



Relate effectively. Nurture diversity. Advance business.

Executive Summary | January 2004

WHAT IS RESPECT-AT-WORK?

Respect-At-Work is a relational practice model that integrates current data on relational practice, an intersectional approach to equity, and personal testimony into a growth-fostering workplace training strategy.

The principles that underlie Respect-At-Work are:

- Lived experiences create knowledge and understanding.
- Equity, accessibility and inclusiveness contribute to a strong, harassment-free workplace.
- Differences among people offer creative opportunities.
- Healthy workplace interaction requires an investment in relational practice.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Positive interpersonal relationships are still not widely viewed as a measure of productivity or enterprise efficiency, despite an evolving rights-based view of human community. Profit and control continue to be the foundation of many workplace practices and values.

Current research indicates, however, that the workplace which encourages communication and relational practice among a diverse group of employees, increases its competitiveness in the global marketplace. In fact, organizations that manage people well, outperform those that don't by 30 to 40 per cent.

THE LARGER PICTURE

Changing demographics are altering Canada's business landscape. Companies are recognizing that cultural competencies will be required as the marketplace changes.

Consider the following:

- A declining birthrate in Canada will result in a deficit of young people in the job market in the coming decades.

- Groups that have formerly had limited participation in the labour market, such as aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and women, will find themselves in high demand.
- Workers from other countries will fill gaps in the labour supply.

ENHANCING ENTERPRISE EFFICIENCY.

Respect-At-Work training promotes cooperation, trust and mutual respect in the workplace. Participants learn to recognize that experience and identity is complex and individual, and that each of us has strengths and vulnerabilities.

Learning about oneself and one's colleagues enables individual employees to work more effectively as a team. Just as importantly, an atmosphere that encourages mutual respect frees creativity and allows employees to bring their most innovative ideas forward for consideration, debate and implementation.

HUMAN POTENTIAL AND PRODUCTION POTENTIAL

New values are beginning to govern the workplace. To attract and retain elite employees from a diverse labour pool, businesses must find ways to fulfill the intellectual and personal needs of employees, and discover new ways to motivate them to participate fully in the objectives of the enterprise.

The information economy relies on an emerging intelligent, committed, and enthusiastic workforce. These workers value a quality of life that emphasizes happiness and personal growth over material gain.

A NEW WORKPLACE CULTURE

The marketplace increasingly requires an agile, responsive workforce. Forward-thinking management favours creative, innovative and flexible employees, because these workers have the drive and the skill to increase productivity and achieve new heights of efficiency.

Enlightened management has moved away from evaluating performance in terms of long hours and visibility to focus instead on overall output.

WHO BENEFITS?

Respect-At-Work has value for senior decision makers, including human resources department heads, business owners and CEO's of businesses that are looking for creative approaches to develop policies and practices that promote appreciation for diversity and harassment-free workplaces.

In the wider workplace, Respect-At-Work encourages collaboration, equity and personal responsibility. For every employee, it creates new possibilities for personal growth and new opportunities to contribute to the life of the enterprise.

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

Respect-At-Work can help individuals at any level of an organization learn to work more effectively.

Full-day training modules are available for all employees. A specialized half-day module is available for managers. Management training includes instruction on the use of a tool,

developed and tested by the Richard Ivey School of Business, to measure positive and productive workplace behaviours.

The full-day course allows time for practical, hands-on exercises, in which participants practice and deepen their understanding of new concepts. Additional exercises will explore the diversity in your organization, look at its power and identify ways of managing it effectively.

A two-hour introductory session is available for those wanting to learn more about relationality and its potential to improve the workplace environment and increase productivity.

Respect-At-Work trainers can accommodate groups as small as 10, or as large as 60. Trainers come from diverse backgrounds, and include

- youth and adult educators
- disability consultants, academics, researchers
- experienced managers and professionals in labour relations, anti-violence programs, community safety and policing.

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