

The Inclusion Journey: Leadership Circle Membership Employer of Choice Certification Guiding Circles: Preparing the Next Gen

Presented by Kathleen Sawdo, CIHRP, THRP

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& Kocihta

Speaker

Kathleen Sawdo is a proud member of Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation in Treaty 3 Territory. With over 20 years of experience in human resources and business administration, Kathleen brings not only deep professional expertise, but also a strong commitment to Indigenous knowledge systems, leadership, and talent development.

Kathleen holds multiple professional designations, including **Tribal Human Resources Professional (THRP)**, **Canadian Indigenous Human Resources Professional (CIHRP)**, and is a registered **HR Practitioner with the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA)**. Guided by a two-eyed seeing approach, she weaves together Indigenous and Western perspectives to build workplace cultures grounded in respect, relationship, and reciprocity.

About Indigenous Works (1998-)

- Launched based on a recommendation in the 1996 Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (“ARCAP”).
- Our mandate is to increase Indigenous engagement in the Canadian economy.
- Award winning, ISO certified, national Indigenous Organization with expertise in workplace, employment, corporate-Indigenous engagement and partnership systems.





Leadership Circle

for Indigenous Inclusion

10,000+

People Engaged

1,000+

Leaders Supported

500+

Organizations Empowered

The Leadership Circle Program

Walk the path of Indigenous inclusion.

Guided by relationships, culture, and lasting impact.

The Leadership Circle Program helps organizations move beyond good intentions into real, lasting inclusion. Members gain access to the Learning Lodge, and expert guidance tailored to their unique journey. Together, we build talent pathways, create welcoming workplaces, and strengthen cultural knowledge. All rooted in respect, reciprocity, and shared prosperity.

3 Key Highlights



Build Talent Pathways

Attract, hire, and retain skilled Indigenous professionals. Strengthen your workforce while creating meaningful opportunities for Indigenous talent to grow and succeed within your organization.



Learn & Connect

Access exclusive forums, networks, and practical tools for your entire workforce. Share experiences, exchange insights, and learn from peers and Indigenous experts across sectors.



Get Expert Guidance

Co-create a multi-year inclusion roadmap with Indigenous Works. Receive tailored advice, cultural guidance, and ongoing support to help your organization implement lasting strategies and measurable impact.



Benefits (1 of 4)

- **Preliminary Inclusion Diagnostic Assessment** - An assessment and initial report about your organization's path of inclusion and the steps we can take together. **(New)**
- **Exclusive online Learning Lodge** - access our growing library of resources, including research, tip sheets, and HR models designed for your whole workforce! **(Enhanced)**
- **Monthly Bulletin** - Emerging trends, new ideas and successful practices. **(New format!)**
- **Monthly Thought Leadership Webinars** - All Staff have access to our ongoing monthly Thought Leadership Webinar Series. Live Webinars are hosted on Zoom on the last Thursday of every month from 1 to 2 pm Eastern time. [Register here!](#)

Benefits (2 of 4)

- **Employer of Choice Certification Pathway** - Move up the Inclusion Continuum and be eligible to be certified as an Indigenous Works Employer of Choice. New additions include a Promotional Program to celebrate your accomplishment.
- **Progress and Service Updates** - receive 3 complimentary check-ins annually with our Indigenous Works Advisors.
- **Authorized Leadership Circle logo use** - for your internal and external communications and talent marketing.
- **Research Updates** - Get updates on new research we undertake in Indigenous employment, workplace inclusion, and human resource development.

Benefits (3 of 4)

- **Leadership Circle Forums** - 2 annual gatherings to connect, network and learn. (New!)
- **Workplace Inclusion 2.0** - information series focused on advancing and retaining your Indigenous employees including new webinars, information, tip sheets, and strategies for employers that want to grow their Indigenous labour market strategies. (New!)
- **Series and Services for Indigenous-owned and operated organizations** - Helping Indigenous businesses and NGOs improve their human resource development strategies and knowledge. (New!)
- **Leadership Council** - Advisory body meets virtually 2x annually providing advice and acting as a reference group for Indigenous Works HRD Group's programs and services. (New!)

Benefits (4 of 4)

- **Advisory Services with a Preferred Rate** - Is your team looking for support or guidance with Indigenous inclusion policy, a Recruitment or Engagement Strategy, or a Reconciliation Action Plan? The Advisory Services team at Indigenous Works is available to write, co-develop and/or provide a second set of eyes on your Indigenous inclusion initiatives. Leadership Circle members receive a 15% discount on IW's Advisory Services rate
- **Indigenous Works Online Job Board** - 15% savings on job postings on our dedicated site at indigenouscarers.org
- **Discount on Instructor-led Training Sessions** -Build Indigenous inclusion awareness throughout your workplace! We have expanded our session offering and tailored them to meet the unique needs of your organization.

Employer of Choice Certification

The Employer of Choice Journey

- The certification process combines self-assessment, advisory support, and a formal audit to guide organizations along the Indigenous Inclusion Continuum.

Part 1: Initial Diagnostic Assessment (Optional)

- Conduct a diagnostic survey and focus groups with key staff
- Receive a baseline report highlighting strengths and areas for improvement
- Gain a roadmap for cultural competencies, workplace transformation, and Indigenous talent strategies



The Employer of Choice Journey

Part 2

- Receive an Orientation and Training Kit with instructions, sample questions, and rationales
- Submit a 30-question self-assessment for review
- Your dedicated IW Certification Auditor evaluates the submission and recommends certification



 Indigenous Works
EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

The Employer of Choice Journey

Successful Completion Grants:

- Official Employer of Choice Certificate
- Authorization to use the Indigenous Works Employer of Choice logo
- Certification valid for 2 years, with recertification required



Benefits of EoC Certification:

- Recognition & Credibility Benefits
Third-party validation - Having Indigenous auditors certify your organization demonstrates authentic commitment to Indigenous employment practices, setting you apart from organizations making surface-level claims
- Competitive advantage in recruitment - The certification signals to Indigenous job seekers that you've designed an inclusive workplace with Indigenous people in mind, helping attract talent in a competitive market
- Market differentiation - Certification provides competitive advantage within your marketplace, demonstrating leadership in Indigenous inclusion to clients, partners, and funders
- Benchmarking tool - The certification provides a clear baseline for continuous improvement and helps track progress over time
- Diagnosis of strengths and gaps - The process identifies specific areas where your organization excels and where improvement is needed, directing resources efficiently

Benefits of EoC Certification:

- Internal and external communication - Helps articulate your objectives and successes to staff, stakeholders, shareholders, and community members
- Systems-based approach - Moves beyond performative actions toward genuine transformation and sustainable Indigenous inclusion
- Role modeling - Certification demonstrates leadership within Indigenous business community and sets standards for other organizations
- Authorization to use the certified employer logo - Can be used on communications, marketing, employment and engagement materials for two years
- Community building - Access to a network of organizations committed to Indigenous inclusion, sharing learning and best practices

Guiding Circles

An Indigenous Guide to Finding Career Success

Guiding Circles: An Indigenous Guide to Finding Career Paths

- Holistic approach integrating modern career concepts with Indigenous perspectives
- Addresses the whole individual: mind, body, emotion, and spirit
- Uses storytelling and circle metaphor for career exploration
- Flexible, adaptable, and engaging for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups of any age or gender
- Two-Part Journey:
 - Booklet One: Understanding Yourself - self-assessment through life experiences, discovering gifts, talents and skills
 - Booklet Two: Finding New Possibilities - exploring career alternatives, decision-making strategies, and building career vision

Guiding Circles: An Indigenous Guide to Finding Career Paths

Facilitator Training

- What You Receive:
 - Two interactive training days per booklet
 - Small workshop sizes (12-16 participants) for hands-on learning
 - Ten client booklets to begin coaching immediately
 - Exclusive access to Guiding Circles coaching manual (Booklet One)
 - Certificate of Achievement upon completion
- Skills You Gain:
 - Active engagement strategies that connect with clients where they are
 - Questioning techniques for deeper understanding
 - Methods to involve families, friends, and social circles in career decisions
 - Tools to help clients overcome challenges and self-determine career paths

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Kinanâskomitin, with thanks.
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Thank you, Merci.