



The Unwritten Rules of the workplace

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My story: from Pauper to Pharmaceutical Priestess to Parliamentarian

- Despite the odds (the obstacles):
 - being ashamed of being Indian
 - being picked on as a Chinese girl
 - moving from small town to small town
 - in rural SK and AB
 - being poor, being shy
 - mother died when I was in gr 5.
 - father died when I was in gr 12.
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Despite being undervalued as a Prof
and unbelievable harassment

I became a Full Prof, an Assoc Dean
and a Senator






The Ideal Workplace


Your gender or race makes no difference in whether or not you are hired.


Your gender or race makes no difference in how you are treated or how you are assessed.






The real workplace

- Ideal workplaces are not commonplace.
 - Your reality may be far from ideal.
 - You may face racism, sexism, bullying,...
 - Your perceptions of being discriminated against probably won't be believed.
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Different workplaces display different attitudes and have differing levels of acceptance of diversity.





The Inclusion Continuum

stages of inclusion of Aboriginals in the workplace

From:


The Aboriginal Human Resource Council


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The 5 stage model of workplace inclusion of Aboriginal Employees


- 1. the denial stage – absence of AEs is not noted or seen as a problem.
 - 2. the token stage – AEs have to be like ‘one of the ‘white’ guys’ to be included.
 - 3. transition stage – open to AEs but no real accommodation of different needs.
 - 4. Acceptance – barriers to AEs eliminated.
 - 5. AEs treated equitably in all ways.
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What stage is your workplace at?

Stage 2 – you have to fit in and be like the
'Norm'.


Stage 3 – you're accepted but not really
accepted.



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- Most likely you're in a stage 2 or 3 workplace.
 - You're likely to face gender or racial discrimination.
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Discrimination – a confusing topic which people don't like to talk about

- As a nation, we think we have overcome discrimination against women, minorities, immigrants and those who are 'different'.
 - Yet – we ourselves or someone we know is being discriminated against.
 - Thus we have a disconnect between reality (what we know is happening) and ideology (what we are told – No, it's not happening).
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AHRC: Racism in Canadian Society

(Carol Tator and Frances Henry)


“Racism as a commanding force in this country is constantly challenged and denied by applying the arguments of democratic liberalism.

In a society that espouses equality, tolerance, social harmony, and respect for individual rights, the existence of racial prejudice, discrimination, and disadvantage is difficult to acknowledge and therefore remedy.






Mainstream Canadians have a deep attachment to the assumptions that in a democratic society, individuals are rewarded solely on the basis of their individual merit and that no one group is singled out for discrimination.”






Peer pressure to join the ‘old boys’ club!

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Can I really blend in? Do I want to? Do I have to?


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The Written Rules

which promote equality & equity

- Charter of Rights and Freedoms
 - Canadian Human Rights Act
 - Employment Equity Act
 - Workplace policies and guidelines
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All of the Former

- Are supposed to guarantee equity or fair treatment in employment practices.







BUT

- The Unwritten Rules rule in workplaces at stages 1-3!
 - These are people's standard ingrained or automatic behaviors which incorporate innate prejudices or biases.
 - All of us have biases.
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The Unwritten Rules

- Those who ‘fit the norm’ or ‘blend in’ are more likely to be hired, be retained and be promoted.
 - Those who ‘fit the norm’ get more – of everything – space, salary, perks.
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The statistical proof of these unwritten rules

- Women and Aboriginals with the same qualifications on average still earn less than white men.
 - Women and Aboriginals are under-represented in the higher ranks.
 - Women and minorities are more likely to laid off during a recession.
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Some Unwritten Rules

- You have to ask for what others get without asking.
 - You have to speak up for yourself all the time.
 - Your non-cohort co-workers don't understand your concerns, don't care or are afraid to help you.
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Some unwritten Rules

- Just because the company says it is welcomes minorities and women doesn't mean it's true.
 - You are likely going to face unfair people and unfair practices.
 - You may have to face this all by yourself – nobody wants to believe that racism and sexism still exist.
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The unwritten Rules

- Your gut instincts are reliable BUT others likely won't believe you.
 - Somehow you have to convince others or prove that you're a target of discrimination.
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The worst Unwritten Rule!

- Bad managers are tolerated, as long as they get results.
 - Bad behaviors - Inappropriate comments, favouritism, disrespect, bullying & intimidation – can go unchecked.
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Results from the Association for Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada Study fall 2013

- About 22 per cent of PS executives reported that they were "verbally abused" by superiors in the past year.
 - About 10 per cent characterized the workplace as disrespectful, citing discourteous behaviour such as not sharing credit, breaking promises, getting angry, telling lies, blaming and making negative comments.
 - if the executives are harassed, you can bet the rank and file employees are too.
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O, Canada

Our home and native land

- Our human rights record with ‘native’ people is shameful.
 - Yet – Canada is seen as welcoming and an ideal place for all peoples regardless of race, ethnicity, etc.
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Racism still exists

The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study, April 2010 showed that:

- Almost 3 in 4 UAP believe they are consistently viewed in negative ways by non-Aboriginal people.

The stereotypes encountered include:


addictions

laziness


lack of intelligence

poverty








The Women's movement

- Societal acknowledgment of sexism in the workplace can help validate workplace racism.
 - Gender neutral policies and procedures can serve as models for combatting racism.
 - The women's movement can teach us a lot about how to combat discrimination in the workplace.
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Examples

- Meeting together to validate individual, personal experiences.
 - Consciousness raising of the issues.
 - Banding together for group action.
 - Formation of lobby groups.
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- Sexism is acknowledged as a barrier, but racism is harder for most people to accept.
 - No one wants to admit they are racist.
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Barriers against women in the workplace


- RCMP Barbie cartoon removed from online version





Racial barriers cartoon


- Are there any????
 - Is the topic taboo????
- 




Indian children as objects of study in residential schools


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How do we
eradicate discrimination in order to increase
diversity successfully?

- Admit that discrimination does exist.
 - Create educational and support services.
 - Adopt, enact and monitor a Zero Tolerance of sexism and racism policy.
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Do The 2 Step

- 1. Stop workplace “denial”.
 - 2. Walk the Talk of equity.
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Conclusion

- Training programs to make workplaces more Aboriginal 'friendly' or inclusive are available.
 - Monitoring of managers should also be in place to measure 'progress'.
 - Employment equity is laudable and it pays off, too.
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“Realizing the Potential”

(a recent Conference Board of Canada report)

- If Saskatchewan’s Aboriginal people were employed at the same rate as others, the annual real gross domestic product would be \$1.8 billion larger by 2035.
 - Major barriers – high school dropout of Aboriginal students and retention of Aboriginal employees.
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Now is the Time to Act

- The demographics favor a change for the better.
 - The Aboriginal population is young and faster growing than other Canadians.
 - If nothing else, the sheer numbers alone will lead to change much as the Baby Boomers have.
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Stage 4 ¼ workplaces





Imagine a World

where who you are doesn't make you a target

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