



# Workforce Connex

**Nova Scotia Workforce Connex...**

**Nova Scotia Forum: Building Strong  
Private Sector and Aboriginal Partnerships**

June 28-29, 2006

Membertou, Nova Scotia



# Acknowledgement

The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) would like to acknowledge and thank members of the Nova Scotia regional planning committee who dedicated their time and talent to help make the Nova Scotia Workforce Connex forum a successful event.

## **Nova Scotia Workforce Connex Planning Committee**

- Bill Spruin, Service Canada
- Kari Morgan, Service Canada
- Rachel Brown, Service Canada
- Shannon Kelly, Nova Scotia Department of Education, Skills and Learning Branch
- Louise Boudreau, Nova Scotia Department of Education, Skills and Learning Branch
- Candy Palmater , Department of Education, Government of Nova Scotia
- Kelly Henderson , Trucking Human Resource Sector Council
- John Sutherland, Nova Scotia Automobile Dealers' Association
- Robert Sampson, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)
- Lee Paul, Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission (APTEC)
- Valerie Whynot, Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission (APTEC)
- Gerald Toney, Mi'kmaq Employment & Training Secretariat (METs)

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Canada<sup>10</sup>

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# Message CEO/President

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## **Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada**

**KELLY LENDSAY**

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September 2006

Dear Workforce Connex participant,

The concept behind Workforce Connex came to life when Human Resources and Social Development Canada undertook a series of roundtables with stakeholders across the country in 2005. The principal purpose of the tour was to bring together Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs), private sector and other key stakeholders to discuss better collaborations in Aboriginal labour force development.

Throughout this process the council emphasized the importance of collaboration, coordination and communication. It was also noted that to achieve results, the potential partners; government, the private sector, community groups and Aboriginal people, have to be committed to implement sustainable partnership strategies.

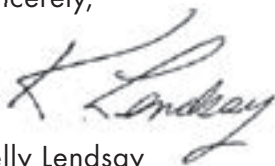
It is rewarding to know this vision came alive through active discussion among all participating stakeholder groups at the Nova Scotia forum. Participants were engaged in discussion and motivated to break down barriers and find solutions to resolve the current training, recruitment and retention issues of Aboriginal people.

It's now critical for the Nova Scotia Workforce Connex participants to continue dialogue and build strong and sustainable partnerships that will encourage and provide training and jobs for Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia.

The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) will continue its work to facilitate discussion among trades and apprenticeship stakeholders to help build a skilled Aboriginal workforce that feeds the growing need of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples and the economy.

We would like to thank you, the participant, for your involvement in Workforce Connex Nova Scotia. The council looks forward to your continued involvement and added value in this multi-dimensional partnership initiative. Your role is critical!

Sincerely,



Kelly Lendsay

# Executive Summary

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## Foreword

This report is a summary of the Nova Scotia Workforce Connex forum held in Membertou, Nova Scotia on June 28-29, 2006. The results outlined in this report are representative of the Nova Scotia participants and have not been altered or analyzed in any way.

This summary is focused on the input participants shared during interactive roundtable and plenary discussions. The findings will serve as a starting point for the development of new private sector/Aboriginal employment centre partnerships in the Nova Scotia region, and for the development of the region's go-forward action plans.

The "AS SAID" reports from across the country will be analyzed for trends that will be captured in a comprehensive and integrated national report that will be used to shape initiatives in the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's (AHRDCC) national Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship strategy.

## Synopsis

Workforce Connex is a national forum series designed to increase Aboriginal participation in targeted trades employment and apprenticeship programs. The intent is for the forums to create, strengthen and leverage regional partnerships and collaborative networks that offer solutions to Aboriginal employment training, recruitment and retention issues.

On June 28-29, 2006, a group of committed stakeholders representing private sector employers, Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs), government and educators convened at the Nova Scotia Workforce Connex Forum in Membertou, Nova Scotia to discuss ideas and commitments that will increase Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship in the Nova Scotia region.

The discussion occurred in five stages:

**Part 1:** Walk in my Shoes/Moccasins: In an effort to better understand each other's challenges, the conversation reversed roles whereby the AHRDAs were asked to walk in the shoes of business and the private sector participants were asked to walk in the moccasins of AHRDAs.

**Part 2:** Presentation: A presentation on the importance of partnership was made to provide participants with context for their discussions.

**Part 3:** Supply Side: The discussion helped employers understand the foundation, role and employment challenges of the AHRDAs, other Aboriginal employment agencies and their clients in Nova Scotia.

**Part 4:** Keynote: Representatives from the National Steering Committee for the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project spoke about lessons learned that could help in human resource development. As well, an Aboriginal apprentice shared his inspirational story about real-life experiences in the automotive repair industry.

**Part 5:** Demand Side: The discussion helped the AHRDA community get to know various employment trends and challenges that business and industry are facing in Nova Scotia.

**Part 6:** Go Forward Commitments: Participants built a list of commitments to ensure the value of the forum would extend into actions and long-term partnerships.

Through the facilitation of local professionals, participants were able to increase mutual understanding about the challenges and the successes that have led to increased Aboriginal participation in the Nova Scotia labour market. There was a consensus that increased momentum is required to drive the connections between the supply side (AHRDAs and Aboriginal organizations) and the demand side (employers).

It was recognized that the forum was a beginning; an opportunity to actively and consciously move the Aboriginal employment agenda forward in Nova Scotia. As a starting point, 60 commitments were made that are later outlined in this report.

The work done in Nova Scotia will be integrated into a report that will be used to shape initiatives in AHRDCC's national Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship strategy.

# The Discussion

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Participants discussed and shared ideas about how to increase Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship in the Nova Scotia region. The dialogue and deliberations at the session are contained below.

## **PART 1:**

### **WALK IN MY SHOES / MOCCASINS**

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In an effort to better understand each other's challenges, the conversation reversed roles whereby the business community was asked to think/act like they were in the Aboriginal community. Representatives from the Aboriginal and AHRDA community were asked to think/act like they were from business. All participants were asked to determine placement, recruitment and retention challenges from this new perspective.

A summary of the conversation is as follows:

AHRDAs as business:

If you were a business, what challenges would you encounter to make positive connections to the Aboriginal community?

- Can't find the common ties or the clients.
- What kind of funding is there for employment?
- Does the client have the skills we need?
- How do we reach the Aboriginal candidates?
- We should visit the community/band and participate at grad day in the community.
- Fear/apprehension to venture into the unknown.
- We need to start thinking long-term.
- We have to "do" what we "say" we will do.
- We need cultural awareness and sensitivity training to deal with stereotypes.
- We need to provide opportunities for promotion for those that we hire.
- What are incentives we can offer to on-reserve candidates to encourage movements?
- What is the best way to develop a successful relationship?
- What should be considered for retention?
- Does the community have a website?
- How do we know/connect to other Aboriginal agencies?
- We don't know what skilled labour is within the community.
- We need to invest/commit to training and support services.
- We need to understand cultural/historical perspectives and the value they bring to overall community.
- We need to value the strengths of Aboriginal people.
- Who do we contact in the Aboriginal community?
- Lack of technical assistance.
- Bad experience.
- Where is the best place to locate a business?
- What is in it for me? Money, money, money.
- Interview process.

- There isn't enough time to do what has to be done.
- Small business has to make money so people have to be aware of this.
- Human resource departments may have to change how they do business.
- We need to undertake more research.

### **What can be done to overcome these barriers?**

- Build relationships and cultural diversity.
- Make contacts.
- Communication.

### **Businesses as AHRDAs:**

If you were in an AHRDA or Aboriginal employment agency, what challenges would you have to make positive connections to the business community?

- Gaining trust/respect.
- How do we build meaningful relationships between businesses and Aboriginal communities?
- What is in it for me?
- Educate employers about AHRDAs.
- Do not know who to talk to.
- How do we overcome the geographic myth some employers feel about some of the Aboriginal communities?
- Relocation issues with Aboriginal people.
- Prejudice.
- Lack of trained Aboriginal people.

- Opportunities, no hires.
- Information barriers.
- Exposure to urban businesses.
- Education levels and opportunities on rural reserves.
- Social issues – too many.
- Culture – Aboriginal and business.
- What do they want?
- Business feels Aboriginal people have no incentive to work.
- Only want Aboriginal people for minimum wage and not skilled jobs.
- Business takes a linear approach versus the circular approach in Aboriginal culture.
- Looking at past perceptions of others.
- How do you get in contact with business?
- Lack of knowledge in careers.
- Lack of skills.
- No feedback.
- No mentoring.
- Lack of training.
- Lack of knowledge of the process (apprenticeship).
- Distance to job sites.
- Lack of role models and cultural bias.
- Stereotyping.
- Perception.
- Lack of networking opportunities.
- Government programs.

## What can be done to overcome these barriers?

- When dealing with construction companies and organized labour, have placement officers prepare briefings.
- Conduct sensitivity training.
- Provide employment awareness kits.
- Encourage people to obtain high school education as this makes good sense and good business for Aboriginal people.

## PART 2: PRESENTATION

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Kelly Lendsay made a presentation (entitled Business Case for Partnerships: Connecting on all Levels) on the unique requirements of partnering with the Aboriginal community, which consisted of six parts:

- Business case.
- Design Features.
- Partnership Principles.
- The Ingredients.
- Labour Market Partnership Areas.
- Benefits and Outcomes.

Mr. Lendsay stated that recent studies concluded “80 per cent of what we learn about our work is learned in the workplace; and the key to success is on going relationships”.

## PART 3: SUPPLY SIDE

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### Purpose

This section involved a general discussion from the supply side (Aboriginal community) of the labour market equation. AHRDAs helped increase the employers (demand side) understanding of the supply side)

Prior to this session, participants were separated into six small discussion groups. The two Nova Scotia AHRDAs gave a presentation on their respective organizations.

Gerald Toney – Mi’kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat (METS) made a verbal presentation and highlighted the following:

- METS provides employment and training programs for all thirteen reserves across the province of Nova Scotia.
- Each reserve has a native employment officer who fulfills a number of functions, one of which is to ensure that the supply meets the demand.
- METS is always trying to develop partnerships with all levels of government, companies and training institutes such as Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC).
- The reserves have a high percentage of youth and one of METS’ priorities is providing assistance to the youth.
- METS is very interested to move forward on phase II of the Workforce Connex forum... making the connections with the employers and getting meaningful employment for Aboriginal people.
- At any given time, METS could have upward of 150 people in the NSCC programs.

- METS does foresee employment opportunities in the Aerospace and defense industries.
- Two of METS most popular programs are the wage subsidy program and self-employment benefit program.

Valerie Whynot, Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission (APTEC), provides training employment programs and services to those Aboriginal people who live off-reserve and live mainly in urban centres. Like METS, APTEC has native employment officers who provide a variety of services to their clients.

Ms. Whynot made a presentation that outlined the programs, services and contact information for APTEC, and profiled one of their clients - an Aboriginal woman auto mechanic apprentice.

Participants were separated into six groups and asked to respond to a number of questions. The following is a summary of the responses:

### **Barriers to Employment**

What are the challenges and frustrations when engaging the Aboriginal community?

- Lack of mentorship.
- Lack of education and training.
- Lack of experience.
- Overall awareness of opportunities.
- Lack of positive feedback.
- Government issues.
- Rules and regulations.
- Location of jobs and transportation barriers.
- Who do we contact?
- Work ethic.

- Communication – information is not flowing smoothly between parties.
- What training is needed?
- Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) values diversity; full intention of engaging under-represented groups.
  - Lack a coordinated approach
    - o 25,000 part-time students
    - o 9,000 full-time students
  - NSCC needs to pull together diversity initiatives occurring across the province.
- Working with Canadian Tire and Nova Scotia Association of Car Dealers to engage the Aboriginal community; 110 car dealerships across Nova Scotia.
- Down East Communications – problem with Aboriginal people applying; don't self-identify; more success in Newfoundland. Don't have applicants; will train and employ.
- Neil Gunter – resumes submitted but no self-identification made by Aboriginal applicants. Need to be aware of identity.
- Self-identifying can be a double-edged sword.
- Neil Gunter wants to hire from Nova Scotia before going outside of the province.
- Some businesses/sectors don't think of Aboriginal people as a viable candidate pool.
- Insufficient links to AHRDAs not knowing some of the barriers and issues.
- Business was not aware that AHRDAs existed.

- Setting realistic goals, expectations.
- Need better partnerships.
- Early intervention would be helpful.
- The biggest problem is getting Aboriginal students from high school and into a trade school.
- All groups should be more engaged.
- Baby boomers are retiring and more opportunities exist – baby boomers – shift and change.
- Need to help people make decisions.
- Link better with the federal site ([www.ncns.ca](http://www.ncns.ca)).
- Lack of positive advice.
- People need to understand that they have to travel to the job.
- Need to change the systems and help people get more marketable skills. Not only 18-25 but 40-50 years of age.
- Business needs to change the way they think.
- Need to develop a better partnership with business.
- Need to match training to labour demand.
- Need to examine the interview process.
- Knowing programs available – incorporate business plans.
- Need to trust each other.
- Issues with relocating financial assistance for partnering.
- General break down of regional contacts from the national level to a community base.
- Fear of the unknown.
- False perceptions; stereotyping.
- Aboriginal youth participant gave a few insights:
  - Aboriginal apprentices don't want to be singled-out as a token Indian, they want to be hired based on merit and credentials
  - Aboriginal youth get in, and then get discouraged; they lack commitment to overcome odds (i.e., screen 30 candidates and hire 10 at the end of the day)
  - Aboriginal youth lack self-esteem.
- An elder participant made few observations:
  - Business – few people in business believe we can fix this problem
  - Too few Aboriginal kids have grade 12
  - Promote models of success.

### **Barriers to Recruitment and Retention**

What the difficulties are associated with the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal workers?

- Lack of mentorship after hiring.
- Not enough diversity awareness training.
- Follow-up on clients/employers.
- Employees get home sick and leave positions and return home.
- Lack of partnerships.
- Entry-level qualifications do not match real job need.

- Where do Aboriginal people get training?
- Detailed resumes.
- Human resources personnel require better understanding and recruitment/retention tools.
- Cultural differences.
- Challenge in knowing/understanding the various organizations that provide support and services to Aboriginal people.
- Who can bring quality Aboriginal clients to the interview site?
- Unions need to start hiring apprentices again (retention).
- Need workplace preparedness strategies.
- Employers need to invest in apprentices.
- Succession planning needs to be better.
- Fear on the private sector side – lack of understanding culture.
- We are not connected; we work in silos.
- Syncrude in Alberta is a champion when it comes to recruitment and retention of Aboriginal people and we should learn from them.
- We must get to grade 9 and 10 Aboriginal youth and get them thinking about trades as a career.
  - Career fairs; take these courses in high school.
- Retention is more difficult in an erratic economy.
- College pre-employment
  - 15 participants – maybe three or four non-native will make it to apprentice position.
- We don't have agreed-upon objectives: 5, 10 or 25 years.
  - As a region, we must set objectives. How are we going to accomplish this?
  - AHRDA retention – being away from family is a big concern.
  - How do urban area employers' retain Aboriginal employees?
    - One participant mentioned job "sharing" as an example of how to overcome this issue. His father was from Cape Breton, worked two weeks in Halifax, returned home for two weeks and rotated jobs.
  - Employers need to be flexible.
  - Erratic workforce occurs because of the geography and desire of people to return home.
  - Business does not fully understand Aboriginal culture.
  - Some strategies to deal with this are:
    - job sharing
    - have some flexibility
    - having agreed upon objectives and plans with timelines
    - cultural barriers – differences
    - diversity training needed as per culture
    - respect.
  - Need to get the word out about Aboriginal clients. How do we do this?
    - information sessions
    - develop database
    - marketing to the sector councils

- updating web page
- client job match
- job bank
- networking conference
- creating partnerships
- newsletters
- more information on traits
- employer visits
- career fairs.

### **Overcoming Barriers**

Provide advice to business on how to overcome barriers to positive engagement with AHRDAs.

- Aboriginal people are an untapped labour force (initiatives are needed to encourage participation) such as:
    - tap into culture and tradition
    - celebrate and share success stories.
  - Having strong work skills with strong hand skills helps when it comes to the apprenticeship process.
  - As businesses we need to learn to grow and think outside the box.
  - We need to challenge the rules.
  - Knowing how to make the connection with the community.
  - This forum is the start of the process of engagement.
  - Go into the communities.
  - Form more partnerships.
- Be aware that AHRDAs exist!
  - Start early in high school.
  - Better rapport with NSCC graduates that are coming out of courses.
  - More career fairs. Making the connection between business and First Nations groups.
  - More effective human resource plans
    - longer term.
  - Skills inventory – having information on skilled Aboriginals and employers as well.
  - Information sharing.
  - Making sure career decisions are matched with youth. Working at something they love
    - not just working because...
  - Use AHRDCC's program, Guiding Circles.
  - Job shadowing
    - networking with AHRDAs
    - what is offered
    - building relationship
    - overall awareness
    - education on the process of background of AHRDAs
    - contact/location of AHRDAs.
  - AHRDAs need to:
    - communicate - get the word out
    - participate
    - increase contact with businesses/employers
    - contact the right people
    - promote success stories

- share and market clients better.
- make programs that are flexible and conduct follow-up
- form partnerships
- standing committee with business at table
- conduct employer visits
- develop websites
- conduct workshops/seminars
- call employers in their communities
- attend job fairs and career days.
- Employers need to:
  - coordinate:
    - o need to know what is going on in the Aboriginal community
    - o what is working
    - o industry partners
    - o follow-up
    - o get candidates.
  - encourage self identification:
    - o history/attitude/equality
    - o have the right qualifications.
  - increase awareness:
    - o what help is available
    - o confidence and commitment to cause
    - o high school education.
  - address new generation perceptions:
    - o prejudice
    - o discouragement
- o what are the models of success.
- lead:
  - o coordinate governments, Aboriginal communities, education institutes and businesses.
- initiate a lot of small initiatives:
  - o awareness
  - o career days.
- Deal with fear:
  - o lack of cultural understanding.
- Take the first step:
  - o I wish he/she would apply then I'll train them.
- counsel best practices:
  - o action items: try to get the candidates to develop a sense of commitment.
- educate:
  - o develop co-op partnerships with employers
  - o support and encourage youth to stay in school and graduate
    - meet with an open mind (explore).
- Attend more networking conferences.
- Share success stories and best practices.
- More marketing! Eye catching.
- Engage unions.
- More networking.
- Form partnerships with employers.

- Get specific workforce needs and share them with the Aboriginal community.
- Deliver training that provides a structured pathway for clients.
- Use a team approach.
- Become more visible – conduct a full-day of employer information sessions.
- Seek better understanding of culture/traditions – work together (employer/employees) to increase culture/traditions awareness.
- Be more adaptable.
- Minimum requirements for entry-level jobs should reflect job requirements.
- Companies provide training that will lead to career/employee development.
- APTEC is working to establish a relationship with businesses.
- Candidates don't always apply or stay for a long time. However, APTEC is developing strategies to encourage people to stay and develop with the company.
- APTEC make visits to employers and have direct contact.
- Continue to develop websites and skills profile.
- Share information between all stakeholders.
- Ensure that good human resource practices are available for promotion to business.
- Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership similar to AHRDA – work with employment counsellor for AHRDAs, chiefs don't hear of results.
- Employment officers need to contact more employers and give successes; AHRDAs are not good at bragging about successes.
- Strategies needed be successful in apprenticeships include:
  - positive attitude
  - greater the education level the better
  - to meet entry level it may be useful or necessary to have a formal education, upgrade and complete a Prior Learning Assessment Review.
- Neill and Gunter didn't know AHRDAs existed; this forum is wonderful. Numerous places to connect her to Aboriginal human resources. As a federal contractor, told to do things, but not advised how to connect with Aboriginal people. Industry sent out blind.

## **PART 4:**

### **KEYNOTE**

Joe O'Neill provided an overview of the National Steering Committee for the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project. This project is a joint project between AHRDCC and Environmental Career of Canada (ECO) designed to increase more Aboriginal practitioners in the environmental sectors.

Mr. O'Neill told the participants stories about his childhood, and how he admired the Eskasoni Ball Team its unbelievable one-handed pitcher. He related the story of the one-handed pitcher to obstacles that he feels the Aboriginal labour force has to overcome. But as with the one-handed pitcher, these can be dealt with and success will happen if people work on issues that confront them. He stated that people should enjoy the small successful steps in life and build on them. And, that one of the most important lessons to learn is that helping people to build their self-esteem can result in great accomplishments.

Jerry Maloney, an Aboriginal third-year apprentice in the automotive industry, spoke about his experience and the obstacles he had to overcome. Three major obstacles Jerry had to overcome were:

- competition for a work term – 30 candidates and only 10 openings
- Retention – his class of 17 people started out and only three remain after their second work term, which will take them into their third year.
- being Aboriginal – not being the same race as others on the job site has its limitations and perceived bias.

Jerry gave thanks and credit to the AHRDA (METS) for the support he received that helped him overcome his challenges and his success thus far.

## **PART 5:**

### **DEMAND SIDE**

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#### **Purpose**

This was a general discussion on the demand side (employer) of the employment equation. Business was setup as advisors to AHRDAs to help increase their understanding of the demand side.

Two presentations were made to begin the conversation on the demand side of the labour market in Nova Scotia.

Kelly Henderson, Trucking Human Resources Sector Council gave a presentation that covered the following points:

- driver shortage facing trucking industry
- economic impact driver shortage has on day-to-day living
- one journey partnership and relationship to essential skills/department of education
- strategy to attract equity workers to occupations in the trucking industry.

Shannon Kelly, Skills and Learning Branch, Labour Market Partnerships, Department of Education, Province of Nova Scotia, gave a presentation entitled *Nova Scotia Labour Market in Brief*. Topics covered were:

- current labour force
- aging population distribution
- natural population increase
- projected retirement in Nova Scotia
- critical labour market challenges and actions
- education initiatives
- growing potential of Aboriginal youth population.

Participants returned to their groups and were asked to respond to a number of questions. The following is a summary of the responses from the various groups.

#### **Barriers to Recruitment and Retention**

What are the challenges and frustrations when engaging business?

- AHRDAs need to market their service better.
- Need cultural sensitivity training.
- Ability to find the right contact person.
- Ability to link jobs with clients (networking).
- More financial resources to do our jobs properly.
- Need consistency.
- Lack of web links.
- Do not know what skills are required.
- Job descriptions are not shared.
- Do not know what jobs are available.

- Clients going for interviews.
- Lack of awareness (i.e., body language).
- Lack of commitment on employers' part.
- Some employers use the wage subsidy programs but drop the candidate when funding stops.
- Ability to match skills to business is a challenge.
- Need workforce forecasting for employers.
- Use of plain language.
- Transportation.
- Lack of buy-in.
- Need to improve communication across the system.
- Business wants easy access - one-stop-shopping.
- Have clients prepare for openings that do exist.
- You get people who want to work and people who do nothing.

### **Current Communication**

How do you communicate your company's employment opportunities?

- Newspaper ads.
  - Cape Breton Post
  - Halifax Herald
  - Aboriginal media
    - Taliak Newsletter (NCNS)
    - Mi'kmaq – Maliseet News
    - APTEC
    - METS.
- Websites/Internet

- Workopolis
- Inclusion Network ([www.inclusionnetwork.ca](http://www.inclusionnetwork.ca)) and other technology
- Hardly advertised.
- Word of mouth/gossip.
- Job banks/line.
- Refer people to others.
- Scheduled meetings with human resource people to identify jobs/skills.
- Meetings with sector councils; other businesses and associations (i.e., Atlantic Boat Builders Associations)
- Career fairs and job fairs.
- Go to source.
- Use Human Resources and Social Development Canada's job bank.
- Union process.
- Construction uses hiring halls – list rotates.
- Community college has job placement as part of apprenticeship program.
- Use private head hunters.

### **Information Sharing**

Do you have any suggestions on how businesses can inform you of current and upcoming job openings?

- Make use of the Internet (job bank/boards).
- Form partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations.
- Make a habit of keeping resumes for three months.

- Make use of co-op programs.
- Forward copies of any opening to the native employment officers.
- Make use of Aboriginal media.
- Spend more money on advertising their opening in the communities.
- Become more visible in the communities.
- Keep staff trained so their resumes are up-to-date and on file.
- Job postings.
- Email – needs to be two-way street.
- Faxing and phone calls.
- Mi'Kmaq News.
- Bigger employment section (within newspaper ads).
- Career fair.
- Send copies of openings to AHRDAs as well as human resources associations.

### **Sector Opportunities**

What employment opportunities exist for Aboriginal people?

- Arctic oil, gas, mining:
  - impact mining agreements, force business to address Aboriginal concerns
  - 52 per cent Aboriginal employment in diamond mine
  - in the North, they have a coordinated effort
  - community college developed 12-15 week program to prepare Aboriginal people for apprentice jobs

- Education (college):
  - faculty openings
  - the Service NSCC it provides to First Nations communities is a very important part of the college's mandate.
  - the college is looking for people willing to learn.
  - the college was making connects by:
    - o regular stream programming
    - o customized/specialized training
    - o one of the pillars of the college is to ensure Aboriginal communities have access to opportunities. Aboriginal student success coordinators have been hired to increase accessibility and the success of students.
- Trucking Council (trucking industry):
  - the Trucking Council is looking for people to fill the positions of technicians, dispatchers, administrators and drivers
  - the industry does have similar issues to apprenticeship
  - some of the basic requirements for these positions are:
    - o medical
    - o criminal record check
    - o class 1 drivers license
    - o drivers abstract
    - o the industry provides on-the-job training.
  - there are misconceptions about industry, which has prevented a wider pool of applicants. AHRDCC is working

- with APTEC to help employers overcome these
  - the Aboriginal Workplace Partnership Initiative Steering committee helped open doors and remove barriers.
- Military/Defence:
  - the Department of National Defense does have an Aboriginal entry program.
  - the objective behind the Aboriginal entry program is to provide Aboriginal candidates with an opportunity to adapt to military lifestyle and receive some pay at the same time. Some basic information about the program includes:
    - o basic training to determine “fit” with military culture (three weeks)
    - o minimum 17 years of age
    - o grade 10 with at least five credits
    - o pre-screening and medical evaluation
    - o personal interview
    - o enhanced reliability check (security screening)
    - o small percentage does decide to join right away
    - o further selection process during program
    - o candidates are asked to provide information to community to encourage other to join.
- Government of Nova Scotia:
  - has a civil service with openings in entry level positions
  - there are some co-op positions
- some external postings
- has testing process
- the Public Service Commission were/ are developing a strategy on the aging population and reviewing the labour market to determine how to bring in more youth
- some of the requirements for Government of Nova Scotia openings are:
  - o masters/undergraduate degrees
  - o experience and education
  - o province does have interviewing process as part of their selection procedures for particular positions
  - o there are opportunities to enter with minimal qualifications
- New Brunswick Government Post Secondary Education and Training:
  - there are 15-16 bands in New Brunswick and they have officers who are funded by Federal Human Resources who fill the roles of job developer and business community liaison
  - New Brunswick is creating a supply and demand database – they are working on how to bridge the gap between those looking for work and the opportunities that are available
  - Aboriginal people have filled many training seats in community college
  - one of the issues is on how to attract more Aboriginal candidates to these openings.
- Membertou First Nation:
  - as an employer we are looking for attitude and commitment
  - we set training/education targets, which

are coordinated with training plans for openings in: IT, apprenticeship and trades and small business and entrepreneurship.

- Native employment officers - the main role:
  - fit individuals into opportunities
  - promote off reserve training to encourage residents to leave the community, acquire new skills and return to the reserve with a new skill set
  - complete junior high level has become a part of their focus
  - find summer jobs for junior and high school students so that they gain some work experience.
  - other strategies include finding meaningful placements through job shadowing and hosting workshops on issues such as self-esteem
  - some incentives used to reduced drop out rates include;
    - o offers of money to encourage learning/good grades
    - o interaction with non-natives.
  - the issue of travel being difficult and sometimes expensive is being dealt with.
- All employment opportunities
  - deck hand
  - vessel operator
  - harvesters
  - boat builders
  - divers
  - processors
  - food handler
  - forklift (soon require a grade 12)
  - supervisory position (Canada Post).
- Aboriginal specific programs in Eskasoni, Chapel Island and Membertou include:
  - heating service professional
  - oil burner program
  - plumbing program.
- Down East Communications:
  - has 397 employees – 15 are Aboriginal
  - entry level – sales, clerks, accounting positions
  - make issue of our satellite offices.
- Canadian Forces Aboriginal entry (low enrollment):
  - high schools
  - career fairs
  - Nexient learning.
- Neill and Gunter (Eng.):
  - engineers
  - CAD operators
  - technical designers
  - website designer.

## Overcoming Barriers

What could be done differently to overcome these barriers?

- Encourage self-identification.
- Secure more funding for native employment officers.
- Employ case managers.
- Undertake customized training.
- More work experience.
- More job shadowing.
- Do not want Act/regulations – want practices.
- Empowerment!
- Overcome preconceptions.
- Employers to be more approachable.
- Exchange business cards.
- Fill community college seats with Aboriginal people.
- Acknowledge cultural differences – deliver sensitivity training to all employees.
- Unions ensure its candidates are qualified – unions hope to work with First Nations especially Local 682.
- Trust, building of relationship between employer/AHRDAs.
- Open two-way communication.
- Fear of unknown with business getting employers to take the step in partnering with AHRDAs.
- Making the work place culturally aware – education on the culture (i.e., community funeral – eye contact).

- Get AHRDAs on more human resource association councils.
- AHRDAs are expected to do more with less money when costs of operating are ever increasing; the issues in employment preparation are multiplying.
- The employers expect recruit fully trained, qualified individuals for “free.” They have not put forward any cost sharing initiatives to help AHRDAs prepare their future/potential employees.
- We need to engage the industries in a cost sharing preparedness strategy rather than “just” first time job placement.

## COMMITMENTS

The following go-forward commitments were made at the session:

- Work with unions (locals of each region) – AHRDAs to work with customized training.
- Community college commits to meetings with all of the AHRDAs.
- Two AHRDAs will share information from employers with one another.
- Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework employers to meet with AHRDAs for presentations in September.
- Continue skills based training.
- Nautical institute – presentations will be arranged.
- APTEC and METS will get together to hear presentation about Dexter.
- Cultural training incorporated into NSCC’s courses

- Like to meet in this forum again – three months, six months and before classes start.
- Mobilize others.
- Will inform co-workers about this forum.
- Give presentation at companies' board meetings – July 17/06.
- All agree to meet with AHRDAs.
- Get together to determine elements to make a meaningful partnership.
- Develop partnership between unions, businesses and Aboriginal communities.
- Encourage Aboriginal youth to get grade 12 – taking care of our own first!!
- Employers' first priority will be to post jobs/opportunities on the Inclusion Network – [www.inclusionnetwork.ca](http://www.inclusionnetwork.ca).
- Aboriginal candidates and AHRDAs will post resumes on the Inclusion Network as a follow-up to this meeting.
- Native employment officers to contact employers that are on the forum's participant list.
- Service Canada will continue to facilitate communications between employers and AHRDAs through an informal process as well as liaise between groups where possible.
- Public Service Commission representatives should be encouraged to attend these forums as they are a large employer across the country. Make the time and be consistent with relationships/contacts.
- Develop a process to inform AHRDAs of job opportunities and skills required to a single point of contact. AHRDAs then refer opportunities to all other Aboriginal employment local delivery mechanisms (LDM).
- Will go to Aboriginal community to promote my company and skills required – look at job shadowing opportunities, etc. – look toward the future.
- Share Workforce Connex learning with other employers.
- Have the AHRDAs come to one of the Federal Contractors Group (FCG) meetings in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) area to explain what programs and services AHRDAs provide and begin to build relationships with the various contractors.
- Report back in three months with a status report.
- Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Services will attend Aboriginal Career Fair at Halifax Friendship Centre.
- APTEC will host a Career Fair.
- NSCC approved the use of the gymnasium space for APTEC's Career Fair. This approval came from one of the NSCC Deans via a text message during the forum discussions on the "So What" conversation.
- APTEC (Valerie Whynot) will meet with NSCC management to provide a fresh perspective and share best practices.
- Fire and Emergency Services will contact APTEC and METS and are willing to host a community information session.
- Air Canada Jazz will attend Alberta Workforce Connex.

- Air Canada Jazz will post positions using AHRDA tools (i.e., Inclusion Network).
- APTEC will meet with the plumber/pipe fitters union.
- Ben Chisholm will meet all APTEC staff.
- Air Canada Jazz will accompany Canada Post to visit Nova Scotia First Nation Bands in August and September.
- NSCC is developing co-op programs with Canadian Tire and Nova Scotia New Car Dealer's Association and will continue to work with Aboriginal people both on and off reserve.
- Welding and automotive company has set a target of employing 20 Aboriginal apprentices.
- Sharing best practices in New Brunswick among the AHRDAs.
- Diversity council – EDS Canada (Carol)
  - get involved with Aboriginal organization – provide training
  - monthly speaker (if possible) at meetings
  - work toward building partnerships.
- Provide contact information list of native employment officer's (Mary MacDonald).
- Continue to network, which can provide skills that are needed (Maritime Paper – Sue).
- Canada Post commits to having face-to-face meeting with the AHRDAs and have an Aboriginal person sit on committee for interviews.
- Casino - improve relationship and management team of employment (Darlene).
- Challenge the AHRDAs to get involved and be active members of the Human Resources Association of Nova Scotia.
- Setup a meeting where employers can meet with the AHRDAs on a regional base to talk about employment opportunities and future positions within the various businesses (every month).
- David will setup a meeting with the board of an aerospace defence company.
- Tom will start a training program and try to hire Mi'kmaq people.
- Jason who works with APTEC sees 15 people per month and will continue to do so.
- Roy is happy to participate in an information session for any of the METS Aboriginal communities.
- Trish will share information with any job vacancies.
- John will continue his work on apprenticeships and on the trade sectors.
- APTEC will provide a list of all their coordinates and forward it to those who make a request.
- Rob is willing to make a commitment to find out what is familiar and think about starting a community employment project.
- Elaine will link different artists to job banks.
- Jo-Ann will contact the four reserves and give them information on the projects – get them involved.
- Peter will hire three to four apprentices in Membertou's concrete construction business.

- Melissa Burns will pass information on about what she learned today.
- METS is holding a board of directors meeting on July 17th and will share the conversations from this forum with the members.

## **SUSTAINING CONNECTIONS**

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Sandy Stevens, National Trades Director, AHDCC thanked all the participants for their hard work through the day and mentioned that once the report was done on this forum a follow-up meeting will be held with the Steering Committee to decide on next steps. She made special comments about the great participation of industry from sectors and how great it was to have a large number of employers in the room.

She also mentioned the Eastern Trades Symposium (Navigating Skilled Trades: Connecting with the Aboriginal Workforce) that will be held November 14-16, 2006 in Membertou, Nova Scotia as well as the National Trades Symposium scheduled for 2007.

In his closing comments, Kelly Lendsay mentioned that the success of any connection depends, to a large degree, on the ability to build a rapport and fulfill commitments. He gave a special thanks to the Nova Scotia Workforce Connex Steering Committee for all their time, energy, interest and commitment to plan this very successful forum.

## **THE NATIONAL TRADES PROJECT**

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AHRDCC is responding to Canada's growing need for skilled trade and apprenticeship workers through a new national trades and apprenticeship project. This three-year initiative, designed to develop new partnerships and employment strategies, will give employers and trainers enhanced access to Canada's largely untapped and existing human capital of Aboriginal people who are eager to fill the employment gap.

This innovative initiative will create, strengthen and leverage partnerships with private-public sectors, Aboriginal employment organizations, learning institutions and government stakeholders in an effort to collaborate on methods to recruit and retain Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship.

Members of the AHRDCC trades and apprenticeship team have been actively supporting the AHRDA community with current projects and future initiatives that will successfully advance Aboriginal interests in trades and apprenticeship.

The forum series, Workforce Connex, is the first of many trades and apprenticeship initiatives to link national and regional employers with opportunities to connect to provincial Aboriginal employment training, recruitment agencies and associations. The work done in Nova Scotia will be integrated into a single report that will be used to shape initiatives in the overarching national trades and apprenticeship project.

Ultimately, the project is designed to link people and ideas. The project will provide regional and national links to groups involved in trades and apprenticeship across Canada. Initiatives will increase skills, learning and employment opportunities and open doors for stakeholders to work together on local and regional projects and initiatives.

The trades and apprenticeship project is administered by AHRDCC and funded through a \$2.9 million contribution from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

AHRDCC is a not-for-profit, public/private partnership with a mandate to increase Aboriginal participation in Canadian labour markets. For further information on the national trades and apprenticeship project contact a team member:

- Sandra Stevens  
National Director Aboriginal Trades & Apprenticeship Development  
sandra.stevens@ahrdcc.com
- Peggy Berndt  
Manager Communications & Marketing  
peggy.berndt@ahrdcc.com
- Victoria LaBillois  
Eastern Trades Liaison  
victoria.labillois@ahrdcc.com
- David Lindley  
Western Trades Liaison  
david.lindley@ahrdcc.com
- Colleen Ostlund  
Administrative Coordinator  
colleen.ostlund@ahrdcc.com

## FORUM AGENDA

### Workforce Connex Nova Scotia Forum June 28 – 29, 2006

Agenda:

TIME	ACTIVITY
<b>Day One</b>	
June 28	
7:00 – 9:00 PM	<b>Networking Reception</b>
<b>Day Two</b>	
June 29	
8:30 AM	<b>Registration</b>
9:00 AM	<b>Introductions</b>
9:05 AM	<b>Opening Ceremony</b>
	Opening prayer
	Welcome
	Opening remarks
	Opening addresses from dignitaries
9:25 AM	<b>Orientation</b>

# Appendix 1

TIME	ACTIVITY
9:30 AM	<p><b>Walk in my Shoes/ Moccasins Roundtable: A Personal Connection</b></p> <p>Conversation</p> <p>Sharing the conversation</p> <p>Unique requirements of partnering with the Aboriginal community</p>
10:30 AM	<p><b>Nutrition &amp; Networking</b></p>
11:00 AM	<p><b>Supply Side Issues &amp; Roundtable</b></p> <p>Overview of Aboriginal communities</p> <p>Overview of Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders</p> <p>Conversation</p>
12:00 PM	<p><b>Lunch Keynote –</b> Aboriginal trades' people</p>

TIME	ACTIVITY
1:00 PM	<p><b>Supply Side Issues &amp; Roundtable</b></p> <p>Sharing the conversation</p>
1:30 PM	<p><b>Demand Side Issues &amp; Roundtable</b></p> <p>Overview of labour market</p> <p>Conversation</p> <p>Sharing the conversation</p>
3:00 AM	<p><b>Nutrition &amp; Networking</b></p>
3:15 PM	<p><b>Strategies &amp; Commitments Roundtable</b></p> <p>Commitment: A two-way path</p> <p>Conversation</p> <p>Sharing the conversation</p>
3:45 PM	<p><b>Sustaining Connections - Closing Statements</b></p>
4:00 PM	<p><b>Closing Prayer</b></p>

## Appendix 2

### ATTENDANCE

	PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
1.	Babando, Brandi	DownEast Communications	Dartmouth
2.	Bennett, Michelle	Eastlink	Halifax
3.	Bernard, Jane	Membertou Band	Membertou
4.	Binns, Jo-Anne	Department of Education	Halifax
5.	Bond, Joanne	Nova Scotia Department of Education	Halifax
6.	Bonia, Brian	Canada Post	Halifax
7.	Boudreau, Gerard R.	Carpenter Union Local 1588	Sydney
8.	Boudreau, Louise	Department of Education, Government of Nova Scotia	Halifax
9.	Burns, Rob	CanJet Airlines	Enfield
10.	Burns, Melissa	Native Council of Nova Scotia	Truro
11.	Campbell, Bill	Canada Safeway	Calgary
12.	Chisholm, Ben	U.A. Local 244 Plumbers, Pipefitters & Welders	St. Andrews, Antigonish
13.	Christmas, Dan	Membertou First Nation	Membertou
14.	Cogdon, David	Aerospace and Defence Human Resources Partnership	Dartmouth
15.	Crawford, Dale	Nova Scotia Department of Education	Halifax
16.	Deschiffart, Clarence	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
17.	Dorey, Jason	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Liverpool

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
18. Doyle, Darlene	Casino Nova Scotia	Sydney
19. Edwards, Laurie	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
20. Felix, Tany	Strait Highlands Regional Development Agency	Port Hawkesbury
21. Franklin, Lisa	Neill and Gunter (Nova Scotia) Limited	Dartmouth
22. Frener, Sterling	Nova Scotia Community College	Sydney
23. Gerrior, Kevin	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
24. Ghanem, Ashraf	Post Secondary Education & Training	Fredericton
25. Glode-Chisholm, Trish	Mi'kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat	Middle Sackville
26. Googoo, Dodd	Nova Scotia Community College	Port Hawkesbury
27. Gould, Adam	Service Canada	
28. Gunn, Tom	Mawi Ta'mk Society	Whycocomagh
29. Henderson, Kelly	Trucking Human Resource Sector Council	Truro
30. Howell, Natasha	Department of National Defence	Sydney
31. Hubert, Emelie	AGFOR Inc.	Fredericton
32. Ingraham, Winston	Nova Scotia Community College	Sydney
33. Jeffery, Elaine	Service Canada	Dartmouth
34. Johnson, Carol	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
35. Johnston, Lynn	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Truro

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
36. Kelly, Shannon	Department of Education, Government of Nova Scotia	Halifax
37. LaBillois Slocum, Carol	ASEP-NB Inc.	Fredericton
38. Lewis-Hill, Donna	Migmawei Mawiomi Secretariat	Listuguj
39. Long, Kim	Nexient Learning Inc.	Sydney
40. Longm Waddie	Nova Scotia Community College	Port Hawkesbury
41. Luft, Marilyn	Alberta Workforce Essential Skills	
42. MacDonald, Paul	Dexter Construction	Bedford
43. MacDow, Carol	EDS Canada Inc.	Sydney
44. MacLean, Audrey	Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency	Halifax
45. MacLellan, Charlie	The Entrepreneurial Centre	North Sydney
46. MacPhee, Maine	Neill and Gunter (Nova Scotia) Limited	Dartmouth
47. MacQuarrie, Susan	Maritime Paper Products Ltd.	Halifax
48. Maloney, Sandy	Indian Brook Employment & Training	Hants County
49. Marsh, Gordie	Native Council of Nova Scotia	Sydney
50. Marshall, John P.	Membertou Band	Membertou
51. McDonald, Mary A.	Mi'kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat	Shubenacadie
52. McMullin, Sgt.	Canadian Forces Recruiting Sydney	Sydney
53. Michael, Anna	Waycobah First Nation	Whycocomagh
54. Milley, Kim	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Sydney

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
55. Monterossa, Sylvia	Louis Bull First Nation	
56. Murphy, Joseph	Nova Scotia Community College	Port Hawkesbury
57. Nichols, Roy	Commercial Safety College	Truro
58. O'Handley, James	Nova Scotia Community College	Sydney
59. O'Neil, Joe	BEAHR National Steering Committee National Economic Roundtable on the Environment	
60. Oram, Lindsey	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
61. Ouellette, John	Strait Highlands Regional Development Agency	Port Hawkesbury
62. Page, Al	Construction Sector Council	
63. Palmater, Candy J.	Nova Scotia Department of Education	Halifax
64. Paul, Lee	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Truro
65. Paul, Wanda	First Nations Human Resources Development Corp.	Fredericton
66. Paul, Peter	Paul's Construction	Sydney
67. Pelletier, Brian	Human Resources and Social Development	Ottawa
68. Peltier, Jerry	Congress of Aboriginal Peoples	Ottawa
69. Pictou, Bill	Millbrook	Truro
70. Pierro, Audrey	Wagmatcook First Nation	Wagmatcook
71. Powless, Dwight	Canada Post	Ottawa
72. Pye, Shelly	APTEC (Aboriginal Peoples Training & Employment Commission)	Halifax

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
73. Raymond, Melanie	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Truro
74. Rogerson, Carol	Nova Scotia Community College Employee Services	Halifax
75. Rowe, Brenda	Air Canada Jazz	Halifax
76. Ryan, Basil	Atlantic Association of Community Business Development Corporations	Corporations
77. Ryan, Bev	Native Council of Nova Scotia	Truro
78. Sampson, Robert	Nova Scotia Community College	Halifax
79. Sharpe, Richard	Apprenticeship Training & Skill Development Division	Halifax
80. Smith, Brian K.	CESO Aboriginal Services	Dartmouth
81. Sock, Alfred	Mawiw District Council	Elsipogtog
82. Spruin, Bill	Service Canada	Dartmouth
83. Stevenson, Janet	Wickwire Holm	Halifax
84. Sutherland, John	Nova Scotia Automobile Dealers Association	Halifax
85. Sylliboy, Claudia	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Truro
86. Toney, Gerald	Mi'kmaq Employment/Training Secretariat	Shubenacadie
87. Westhaver, Wanda	Acadia First Nation	Milton
88. Wolfe, Jill	Native Council of Nova Scotia	Liverpool
89. Woodburn, Mark	DownEast Communications	Halifax
90. Woods, Peter	P.R. Woods & Associates Ltd.	Dartmouth
91. Page, Carol	Mi'kmaq Employment/Training Secretariat	Shubenacadie
92. Whynot, Valerie	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission	Liverpool
93. Maloney, Jerry	Aboriginal Apprentice	

# Appendix 3

## EVALUATION SUMMARY

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### Membertou, NOVA SCOTIA - RESULTS

#### Summary

The Nova Scotia Workforce Connex forum attracted delegates from Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs), private sector organizations and government. In total, 93 participants were in attendance. 53 evaluations were received; representing a participant return rate of 57 per cent. Response sector demographics are broken down as follows:

Private sector delegates .....	26
AHRDAs.....	10
Unknown .....	17

#### General Questions and Responses

1. *Please forward me a copy of the forum report as follows:*

By Email.....	39
By Canada Post .....	3
By Email & Canada Post .....	8
No Indication .....	3

2. *Did the Workforce Connex forum meet your expectations?*

Yes.....	52
No.....	1
No Indication .....	0

3. *Were the information materials you received at the forum valuable to you?*

Yes.....	52
No.....	1
No Indication .....	0

4. *Did you visit the Workforce Connex (www.workforceconnex.com) website prior to the forum?*

Yes.....	34
No.....	19
No Indication .....	0

5. *Did you have sufficient advance notice about the forum?*

Yes.....	48
No.....	4
No Indication .....	1

## 6. One thing I liked about the forum...

- Great Job! I was very impressed by how organized this event was! Great networking opportunities.
- Opportunity to interact with others.
- The interaction.
- Good connections were easy to make.
- It was so helpful and very informative.
- The location was great and the participants from both community and industry showed passion.
- Network opportunities, all the available information.
- Testimonials.
- Good representation from industry.
- The chance to network & exchange ideas.
- The uniqueness.
- The speed of the discussion and the commitments made by most of the presenters.
- Interactive.
- I was able to network with many different people on Aboriginal issues.
- Honest input from participants and their openness to share experiences, thoughts and ideas. The dialogue to actually identify commitments was the best outcome. Let's make sure we follow through! Thanks.
- "Feeling of equal ground." Contacts made with potential partners.
- Networking. Commitments that were made.
- Increased contacts with employers.
- Facilitator – best I have seen – don't lose her.
- Making the connections! Organized.
- Networking, group work, communicating, making the connection.
- Constantly moving forward. Not just focus on the issue but on solutions as well.
- "Break-out" sessions.
- Breakout groups – great networking opportunities.
- The opportunity to network with all interested groups.
- The contacts established. More informed about avenues and options
- Open, frank discussions.
- The conversations and new contacts.
- The contact information I received to improve on employing Aboriginals.
- Everything; the speakers, the break-out sessions, the material presented; networking opportunities.
- Everything. Incredible dialogue followed by action. I've learned so much and need to know so much more.
- The networking.
- Networking.

- Everything.
- Diverse networking opportunities and learning about our cultural differences.
- The ease of networking.
- Everything not just one.
- The opportunity to connect.
- The information about who to contact and where to contact.
- Opportunity to view issues from those living the Aboriginal experience.
- The mingling of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal attendees is always valuable.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the people, the information and the connections. Sorry couldn't list just one.
- The atmosphere of sincerity. Exceptionally well organized. Very focused.
- Having employers and human resource specialists – METSs and APTEC together to promote and act on points of interest.
- The agenda and the facilitator Susan - she was great and kept everyone on track. Loved it!
- The employers networking.
- Having everyone on the same page. Introduce who we are and meeting new ones.
- Meeting and interacting with new businesses.
- Hands on, coming up with solutions and thinking positive. Thank you.

- Educational. We will make a difference. I firmly believe this.
- Networking opportunity.
- Getting to meet a lot of people. People who knew me that I didn't know.

#### 7. *One thing I would change about the forum*

- Only to have something more often.
- I would make sure that this was only the start of something fantastic. See you again in the near future.
- Perhaps have an extra day. I felt we covered a lot in short time and yes we need entertainment for the first night.
- Slow start – some facilitators were great others seemed unprepared.
- Nothing, but if I had to come up with one – make it a two day event.
- More people.
- Tighten-up the group session (three to four tables) hard to hear.
- More Employers!!
- Include and share prior (AHRDAs) successes with participants to get the thought started in other companies/employers.
- Nothing. Perhaps get list of employers who chose not to come so native employment officers could still contact.

- Have more employers with actual jobs!
- Signage at the Membertou Road.  
Decaffeinated coffee, herbal tea. This should happen annually. Thank you. Didn't have sufficient notice of the forum but only became aware through an external consultant – was there an invite list? How was the forum publicized?
- Too much air conditioning. (ha, ha)  
Great forum!
- More time – multiple days.
- One day not enough to look at and address the issues at hand.
- Nothing.
- Smaller groups so all get to speak.
- To hold this type of forum more frequently – or hold follow-up sessions.
- Turn down the air-conditioning.
- Over a two-day period.
- Invite band council members and employment counsellors.
- Nothing.
- More time!
- Every speaker should have a microphone and know how to use it.
- Make it two-day – allows for greater networking.
- Should have been a Mi'Kmaq keynote. The facilitator grates on the nerves a bit. A less aggressive facilitator would be good. Should have been more time to discuss issues and more actual presentation. If you open with a prayer you need to close with a prayer.
- Better sound – couldn't hear some of the speakers. Overall – great information and great presentations. I am happy to be part of this noble initiative!
- Some facilitators more willing to spur discussion.
- Bigger! It would be great to see this keep on growing.
- Make sure each presenter uses the mike – we let some important points go unheard.
- Federal employers – jobbers – Irving group of companies – Sobey's – Empire...
- Had more time maybe one more day!
- Nothing. I enjoyed the open forum discussions.
- Have it more often.
- Volume control could be improved on hand held microphones.
- N/A. EXCELLENT JOB.
- The length of time.

8. Participants were asked to rate the following questions using the following scale:

<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
STRONGLY AGREE						STRONGLY DISAGREE				

**PRIVATE SECTOR**

- a. Prior to attending this Workforce Connex forum, I had a high level of awareness about Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement holders.  
 Strongly agree..... 20  
 Strongly disagree..... 17
  
- b. As a result of this forum, I am coming away with a better understanding of the constraints and impediments that Aboriginal people face in their efforts to work with companies and secure employment.  
 Strongly agree..... 35  
 Strongly disagree ..... 2
  
- c. I intend to develop a plan to increase my organization’s recruitment and retention of Aboriginal people.  
 Strongly agree..... 32  
 Strongly disagree..... 1

**ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT HOLDERS (AHRDA)**

- a. Prior to attending this forum, my AHRDA has experienced many challenges developing relationships with businesses.  
 Strongly agree..... 19  
 Strongly disagree..... 1
  
- b. This Workforce Connex forum has helped me to better understand the issues and constraints that businesses face in their efforts to recruit and retain Aboriginal people.  
 Strongly agree..... 21  
 Strongly disagree ..... 1

# Glossary Of Terms

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
AHRDS	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy
AHRDAs	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreements holders
AHRDCC	Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada
APTEC	Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission
CAD	Computerized Assisted Design
HRSDC	Human Resources & Social Development Council
IT	Information Technology
METS	Mi'kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat
NSCC	Nova Scotia Community College





Canada's leading innovators in Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement.

Canada

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