Human Resources Toolkit

Introduction

As South Eastern Ontario begins to welcome back travellers, tourism operators need to adapt to changing needs in the workplace.

The region has a growing demand for employees and a variety of unique roles for people with a range of knowledge, experiences, and skillsets. The COVID-19 pandemic has only highlighted the importance of active and ongoing recruitment, retraining and retention to meet shifting perceptions of tourism and expectations of employees and job seekers.

The toolkit was designed through research and content shared by topic specialists during our Workforce Development Webinar series which took place in March 2022. We identified important challenges that tourism business may face during the recovery period and beyond and have provided insights and resources that align with those needs.

Background

As across the province and the country, the tourism industry in the RTO 9 region has been devastated by a prolonged pandemic with associated public health protocols that closed businesses and operations deemed to be "non-essential".

Ongoing public health messaging about the risks of contracting COVID-19 has changed the behaviour of both consumers and the labour force on which tourism relies. These changes have amplified pre-existing trends and conditions (e.g., demographics, the retirement wave, perceptions of the sector in terms of reliable, satisfying career paths etc.). It is estimated that the current workforce challenges will almost certainly take years not months to address.

Disclaimer

This toolkit is provided for RTO 9 tourism stakeholders. RTO 9 assumes no responsibility for the effectiveness of the information presented. The human resources information and recommendations contained in the toolkit are based on best practice experience and should not be construed as legal advice. Mention of a specific business/organization name does not constitute an endorsement.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Leading in Times of Transition to Attract and Retain Employees

What most often sets successful companies apart is not the policies, procedures or even the product, it's the people. If companies take care of their people, odds are the people will take care of customers and products. Emotionally intelligent, psychologically healthy, and safe work environments that engage teams to be the best they can be sets companies apart.

The webinar covered:

- Leadership challenges in times of uncertainty

- Elements of a healthy and safe organization to attract and retain talent

- Key emotions and behaviours that determine success in different work situations

- Drivers to maximize team effectiveness

- Strategies to address persistent performance issues that impact team success

The State of the Workforce Now and Beyond

It is no secret that COVID-19 has impacted companies—whether business increased, decreased, or was eliminated altogether, for better or for worse, no company has escaped the impact of COVID-19. This impact has forever changed the landscape of the workforce with a whole host of "greats": resignations, retirements, reconsiderations, and renegotiations. The tourism industry has been hit particularly hard as many companies have lost long-term employees to other sectors. The competition is fierce for suitable employees, and they are not just looking for money, they are looking for meaning at work.

COVID-19 is just one more element that companies are facing now and beyond. Some elements were already present before COVID-19, some are here now, and some are yet to come.

Elements Impacting the Workforce Now and Beyond

Impact of COVID on workforce .... Productivity of workforce ....

Cultural diversity of workforce .... Expectation of/on workforce .... Availibility of workforce ....

Generational diversity of workforce .... New skills needed now and in future

With all these elements in play, how will companies continue to take care of their customers and deliver exceptional products and services? Engaged employees are key!

To be an "employer of choice" to recruit and retain employees' companies need to focus on leadership, business emotional intelligence and psychologically healthy and safe work environments.

The Importance of Leadership and Employee Engagement

Employee recruitment is so much more than posting a job, sorting through resumes, interviewing candidates, and setting up the new employee on payroll. It is the whole life cycle of the employee relationship that contributes to employee retention and the recruitment of future employees.

Exercise

What are your strengths? What are your areas for improvement?

Choose two areas to focus on to improve your recruitment cycle.

Future of Work: Recruitment Cycle

Source: Alpine Solutions

What is Leadership?

What is Employee Engagement?

Gallup defines employee engagement as **the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace**. The Corporate Leadership Council's global study on the engagement level of 50,000 employees around the world identified 25 employee engagement drivers, these are the top two:

- An employee's manager is most important as the enabler of employees' commitment to their jobs, organizations, and teams.

- The most important driver to employee engagement is a connection between an employee's job and organizational strategy.

Source: Driving Performance and Retention Through Employee Engagement, Corporate Leadership Council

How Do You Lead Now and Beyond?

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand how emotions affect behaviour and to do something with that information (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence is a learnable, measurable, scientifically validated skillset that fuels better effectiveness, relationships, wellbeing, and quality of life.

Business Emotional Intelligence, understanding and addressing how emotions impact relationships and work performance, is recognized as the key to realizing the full potential of an organization's human capital. Emotionally intelligent leaders adapt their leadership style to the maturity of the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence.

The Dimensions of Business Emotional Intelligence

The Key Elements of Emotionally Intelligent Teams

How do you rate your team?
How do your employees rate their team?

Team Elements	Scale 1–10 1=Low 10=High

Vision
Level of understanding and agreement about team's
purpose and goals

Identity
The desire to be part of, and within a team that works
together towards a shared purpose

Trust
Feelings of confidence about team members' behaviour
and goodwill

Commitment
The drive and belief in the team's ability to achieve its' goals

Communication
The willingness to collaborate, to listen, to share ideas
and encourage discussion

Working Together
The level of cooperation and participation within the team

Building a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Work Environment

It is the job of management to look out for and handle work-related stress and other psychosocial risks.Managers need to be aware of the warning signs and know how to handle problems once identified. Remember that psychosocial problems at work are always an organizational issue, and management should be attentive to spot and handle any such problems.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has created the *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* as a set of voluntary guidelines, tools and resources intended to guide organizations in promoting mental health and preventing psychological harm at work.

A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to psychological health due to negligent, reckless, or intentional acts. A psychologically healthy and safe workplace can lead to better:

• Productivity
• Financial Performance
• Risk Management
• Organizational Recruitment
• Employee Retention

The *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* is available for free.

Strategies to Address Persistent Performance Issues

Let's face it, sometimes, despite a leader's best efforts, an employee just doesn't work out. Disengaged employees and poor performers can impact the work environment and workplace in negative ways. For this reason, there are times when difficult decisions need to be made to ensure **the right people, are in the right seats, on the right bus** (Jim Collins, Good to Great).

To prevent and address persistent performance issues:

• **Invest in employees.** Make sure they see a direct connection from their work to the work of the business.

• **Review the recruitment cycle.** Is anything missing? Has the company invested in them?

• **Use the probation period.** This is when employees are trying to impress you the most.

• **Get legal advice to terminate with or without cause.**

Webinar

Topic Specialist: Angela Hoyt, Principle at Evolution Group

Date: March 23, 2022

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion from Awareness to Action

Despite a deepening skills shortage in Canada's workforce, equity-seeking groups continue to face systemic barriers to employment. Employers often lack the support and resources to create more diverse and inclusive workplaces and effectively recruit and retain marginalized groups. This webinar shed light on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), the different levels of awareness and provided employers with innovative approaches to take their EDI profile from awareness to action.

This webinar covered:

- Meaning of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and their similarities and differences

- How to create safe spaces for employers and employees to discuss EDI

- Challenges faced by employers to implement EDI

- Barriers to achieve EDI: Systemic Racism, Discrimination and Biases

- Different EDI terminologies and what to use?

- Importance of diversity

- Cultural Competency and Cultural Humility

- How to champion EDI and where to start

Diversity in Tourism

As a global industry, tourism is full of differences. It relies on an ecosystem of businesses and organizations across sectors, travellers from varying domestic and international markets and walks of life, and teams from different backgrounds and lived experiences. While this can create potential challenges within organizations serving the industry, research proves that when businesses value diversity, they tend to be more creative, innovative, and competitive.

Benefits of Diversity in the Tourism Workplace

Increase Market Share

In tourism, success is largely dependent upon positive customer interactions. To increase market share, customer-facing representatives need to understand and appreciate different cultures to create a welcoming feeling. If potential travellers see themselves represented in an organization, they are much more likely to relate.

Enhanced Reputation and Market Positioning

Word of mouth and online reviews are some of the best ways to influence new and returning travellers. By meeting the diverse needs of customers, repeatedly, tourism businesses can ensure a steady source of income, develop a resilient business model, and help employees and customers alike feel more at home.

More productivity and creativity in addressing challenges

As various cultures and backgrounds work together, the opportunity for increased creativity exists. This is because there are more people with differing perspectives and ideas, allowing for a greater chance of new solutions.

Access to new markets

Diverse organizations are more likely to have employees who speak various languages and come with connections in different markets. This may be a path to access markets worldwide, which is especially important for tourism.

What is Diversity?

Diversity is the practice of having people from a range of different backgrounds represented in a group/workplace. Diversity can take many forms including:

- Culture
- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Socioeconomic background
- Education
- Life experiences
- Personality
- General worldview

What is Equality?

Equality means each individual, group of people is given the same/equal resources, or opportunities regardless of their different needs which in many cases results in setting people up for failure.

What is Equity?

Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and different needs to be able to achieve their full potential and requires leaders to allocate the different resources and accommodations needed to reach an equal outcome from different individuals.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are equally supported.

Diverse employers may still face retention challenges if the goal is to simply have a diversity of people present. Creating an inclusive workplace requires involvement, respect, trust, and actions like integrating Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) into the policies and procedures that regulate the workplace, committing to diverse representation in leaderships teams, and ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities and career growth.

What is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias is often defined as prejudice or unsupported judgments in favor of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair.

Examples of biases include:

- **Performance bias** is based on deep rooted—and incorrect—assumptions about some groups' abilities and potential to perform well while underestimating other groups e.g., Canadian graduates have better potential than internationally trained candidates, etc.

- **Confirmation bias** is the tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with one's existing beliefs. This biased approach to decision making is largely unintentional and often results in ignoring inconsistent information.

- **Affinity bias** can manifest itself when hiring based on cultural fit. Leaders choose to work with people who remind them of themselves or the dominant culture in their society, to the disadvantage of many excellent candidates.

Creating an Inclusive and Equitable Workplace

Though employers need to set diversity targets and strive to achieve them, diversity should not be the only EDI principle embedded in policies and practices. Fostering an inclusive, welcoming, culturally sensitive environment and offering equitable access to opportunities while accommodating different needs is the key to benefitting from diverse teams and addressing retention challenges.

Recruitment and Hiring

Here are 10 steps to enhance your organization's hiring process and move towards more inclusive recruitment and hiring:

1. Form a diverse search committee that is trained on intercultural intelligence and inclusive hiring practices.

2. Develop an inclusive, appealing, and discrimination free job posting.
   - Have you included a diversity and accommodation statement?
   - Have you checked for discriminatory words?
   - Have you included words that would attract a diverse pool of candidates?

3. Diversify your pipeline by collaborating with employment agencies and job boards that target equity seeking job seekers.

4. Provide any requested accommodations and/or accessibility needs during the interview process.

5. Send the names of the interviewers to the candidates in advance.

6. Include a question about equity, diversity, and inclusion during the interview.

7. Consider different learning styles when designing your onboarding process.

8. Consult with the new hires and invite them to participate in the design of accommodations.

9. Consider developing a peer-mentoring program within your organization.

10. Establish and clearly communicate specific, measurable, and time-bound goals.

Accommodation and Accessibility

Several models guide disability management in the workplace, such as medical and social. In the past there was an overemphasis on the medical model; however, today, hiring managers and leaders are more likely to reference the social model when fostering an inclusive and equitable working environment. It looks at ways of removing barriers rather than what should be 'fixed.' The following is a comparison of the traditional Medical Model vs. Social Model:

The Medical Model (Traditional)

1. Disability results from an individual person's physical or mental limitation.

2. Definition of disability is related to biology and not the social or geographical environments. Disability is regarded as a defect or sickness.

3. This model places the source of the problem within the person (intrinsic to the individual) = solutions found by focusing on the person.

4. The medical model often refers to a disabled person as a victim: this can be very patronizing and offensive.

The Social Model (Inclusive and Equitable)

1. Disability as a consequence of environmental, social, and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with an impairment from a maximum participation in society.

2. This model centers on social barriers that keep persons with a disability from participating actively in all political and social institutions.

3. This model places the source of the problem on society = solutions must focus on social change and not solely on the individual with the disability.

4. This model focuses not only on physical or environmental but also other barriers of a social nature such as prejudice, stereotyping.

5. "Barriers experienced by people with disabilities in society are not necessarily caused by our disabilities, but rather the result of living in a society that is designed by and for non-disabled people"

Source: **Public Service Alliance of Canada**

Example

Here is an example of the social model of disability integrated at the policy level for better accommodation and accessibility of new and existing employees:

Disability Management Policy

"For the purposes of this policy, the term disability will refer to both mental and physical disability as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the term barriers will refer to obstacles preventing persons, and most notably persons with disabilities, from fully accessing opportunities and advantages customarily available to others. Barriers may be communicative, physical, technological, systemic, attitudinal, etc."

Purpose of This Policy

The organization recognizes and values the contributions that employees make to the organization. The organization promotes a workplace environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and where all may seek to reach their full potential. The purpose of this policy is to achieve an effective and inclusive disability management system that ensures the organization provides a safe working environment that is free of systemic and social barriers, meets the requirements of all applicable legislation including the OHRC, the WSIA, and the OHSA and support all employees to achieve their full potential.

Webinar

Topic Specialist: Wessam Ayad, EDI Consultant and Training Facilitator at KEYS Job Centre

Date: March 8, 2022

A Roadmap for Success with Succession Planning

A loss of key talent can create a catastrophic ripple throughout any organization that is not prepared. With a variety of factors at play, it is not a question of if you will lose talent, it is only a question of when. So, are you ready?
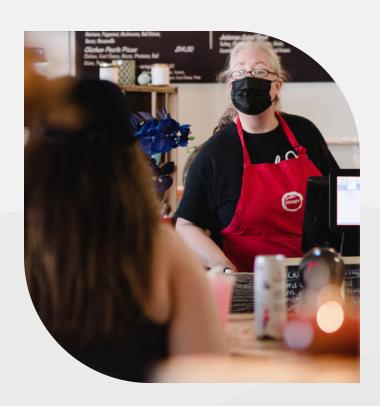
This webinar guided businesses though the succession cycle to provide a roadmap for success and covered:

- Generating momentum and executive support for the process

- Applying a structured approach for identifying the roles critical to your organization

- Building success profiles that combine current requirements with future needs

- Identifying successors through a formalized nomination survey

- Assessing candidate development needs

- Building and developing the breadth and depth of your talent pool

- Measuring, monitoring, and communicating ROI

The Need for Succession Planning

Due to a variety of demographic factors, there is a heightened sense of urgency for organizations to focus on succession planning to lessen risk and stay competitive. Despite this urgency, organizations continue to delay making succession planning a priority. As a result, they struggle to simply keep up with every day organizational demands.

A proven succession planning process provides a roadmap for success. This structure ensures consistency across the organization, aides in the communication of the plan across all levels of the organization and provides the ingredients for success.

The Succession Planning Process

The following should give you a sense for what is required at each stage of the process along with some helpful tools to get you started.

Identify Critical Roles

There is typically no shortage of need when it comes to Succession Planning. However, it is important to take a measured approach when introducing Succession Planning into an organization for the first time. With this in mind, the first step is to identify which roles your organization should target based on urgency and how critical the role is to the business.

Build Success Profile

Now that you've narrowed down the need to your most critical positions, focus on understanding the requirements of each role. At this stage, define the talent composition required for success by incorporating present and future needs. This step will provide the target to aim for when selecting and developing future leaders.

Nominate Successors

The Success Profile in the previous step is the lens to use when selecting candidates for succession. This is a stage where a formal process adds much needed credibility and transparency to combat perceptions of favoritism.

Results from the nomination survey are used to populate a draft Succession Bench that groups successors based on their readiness and provides an 'eye test' measure of bench strength for the incumbent's role. A well-maintained Succession Bench is also a great way to measure the success of your Succession Plan.

Assess Development Needs

The nomination survey is just the first step in evaluating your bench strength. At this stage, there is an opportunity to add objectivity through scientifically validated leadership assessments. The assessments do not take the place of the candidate's history and experience but add a unique perspective at an incredible level of depth. Any Succession Planning Process should incorporate an objective assessment to measure the talent profile of each succession candidate and to identify gaps that can be targeted through development.

Develop Talent

To make your succession process truly succeed, you now need to follow up on the assessment phase by creating a development plan that will help potential successors fill in the gaps in their skills and experience, and progress into readiness for their future roles. This is where the work comes in as development plans are managed for each candidate and recommended and completed development activities are tracked. At a minimum, create a development plan for all your high-potential succession candidates. In a perfect world, you would have development plans in place for your entire Succession Bench.

Measure Progress

Tracking measurable progress indicators and regularly sharing the results with key stakeholders demonstrates the value of your succession plan and keeps its importance top of mind. When you're just starting out, you might not like all the numbers, but if you set and communicate reasonable expectations from the beginning, in time you'll be able to show year-over-year progress.

Get started today by looking at what you can easily measure now and gathering those numbers. Set a calendar reminder to review, compare, and communicate progress every six months. Even if you only track one metric, get in the habit of recording it, attaching a dollar value if possible, and conveying that to your stakeholders.

Webinar

Topic Specialist: Glen Harrison, Vice President at Sigma Assessment Systems

Date: March 30, 2022

Recommendations for Success

1. Review org charts for dependencies and areas of concern.

2. Identify areas of high need:
   - Roles where incumbent is eligible or likely to retire
   - Positions that experience high rates of turnover
   - Roles where there is no available candidate to replace the incumbent

3. Consider the skills needed for success in these high-need roles:
   - Do you have anyone that already has these skills?
   - If a skilled person is promoted, who will fill their role?

4. Regularly review and discuss succession bench.

5. Use discussions to validate assumptions, identify development opportunities, and collectively drive the process forward.

6. As employees undergo training and development, measure their progress, and re-assess their readiness to move into a new role.
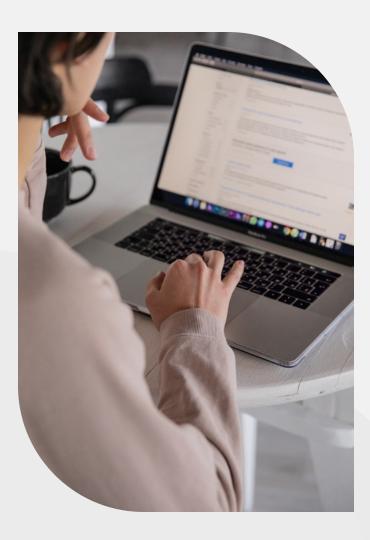
SIGMA's Simple Succession Planning Guide is available for free.

Digitally Transforming Your Business

Digital transformation is a must for tourism businesses of all sizes.

To be competitive and stay relevant, leaders need to understand the meaning of digital transformation and then take specific steps to foster change. There are many ways to tackle digital transformation in an organization's operations, from integrating digital tools for consumer engagement to digitizing essential business processes.

Here are some resources to help you get started:

- **Digital Maturity Assessment**
  BDC offers a Digital Maturity Assessment to evaluate businesses on two different but related dimensions: digital intensity and digital culture. The tool is free, and it provides a detailed report containing readings and information on best practice.

- **Free and Low-Cost Software**
  BDC has developed an inventory of free and low-cost software that can help meet your needs and solve challenges you are facing. Software is listed under the following categories: funding and budget tools, marketing and sales tools, productivity tools and web tools.

- **Digital Main Street Vendor Directory**
  Digital Main Street has a portal of with a wide range of digital vendors who want to work with small businesses. The portal is easily searchable by Province, City and Tags (e.g., content management, productivity, payment processing) which can help you find the expertise you need to get started.

Helpful Resources and Links

RTO 9 has put together a set of resources to help you. Access Labour Market Data, Resources for Mental Health and how to Access Talent, Tourism Careers, and Free High-Demand Training here.

Leadership and Employer Engagement Resources

- COVID-19 Workforce strategies for a post-COVID-19 recovery, Deloitte

- Situational Leadership Styles

- Strengths-Based Leadership: The 4 Things Followers Need

- Work can be better post-COVID-19. Here's what employers need to know, World Economic Forum

- Workwell: The Depleted, The Overworked, and The Underappreciated

Building a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Work Environments Resources

- Guarding Minds at Work

- High-Performing Teams Need Psychological Safety. Here's How to Create It

- Managing Psychosocial Risk in the Workplace

- Manpower Group Employment Outlook Survey

- Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplaces

- Why are workers really quitting?

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Resources

- 50 Cognitive Biases in the Modern World

- Tourism Diversity Matters

- KEYS Workplace Inclusion Charter

- The Canadian Guide to Hiring Veterans

Succession Planning Resources

- Sigma Assessment Systems

- Succession Matching

- The Next Generation Succession Planning

- North and South Greville Business & Investment Assistant

- Business Ownership Succession

- Plan your succession

Digital Transformation Resources

- Homebase for Employee Scheduling

- HotSchedules Labour Management

- 7Shifts Restaurants Scheduling Software

- Toast restaurant technology platform

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We look forward to the opportunity of working with you
to help grow tourism in South Eastern Ontario.

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