to individuals or groups with an interest in organizational activity. Indigenous Nations are not merely stakeholders; they are Rights and Title Holders.

Success Metrics (Western/Industry)

Quantitative, trackable measures used in HR and governance systems, such as hiring rates, retention rates, promotion rates, and procurement percentages. These require pairing with Indigenous Success Metrics for balance.

Sustainability Reporting

Corporate reporting framework often aligned with ESG. May not fully capture Indigenous relational, cultural, or sovereignty dimensions without adaptation.

T

Tokenism

Superficial inclusion of Indigenous individuals or representation without meaningful authority, influence, or systemic change.

Trauma-Informed

An approach recognizing the presence of trauma (including intergenerational trauma) and designing systems to avoid re-harm. Trauma-informed does not lower standards; it applies them humanely and predictably.

Two-Eyed Seeing

A guiding principle integrating Indigenous ways of knowing (relational, land-based, intergenerational) and Western systems (policy, measurement, operational tools). Neither worldview is subordinated.

U

UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)

An international human rights instrument affirming Indigenous rights, including self-determination, FPIC, land rights, cultural preservation, and governance authority.

W

Western Eye

The structural, regulatory, and operational lens prioritizes timelines, policy, efficiency, risk mitigation, and quantification. Incomplete without an Indigenous worldview.

Western Workforce Model

A linear employment model emphasizing recruitment → onboarding → performance→ promotion → retention, often without recognition of cyclical or relational realities.

Closing Reflection

True partnership requires shared understanding. This glossary is offered as a foundation for clarity, accountability, and respectful engagement across Indigenous Nations, the energy industry, and government. As a living document, it will evolve as relationships deepen and learning continues.

Shared Energy, Shared Futures

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