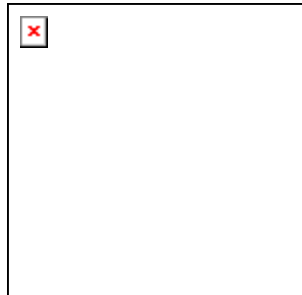


Creating an Inclusive Workplace for Urban Aboriginal Youth

Presented by the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth



The background features several vertical, hand-drawn style lines in purple, yellow, blue, white, and green on the left side. On the right side, there is a stylized, light-colored figure that resembles a person or a traditional Aboriginal symbol, composed of simple geometric shapes.

MISSION STATEMENT

Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) will enrich the lives of all Urban Aboriginal youth nurturing self empowerment and fostering healthy collaboration and communication to ensure healthy future generations.

VISION STATEMENT

Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) will be recognized as a fundamental organization in society, empowering Urban Aboriginal youth to envision and attain a healthy sustainable future while upholding traditional Aboriginal values.

USAY

HISTORY OF THE URBAN SOCIETY FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH

The Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) is a non-profit, 100% Aboriginal Youth governed organization determined to assist Aboriginal Youth, in the City of Calgary and satellite areas, succeed in urban life.

This dynamic organization was founded in 1999 by Redmond Little Chief who had organized a Suicide Awareness Conference, "Wake Up Call", in the Aboriginal community. The strongest recommendation from this conference was a call for the development of an Aboriginal Youth Council to assist the Mayor in decisions of policy and strategy on issues concerning Aboriginal Youth in the City of Calgary.

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HISTORY CONTINUED...

Armed with fresh ideas and the support of former Mayor Al Duerr, USAY was formed and in 2000 hosted the 1st Annual Firekeepers Gathering aimed at assisting Aboriginal youth with the issues surrounding their success in an urban setting. The success of Firekeepers was encouraging enough for the USAY Board to explore the other opportunities for Aboriginal Youth in Calgary and see where they could assist in helping to make the experience of living and succeeding in this city a positive one.

With various grants USAY formed a non-profit organization in August of 2001 and began paving the way as one of Calgary's leading organizations for Aboriginal Youth.

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HISTORY CONTINUED...

We continue to provide youth with the opportunity for advancement through Board and volunteer opportunities as well as giving them the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions on urban life through print medium with NEW TRIBE Magazine. USAY will continue to seek out new opportunities and develop programming that will help youth achieve their short and long term goals for a successful, happy future in the City of Calgary for years to come with the help of the Aboriginal community and its partners.

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USAY PROGRAMS

NEW TRIBE MAGAZINE

NEW TRIBE Magazine is a monthly publication, which mission is promote a positive outlook on Aboriginal living in an urban setting by promoting information sharing within the Aboriginal and youth communities.

RECREATION NIGHTS

Every Tuesday YMCA and USAY coordinate an Aboriginal Youth Recreation Night that gives urban Aboriginal youth access to Eau Claire YMCA's recreational facilities free of charge. The Rec Night also plays host to the Aboriginal Youth Hip Hop Dance program training Aboriginal youth in the techniques and training for Hip Hop Dance. USAY also partners with YMCA and Calgary Boys and Girls Club to host the annual Aboriginal Youth Hoops Tournament.

eLEARNING PROGRAMS

USAY has designed several online eLearning Programs, which will be the topic of discussion for creating an inclusive workplace for urban Aboriginal youth.

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eLEARNING BASICS...

eLearning or eSeminars are online programs that allow courses to be accessed at any time and in any order. The course participant simply needs to choose the module that seems most relevant to their needs. The content is fresh and designed with the user in mind. This combination of expertise and modern delivery methods gives the course a speed and relevancy that may not be found in textbooks, outdated videos, and non-cultural specific courses.

You can access USAY's eLearning Programs on our website at:

www.usay.ca

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BUSINESS ETIQUETTE & JOB FINDING SKILLS

The intention for this program is to give urban Aboriginal youth the skills and resources necessary for entering the workforce.

To accomplish this goal we needed to alleviate any fears or hesitations they might have about job finding and business etiquette, but what are their fears and hesitations?

It was essential to ask youth what deterred them from entering the workforce and how we could assist in making their transition into employment less stressful and more successful.

Not surprisingly, urban Aboriginal youth asked for the basics, simply resumes techniques, interview skills and other modules outlined in the program.

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BUSINESS ETIQUETTE & JOB FINDING SKILLS CONTINUED...

MODULES:

Unit 1: At Work

- Business Dress and Appearance
- Appointments and Meetings
- Peers, Subordinates and Superiors
- Guests, Consultants and New Employees

Unit 2: Communication Skills

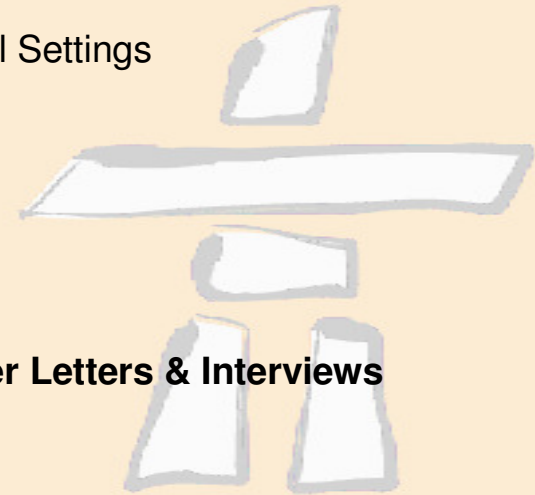
- Courtesy
- Introductions
- Addressing People
- Negotiating
- People Skills
- Phone Skills
- Email
- Appreciation
- Credit
- Apologies
- Interruptions

Unit 3: Social Occasions

- Public Behaviour
- Gift Giving
- Entertaining and Social Settings
- Table Manners
- Toasting
- Tipping
- Networking

Unit 4: Resumes, Cover Letters & Interviews

- Resumes
- Cover Letters
- Interview Techniques



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BUSINESS ETIQUETTE & JOB FINDING SKILLS CONTINUED...

Each module has a video description and an accompanying written or workbook component.

For example, lets take a look at Unit 1, Module 1 on the website. This module discusses resumes.

By offering such information, we are equipping youth with essential information to enter into the workforce.

However, what if they have just started a new job or career? One of the greatest aspect of eLearning is that if they have already created a resume, been interviewed and awarded the job, they can go straight to the networking or social events modules.

For example, lets take a look at Unit 4, "Doing Business". This module discussing proper table manners.

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BUSINESS ETIQUETTE & JOB FINDING SKILLS CONTINUED...

ENGAGING YOUTH

It is always difficult to engage youth in programming and services, but we can increase our chances of reaching urban Aboriginal youth by having information that is accessible, offered in a culturally safe space and relevant.

Business Etiquette & Job Finding Skills Program allows youth to discover the skills that are essential to entering the workforce and retaining their employment. They can access this program from any computer, including our computer lab at the USAY office. We can provide assistance to youth as needed and guide them through each program.

By developing these skills and feeling comfortable using them, urban Aboriginal youth will feel confident in the non-Aboriginal workforce. We hope to alleviate the fear and hesitation that previously existed and make them feel included in their career choice.

Even if we equip urban Aboriginal youth with the skills to enter the workforce, we have to get the workforce inclusive of urban Aboriginal youth.

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ABORIGINAL AWARENESS

“There’s a great big world of First Nations people who are proud, educated and hard working”

- Elder Victoria Crowchild Aberdeen – Calgary Herald April 5, 2007

After developing Business Etiquette & Job Finding Skills, we knew it was only one part of the equation to assist urban Aboriginal youth, we knew we also had to deliver information to potential non-Aboriginal employers.

USAY developed the Aboriginal Awareness Program to assist non-Aboriginal management and fellow employees understand their Aboriginal counterparts.

The program's goals were to dispel negative or inaccurate Aboriginal stereotypes that exist in the non-Aboriginal culture, while creating safe space to ask questions, gain knowledge and above all increase recruitment, retention and job satisfaction for both parties.

The process in creating this program was simple, describe historical and cultural differences and how to overcome those differences.

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ABORIGINAL AWARENESS CONTINUED...

MODULES:

Culture & History

The first two modules provide information regarding some historical events and cultural influences that affect First Nations youth as they head out into the work world.

Cross Cultural Communication

The third module discusses the way this history and culture influences communication.

Recruitment & Hiring, Management & Retention

The fourth and fifth modules will show how this knowledge provides employers with an advantage in the interview room or in the workplace because they inevitably become better recruiters or bosses through increased understanding of the cross cultural differences between mainstream Canadian culture and First Nations cultures of Canada.

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ABORIGINAL AWARENESS CONTINUED...

This program is similar to Business Etiquette in that each module has several videos and written or workbook components.

I would like to take a look at Module 2.1, Cultural Transmission, to get a sense of the cultural and historical components of the Aboriginal Awareness Program.

Let's also take a look at Module 3.1, Demographics, to understand the need for Aboriginal Awareness training the workforce.



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ABORIGINAL AWARENESS CONTINUED...

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS

Similar to youth, it is always difficult to engage employers in services that do not seem “essential”. At USAY we have increased engagement by using similar techniques used with youth, allowing employers to have information that is accessible, offered in a safe space where they can ask questions and have relevant, useful answers.

Aboriginal Awareness allows employers to explore the differences in culture and history between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Peoples. Once they have explored those difference they can develop skills to help with communication and therefore retention.

USAY does not just want to increase recruitment and retention we want to create satisfying working conditions, where the employees and employers are mutually respected by one another and understand the complex cultural differences that exist.

It is our hope to assist youth in feeling confident in obtaining a job and feeling respected by their employer once they are there.

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OTHER eLEARNING PROGRAMS

PERSONAL FINANCE

USAY has also developed the Personal Finance eLearning Program, which assists youth in managing their finances once they get that job or career.

CAREER PLANNING

USAY has mainly focused on getting “a job” in Business Etiquette, but in our soon-to-be-launched program, Career Planning, we will be assisting youth in planning a career to develop over a lifetime.

URBAN EXPECTATIONS: SURVIVING THE CITY

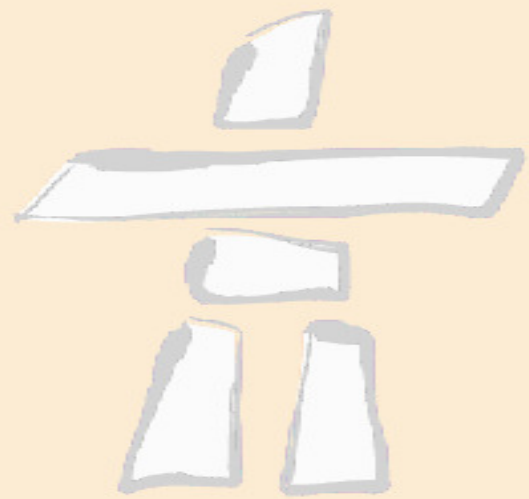
We are also in the planning stages of creating a program to assist Aboriginal youth with the transition from rural or reserve areas to an urban setting. This program will provide youth with basic information of “urban etiquette”.



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Questions?



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THANK YOU!



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