



The Employer's Syllabus: Creating An Inclusive Workplace

The Asper Career Development Centre connects with industry expert in Indigenous engagement Kelly Lendsay, president and CEO of Indigenous Works to discuss how Manitoba employers can set Indigenous employees up for success, meaningfully integrate Indigenous perspectives in the workplace and avoid tokenism for underrepresented employees.

How can employers ensure their efforts towards Indigenous inclusion go beyond tokenism and foster genuine, meaningful engagement?

Tokenism, a term from the 1960s, refers to the appearance of diversity without substance. To go beyond tokenism, organizations must take a holistic approach to Indigenous inclusion, including reviewing their employment brand, policies, and understanding of socioeconomic issues. Employers should assess their brand's reputation in Indigenous communities, identify successful strategies, align with community values, and evaluate progress and improve. By investing in education and inclusivity, Manitoba employers can better serve a growing, diverse population. True inclusion involves embedding diversity in core values, long-term strategies, and accountability measures.

What are some common pitfalls organizations encounter when attempting to integrate Indigenous perspectives?

One common pitfall is trying to make changes without readying internal systems and processes. Avoiding tokenism requires examining internal systems beyond surface-level changes. At Indigenous Works, managers value a systems approach, focusing on five key factors: understanding the Indigenous labor market ecosystem, mastering knowledge in this area, evaluating the employment brand, reviewing workplace policies, and deepening awareness of socioeconomic issues. A comprehensive systems review helps identify unconscious biases and ensures genuine inclusivity for all employees, not just Indigenous ones.

Can you speak to the value that including Indigenous perspectives brings to an organization?

Including Indigenous perspectives can significantly enrich an organization. Indigenous knowledge systems offer unique insights into sustainability, community engagement, and holistic approaches to problem-solving. These perspectives can lead to innovative solutions, increased employee satisfaction and performance, and a deeper connection with the community.



How do you envision workplace diversity and efforts evolving in the future?

Manitoba employers have a major opportunity to transform their workplaces as demographic shifts predicted by the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) are now becoming reality. Indigenous populations, known for their deep connection to local communities, offer employers a stable and dedicated workforce, which is key to long-term success. This growing demographic presents both a challenge and a unique opportunity for forward-thinking organizations.

The time to act is now. Employers must collaborate with organizations to access valuable support resources, expertise, and events like Inclusion Works 2024.

These partnerships will help develop meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, stay accountable to inclusion goals, and continuously improve strategies to adapt to changing workforce demographics and needs.

Building Future Leaders: Insights from the 2023 Asper Employment Report

The Asper School of Business is proud to present the **2023 Employment Report**, offering valuable insights into the achievements of our graduates and the ongoing collaboration between the school and the business community. As an institution committed to experiential learning, we have witnessed our students and alumni continue to thrive, thanks in large part to the support and partnership of local and national employers. Here are some [key takeaways from this year's report](#).

BCOMM

Despite the challenges posed by a tighter labor market and slowing economy, our Bachelor of Commerce (BComm) graduates have demonstrated remarkable resilience. In 2023, 83% of BComm graduates secured full-time employment within three months of graduation, with an impressive 89% of them choosing to stay and work in Manitoba. The average starting salary for these graduates across all disciplines was \$56,886, highlighting the value that our graduates bring to the workforce.

CO-OP

A critical element of Asper's success in preparing students for the workforce is our robust Co-op Program. In 2023, 29% of BComm graduates participated in co-op placements, gaining hands-on experience that complements their academic achievements. These co-op students earned an average salary of \$59,772 upon graduation, demonstrating that the combination of classroom learning and practical experience creates highly competitive candidates for employers.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Asper's dedication to experiential learning goes beyond the co-op program. In 2023, the Career Development Centre received the prestigious AACSB Innovations that Inspire Award for integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into its co-op curriculum. This recognition highlights our commitment to preparing socially responsible leaders equipped to tackle global challenges.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Our graduate programs have also seen continued success. Among MBA graduates, 75% secured full-time positions, with an average salary of \$88,298. This represents a 36% increase in salary compared to their pre-MBA earnings, reflecting the transformative power of the program.

Additionally, 50% of MFin students participated in the mentor program, with 100% indicating they found the connection to the business mentors extremely helpful in navigating their career path.

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS

At the heart of these achievements are the strong partnerships between the Asper School of Business and the business community. Through co-op placements, mentorship programs, and recruitment initiatives, employers have the opportunity to engage with talented students early, ensuring a seamless transition from academia to industry. These connections foster long-term, mutually rewarding relationships that benefit both our graduates and the organizations that hire them. Even in a year marked by economic uncertainty, Asper graduates have proven to be resilient and adaptable. Their success reflects not only the quality of education they receive but also the crucial role of experiential learning and industry collaboration. As employer partners, your engagement helps shape the next generation of business leaders who are ready to drive innovation in your organizations.

EXPLORE THE FULL REPORT

For a comprehensive look at the employment data, salary statistics, and insights into how Asper graduates are making an impact, we invite you to view the full 2023 Employment Report on our [website](#) or click the button below.



GET INVOLVED: Elevate Your Employer Brand On-Campus

Asper Career Month, held in January, is the perfect opportunity for employers to connect with top talent at the Asper School of Business. By participating, your organization can foster strong relationships with students and showcase your brand as an employer of choice.

There are several ways to engage with students during Career Month. Employers can host an interactive [Resume Blitz](#), offering personalized feedback to students and helping them enhance their application materials, conduct an [on-campus information session](#) to present your organization's values, opportunities, and culture to a captive audience, leaving a lasting impression and building brand awareness among future graduates.

For those looking to connect virtually, consider hosting an [Instagram Livestream](#) event. This innovative format allows you to reach a broader student audience, share insights about your company, and answer questions in real-time, making your brand stand out in the competitive recruitment landscape.



Ready to make an impact? Review our sponsorship and engagement brochure on the [website](#) or click the button above to explore the full range of opportunities and find the perfect fit for your organization.

Contact asper_cdc@umanitoba.ca for more information.