



THE INCLUSION QUARTERLY

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY: WHO NEEDS IT?

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Employment Equity legislation evokes a great deal of emotion especially anger whether you are a white applicant who feels that you have been denied a job because of your skin colour, an over-worked employer, or an employee who feels they were hired to close an equity gap. It can be accredited with advancing the participation of certain groups in the workforce, while at times also creating a “me” versus “them” attitude.

In preparation for this issue, I spoke with many senior private sector Human Resources professionals who discussed the drawbacks of the legislation and all the hours of work they have put in to make the companies that they work for attractive to designated groups to apply, only to find that if they don't meet certain targets, they cannot apply for federal contracts. They spoke of the associated costs of Employment Equity and what they saw as little in the way of return on investment. When I asked these professionals if they would like to share their views, they declined --- feeling that it was too politically charged and that they and their companies would come across as unsympathetic to the cause if they shed some light on the pitfalls of the legislation.



What about the candidates themselves who obtain jobs because of Employment Equity legislation? How do they feel? I imagine that there is a broad range of emotions from feeling grateful to being resentful. Let's take for example the bank teller who has a physical disability who started up a conversation with me when he saw my business logo. He spoke about how he felt he was a token for the bank and had far more education and work experience than the management. He clearly said to me: "I want to be hired for my skills, not because of the chair!" He said that his chances for promotion were slim because the bank wanted him in the front as "The Poster Boy for Inclusion." Is this bank sincere

about hiring people with physical disabilities? If so, why is this the first time I have seen a front line person with a physical disability in the over 20 years that I have been frequenting the bank? It is not surprising that he feels the way he does!

In the last year, I was contacted to chair an event and when the organizer found out that I wasn't black he told me: "I hope you understand, but I need to find someone that would be more suitable for the group. We prefer an African or Caribbean person". The organizer thought I was suitable and qualified until he found out my skin colour. It sure sounds like discrimination to me, and it certainly felt that way, too! There have been several other occasions when I have been asked

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY: WHO NEEDS IT?

CONT'D FROM PG 1

to represent Newcomer issues and I get a call from someone who tells me that my English is really good, and asks me: "How long have I lived in Canada?" I tell them that I am Canadian-born and thank them for the compliment regarding my fluency, only to find out that they were looking for an immigrant. Again they call me for my skills and personal traits, but my country of origin seems to disqualify me from participating in their group? Is this discrimination? I sure think so. While these were not employment examples per se, they do indicate a same potentially dangerous mentality that people from a certain group think one way. I don't agree with that. We are far too unique as people to be reduced to a monoculture.

Discrimination is wrong and it hurts no matter who you are!

With all of the advances that we have made over the last few decades in particular with the rise of women in non-traditional professions and trades, is Employment Equity legislation still relevant today? If not, should we abandon it and create something else? Since private sectors organizations that do not do business with the federal government are exempt, should we be expecting them to create a more representative workforce? I am really hard-pressed to figure out what the alternative could be. I know for a fact, we absolutely need to find more ways to engage our Aboriginal people and people with disabilities into the workforce and create more opportunities and acceptance. With the current and impending labour shortages it makes logical sense that to have certain groups such as Aboriginal people and people with disabilities who are under-employed or unemployed in greater numbers to have a

strategy to get them more fully engaged in the workforce. I am not completely sure that Employment Equity legislation is still needed for all of the current designated groups. Maybe there is a better way. All I know is that I think it is a dangerous practice to label and separate people, reducing them to one dimension. I question how much this legislation has interfered with the creation of true workplace inclusion.

Yet we do know that voluntary compliance simply does not work. Let's take for example the little know origins of Employment Equity. Most of us like to think that equity legislation was probably first introduced in the 1980's (1984 to be precise), but how many of you knew that the Government of Canada experimented with a "voluntary affirmative action program" in 1978 for the private sector? I didn't. Knowing this, helps to cement my point. The federal government tried to make it voluntary, but they had a hard time getting employers to structure an equity program, probably because it seemed too costly, time consuming and bureaucratic. However, 5 years later a Royal Commission on Equality in Employment was established under Judge Rosalie Abella. The Employment Equity Act was formed to include women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities as the designated groups.

Some employers have become more proactive in dealing with meeting their Employment Equity goals. One of my clients started up a mentoring program whereby candidates who passed the interview were hired and then sent on a mentoring and workplace orientation program designed for New Canadians and visible minorities. The mentee would go through a

process of helping them gain essential soft skills and learn how business is conducted in Canada. Upon completion of the one year of mentoring they would be assessed and then placed into an appropriate position in the company. Similarly, one employer wanted to reach out to the local Aboriginal community and did presentations at the employment centres, gave the job-seekers a tour of the company and was very specific about what skills they were seeking. Discovering that many Aboriginal people felt that they would be discriminated against if they placed their address on their application, the employer pressed them to check off the "Aboriginal" category in the application process and explained to the group that it was to their advantage to do so. In this case, the employer could potentially be increasing the number of applications from qualified Aboriginal people.

In our effort to produce a well rounded, balanced and pragmatic approach to workplace diversity we have solicited the views of both critics and defenders of Employment Equity legislation to respond to the question: Who Needs It? Diversity of thought and opinions is often left out of diversity in the workplace discussions. By respecting differences of opinion and having employees speak their mind regarding diversity issues, we are taking a major step toward workplace inclusion. We hope to provide you with many perspectives in our future issues.

Thank you to all of our contributors this month for enriching the Inclusion Quarterly.

Evelina Silveira
Editor



The purpose of the Employment Equity Act is to ensure that federally regulated employers provide equal opportunities for employment to the four designated groups: women; Aboriginal peoples; persons with disabilities; and members of visible minorities.

CANADIAN HUMAN
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COMMISSION
www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca

DIVERSITY AT WORK UPDATES

Dear Readers:

Our goal as a small business is to provide organizations with the tools to help them integrate diversity successfully in the workplace. One of the biggest barriers confronting our workplaces is problems with communication. Diversity At Work has introduced a new Language Team of instructors to assist in this area. Previously our language classes were focused exclusively on the internationally trained professionals who needed to improve their pronunciation and grammar skills to advance. We will still be offering these classes but have extended our language services to also include working with Canadian born clients who may struggle with low literacy skills. Furthermore, we have hired a teacher with a background in speech disorders who can assist employees who need more support in making their speech clearer as a result of a

disability. We believe that these services can greatly enhance the productivity and confidence of employees who struggle to communicate clearly, whether English is their second language, they have low literacy skills or a disability affecting their speech. Additionally, we are offering Spanish instruction in London and in Toronto.

Joining our language instructors, Alfredo Garcia and German Guittierez is Heidi-Jo Bagshaw and Margaret Agbalizu. We welcome them to our team. Instruction is available in person in London or Toronto, or through Skype. We are able to offer on-site corporate instruction to groups of 10 or less.

When employers present the opportunity for paid language classes, employees will readily sign up for them. We often get phone calls from employees who want to improve their pronunciation but they cannot afford the classes but they are

uncomfortable with approaching their employer for assistance with funding.

We have introduced a new on-demand webinar called “Managing Cross-cultural Conflict in the Workplace”. It comes with quizzes, notes, a glossary, group scenarios, and supplementary reading. It can easily lend itself for individual study or group training. You will come away with a better understanding of the complexity of cross-cultural conflict and some very concrete ways of dealing with it when it arises.

As always, we welcome your suggestions for future issues and other feedback on *The Inclusion Quarterly*.

Cheers,

Evelina Silveira,
President



*Managing Cross-cultural
Conflict in the Workplace
On demand*

Webinar is here

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN CANADA VERSUS AMERICAN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Employment Equity

- Focuses on equity by type of skill equivalents in and between professions.
- The outcome is a more representative workforce in general even though a specific profession might be under-represented of a particular minority.

Affirmative Action

- Focuses on numbers of workers by disadvantaged groups –based on achieving quotas
- Results in a more representative workforce for each profession.

ADVOCATES OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY



Union

It is very interesting that as Baby Boomers begin to retire, our workforce demographics is quickly changing. As Canada is a multicultural country, statistics show that Young Workers, Aboriginal Peoples and Immigrants are actively on the rise in our workforces.

Representation for our members in our Unions needs to ensure their ability to recognize our diversity, cultures, history and uniqueness. We need to proactively address issues off equity, diversity and inclusion to build solidarity.

As members of unions we need to recognize that traditional democratic structures do not always work in the best interest of under-represented groups and those in the majority have an obligation to protect and promote the interests of marginalized members in achieving their goals.

Unions need to recognize the expertise and lived experiences of diverse members, and equity seeking groups to support member issues. OPSEU seeks to evolve and commits to incorporating ongoing change to support equity and inclusion by identifying barriers and implementing strategies that commits to diversity and inclusion.

Kim Mc Dowell

President of a Local/St. Thomas OPSEU (Ontario Public Service Employees Union) members who all work in the Mental Health Field.

Chair of OPSEU's Provincial Human Rights Committee, and a member of the Mental Health Committee as Bargaining Co-ordinator.



Visible Minorities

There are still marginalized groups (blacks, women, first nations; people with disabilities, who are still do have equal opportunities and even the ability to get through some doors for an interview, much

less meaningful employment. I think for those who think that is not needed, are deluding themselves and perhaps need to look at an article called "white privilege: unpacking the invisible knapsack" and perhaps draw comparison. As long as intersecting oppression continues to exist, we will continue to need employment equity"

Colette Chapman

President

Congress of Black Women

website: www.cbwlondon.org



Women

Women continue to be discriminated against due to gender-based pay practices which limit their advancement to higher paying jobs and undervalue their contribution.

Despite such legislation as Pay Equity and Equal Pay, today women in Canada on average are required to work an additional 2 ½ months into the next year to earn the same income that men earn doing the same job working the regular 12 months of the preceding year.

BPW believes that income equality must become a reality for all. Real solutions must be generated to help individual women and our Nation as a whole, (men, women and children) benefit from the fiscal stability that economic equality can bring.

Laura Noble

President

Business Professional Women's Association

<http://bpwlondon.com>



Aboriginal

The business case for Aboriginal inclusion and employment equity in Canada has never been stronger. Canada will be facing a skills shortage as baby boomers retire over the next several years. Aboriginal people, growing six times the rate of non-

Aboriginal people in Canada, are in a perfect position to provide a solution to this skills shortage. This merging and very young population of Aboriginal consumers, entrepreneurs and employees add value to workplaces of inclusion that welcome them and engage them in opportunities that are win-win.

According to a study conducted by The Centre for the Study of Living Standards, if Aboriginal people were educated and working at the same rate of non-Aboriginal Canadians, Canada's GDP would increase by 401 Billion by 2026. Employers need to awaken to the power and potential of an Aboriginal workforce and Aboriginal inclusion in their workplace. The Aboriginal Human Resource Council provides training, tools and advisory services to help employers recruit, retain and advance an Aboriginal workforce.

Kelly J. Lendsay

President and CEO

Aboriginal Human Resource Council

<http://www.aboriginalhr.ca>

"If Aboriginal people were educated and working at the same rate of non-Aboriginal Canadians, Canada's GDP would increase by 401 Billion by 2026"

ADVOCATES OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Without a doubt, employment equity initiatives are still needed by the community of persons with disabilities. As the Government of Canada, itself, admits, "The employment rate for working-age adults with disabilities is significantly lower than the rate for working-age adults without disabilities (53.5% versus 75.1%). Among those who are employed, 82.8% of people with very severe disabilities are limited by their disabilities at work, compared to 27.2% of people with mild disabilities." (Government of Canada, 2010 Federal Disability Report.) This level of underemployment is the result of historic barriers in the labor market, which prevent people with disabilities from being employed. Groups such as CCD campaigned for employment equity because it was viewed as a way to correct practices which prevented people with disabilities from engaging in the labor force. The Federal government passed the 1985 Employment Equity Act and amended it in 1995. CCD had sought a robust form of employment equity with goals, timetables and

effective enforcement measures. While this did not come to fruition as CCD had recommended, and despite its limitations, employment equity is paying dividends as it is, thus appears to be an important element for contributing to improved employment opportunities. In 2003, Kim England published the study "Disabilities, Gender and Employment: Social Exclusion, Employment Equity and Canadian Banking" in the *Canadian Geographer*. Her research indicates that in workforces where there are formalized and comprehensive Employment Equity programs, employees from designated groups experience less disadvantage than their counterparts working for employers who have not embraced employment equity. Employment equity is helping to remove systemic barriers that keep people out of jobs and prevent them from advancing up the career ladder. While it is not the only tool for improving employment opportunities—recently, we have not seen much appetite for new social policies to address economic and social disadvantage—employment equity remains an important catalyst for changing the labor market in a

way that makes it accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities. Consequently, we continue to encourage employers to adopt meaningful employment equity practices and to work with people with disabilities and their organizations to devise solutions to workforce barriers. People with disabilities have a great deal of experiential knowledge about how to eliminate barriers that is transferrable and applicable to remedying systemic discrimination in the workforce. For example, in Newfoundland, the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities does awareness training to improve public knowledge of disability issues, which can help to dispel negative and stereotypical attitudes about disability. Canada's disability community organizations are an important resource for employers to tap when they need strategies for achieving an accessible workplace.

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Policy Committee
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Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)

926-294 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0B9
www.ccdonline.ca/en/



"The employment rate for working-age adults with disabilities is significantly lower than the rate for working-age adults without disabilities (53.5% versus 75.1%). Among those who are employed, 82.8% of people with very severe disabilities are limited by their disabilities at work, compared to 27.2% of people with mild disabilities." (Government of Canada, 2010 Federal Disability Report.)

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY: SANITIZED OFFICIAL DISCRIMINATION? AN INTERVIEW WITH EZRA LEVANT

D@W: It doesn't take long to realize that you are a big supporter of human rights, freedom of speech and a defender of women's equality. As someone who appears to detest government bureaucracy and interference (especially the Human Rights Commission), do you think that the often misunderstood Employment Equity Act still has some merits? Should we be legislating hiring practices?

EL: I think that employment equity is an inherently unjust idea. The very fact that it has an engineered name as a euphemism -- "employment equity" -- is a tip off. Because the truth about employment equity is that it's just sanitized, official discrimination. It's racism and sexism, just the other way around. I'd call it "reverse discrimination", but I'll use the term "race and sex preferences" to be neutral.

D@W: In your professional experience, what do you think is Employment Equity's greatest contribution?

EL: I think that the real legacy of race and sex preferences is to put a cloud of doubt over any minorities and women who are successful. Did they succeed on their own merits? Or were they picked based on their race or sex? It undermines the legitimate achievements of women and minorities who achieve great things on their own without special preferences.

D@W: Should we rethink the designated groups that

currently fall under the Act, and replace them with others? Some public agencies are adding the LGBT as a designated group for employment equity purposes?

EL: Of course, gays are amongst the most successful and highest-earning demographic group in Canada. In many professional industries they are over-represented, like Jews and Asians. So even the traditional arguments for race and sex preferences -- that it's to help equalize things -- fails. Of course, Jews and Asians are punished by race and sex preferences, since they are high achievers who often account for more than their "fair share" of law school, medical school, professionals, etc. Then again, women are now over-represented in medical school, too. This is the pitfall of race and sex preference: if you say that one group is underrepresented, you are implying that another group is over-represented.

Of course, another problem is defining who belongs to what group. How black is black? Obama is 50% black. Does 1/8 black count as black? How do you prove someone is gay? Does a bisexual count? In the antebellum south, they developed a whole taxonomy for blood quantum: mulatto, quadroon, octaroon. The Nazis had their concept of "mischlings" -- mixlings. If you were a Jewish mixing of the second degree, you were too Jewish to be in the SS, but not so Jewish that you'd be killed. Welcome to the

distasteful world of judging people by race and sex.

D@W: With more emphasis on similarities and inclusion these days, do you think it is counter-productive to be singling out people on the basis of one dimension, instead of looking at how we can level the playing field for all?

EL: I don't believe in levelling the playing field. If someone is the best, I don't wish to change the rules so they're no longer the best. That's called cheating. We live in a country in which racism or sexism is no longer a material factor in life. Although pockets of prejudice may exist, there is no racism or sexism that can stop you from getting to where you want to be. Two women of colour as governor-generals in a row; the chief justice of our supreme court; several premiers; the most diverse Parliament in history, etc. Those successful women and minorities are successful precisely because they have focused on achievement rather than rule-rigging, and because they think of themselves as Canadians first, or professionals first, or businesspeople first, instead of putting themselves forward as tokens. The idea of race and sex preference is an obsolete relic from the age of political correctness - the 1980s. Today race and sex preferences succeed in only two things: pitting us against each other in the country and in the workplace, and in enriching a grievance industry.



Ezra Levant is a Canadian lawyer, conservative political activist and host of the show, The Source, on the Sun News Network. He is the founder and former publisher of the Western Standard and has written several popular books including Shakedown and Ethical Oil.

<http://ezrlevant.com/>

www.sunnewsnetwork.ca/shows/the-source.html

"Because the truth about employment equity is that it's just sanitized, official discrimination. It's racism and sexism, just the other way around".

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY: A PRIMER

What is Employment Equity?

- A Canadian process which deals with achieving equality in all aspects of employment.
- It recognizes the important role “systemic discrimination” plays in the inequality found in employment.

What does Employment Equity involve?

- It attempts to identify and eliminate barriers in an organization (policies and procedures).
- It puts into place policies and practices to ensure that the systemic barriers are eliminated; and
- It ensures representation of “designated group” members in the workforce.

Who are the designated groups?

- Women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, members of visible minorities.

What types of Employment Equity programs exist?

1. Legislated Employment Equity Program

The following employers are regulated by this Act:

- All federally regulated employers with 100 or more employees, including organizations in industries such as banking, communications, and international and interprovincial transportation.
- All federal departments, representing approximately 155,360 employees.

2. Federal Contractors’ Program

Under the FCP, employers with 100 or more employees who have secured a federal goods or services contract of \$200,000 or more are required to sign a certificate of commitment to fulfill their mandated goal of implementing employment equity in their workplace.



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FACTS

Youth Unemployment

Canadian Youth Unemployment Rate for 20-24 year olds was 15.0% in May 2011.
Statistics Canada 2011

Aboriginal Self-Employment

There are more than 37,000 self-employed Aboriginal people in Canada, up from just over 27,000 in 2001 – an increase of 38%. During this time period, the rate of growth of self-employed Aboriginal people was five times that of self-employed Canadians overall (7%).
Statistics Canada 2006

IMF Diversity

20% of managers of the International Monetary Fund are women in comparison to the 36% of women who hold management positions for the World Bank.
IMF Diversity Report and Globe and Mail June 29, 2011

Adult Literacy Rates

Four out of 10 adult Canadians, age 16 to 65 - representing 9 million Canadians - struggle with low literacy. They fall below level 3 on the prose literacy scale
Adult Literacy and Life Skills (ALL) Survey, Statistics Canada and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005.

Cost of Accommodations

"...employers can accommodate most adaptation needs for \$500 or less. These costs are even more reasonable when you consider them amortized over the entire duration of the employee's stay in your organization."
Barrier-Free Employers, The Canadian Human Rights Commission.



BEST PRACTICES FOR EQUITABLE HIRING

1. Identify the Needs

Determine the program or organizational needs, goals and any existing skill or personnel gaps that the position will meet. Ensure that a complete job description is available for the candidate in advance to review.

2. Assemble a Representative Selection and Recruitment Committee

The composition of the S&R Committee should include a broad representation of individuals of designated groups wherever possible. By doing so, organizations are demonstrating that their commitment to diversity is serious.

Ensure that all members are aware of the relevant legislation as it pertains to hiring and selecting and know about fair hiring practices.

Careful notes should be taken with each candidate. Remember you may need to refer to these notes at a later date if there are any questions about the fairness of the hiring decision.

3. Select Criteria

The selection criteria needs to be determined ahead of time before any job postings are advertised. The selection criteria should be weighted with the most important qualifications/ characteristics etc. given the highest value.

The selection criteria and weighting of each factor will be different for each position. For example a professor's education will carry a stronger weight than that of a sales clerk.

4. Post the job

The job posting will describe

the position and the application process clearly. The job posting should have inclusive language, give a clear description of responsibilities and expectations, state all of the required qualifications and the ones that would be nice to have.

Bear in mind that applicants from remote areas may not have reliable internet access or certain disabilities make it difficult for online applications. Where ever possible, provide applicants multiple means for accepting their applications such as fax, mail, and email.

5. Evaluate

The evaluation method that is chosen should detail how the candidate met the position requirements. Again it is important to remember that any comments are clearly laid out for future reference if needed.

6. The Application

If you are unsure of a candidate's Canadian credential equivalency, ask he/she to provide it if necessary. You may also want to contact Credential Assessment bodies in your area for further information.

Be cognizant that many skills can be transferable through volunteer or other work experiences that might not deal directly with the position that the candidate has applied.

7. Create Your Interview Questions

Using a structured format by asking the same type of information from all of the candidates makes the process fairer.

The questions should relate directly to the position.

Test the questions out with other people to ensure that they are clear and valid.

Some of the best indicators of

future employment success is how well candidates respond to behaviour-based and speculative questions.

Behaviour-based questions test a candidate's knowledge and skills and how well they can use them. An example of this is: *What was the toughest ...?* Speculative questions ask questions about how a candidate would apply their skill in a given situation but also explore aspects of their knowledge, behaviour, relationship with others, ethics and as well as other dimensions.

10. Assess and Select

Focus on the 'bona fide requirements' of the position. Does the organization have a commitment to Employment Equity Plan to close the gaps in representation of designated groups? If so, this will need to be taken into consideration with the proceeding steps below.

Questions to ask when making your final decision:

- How well does the candidate measure against the others in each of part of the evaluation?
- Are all of the comments on a candidate's suitability for a position in writing?
- Have all of the references been checked and educational qualification verified?
- Have all of the documented evaluations and scores been thoroughly reviewed to determine the best candidate for the position?
- Have detailed notes been taken and discussions about candidates' strengths and weaknesses occurred?



ASK A DIVERSITY CONSULTANT

Dear Ask the Diversity Consultant:

I have been given the Diversity portfolio for my organization, and want to bring more knowledge and skills to the workplace about mental health issues and to help managers deal with staff who are experiencing these problems. Can you suggest any resources?

Paul, Moncton, NB

Dear Paul;

Creating empathy and developing skills in how to deal with mental health in the workplace is proactive. Over the last several years there has been more emphasis on tools and training to assist managers and staff to: recognize the signs of mental illness in the workplace, understand the employee's right to accommodation and management responsibilities.

There are several places that I would start in terms of looking for trainers, obtaining written resources and videos.

Mental Health First Aid

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca/EN/Pages/default.aspx

- is a program of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. I have heard excellent reviews of the content and approach to this training and I would definitely make them one of your first calls.

Guarding Minds @ Work

www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/

- provides a set of tools to assess the health and safety issues related to mental illness.

Mental Health Works

www.mentalhealthworks.ca/employers

- information about how to talk to employees, legal rights and responsibilities and how to make the workplace psychologically healthy for everyone. There is a link to a great list of free resources as well.

Additionally, your local chapter of the Canadian Mental Health Association can be another resource for you.

You may want to go the route of having a member (s) of your office trained in the above noted courses or hire a trainer to deliver the service to your organization.

Congratulation again for trying to make your workplace healthier and more inclusive.

The Diversity Consultant



*Evelina Silveira
Diversity Consultant*

“Creating empathy and developing skills in how to deal with mental health in the workplace is proactive”

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Have a question for the Diversity Consultant?

Send them to:
info@yourdiversityatwork.com

THE CHINESE IN NORTH AMERICA

WRITTEN BY WEN ZOU

The earliest records of the Chinese in Canada have pinned them as arriving approximately 300 years ago, with their first settlement in the Canadian west coast. Constituting the second largest visible minority in Canada, their arrival is described by three main stages of immigration:

- The first occurred in the early 1900's, when Chinese labourers were hired to build the railroad;
- The second was an influx of immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong in the 1970's and;
- The last wave began in the 1990's, when people from Hong Kong and the Mainland came to North America in search of better jobs and education.

Each wave of immigration was different from one another. By comparison, it is said that the first wave of immigrants was primarily comprised of labourers and were less educated than those who immigrated later in the 1900's. Despite these challenges, many to this day, have found themselves earning a living in areas like Chinatown in downtown Toronto.

Immigrants of the second wave were more focused on expanding their educational opportunities and thus you will find in some cities an over representation of Chinese students in medical and business schools.

The last wave consisted of those who have already been educated, and now most of them hold a steady income

and perform technical tasks for companies. Although the people from those three waves are vastly different, they form the Chinese population in North America.

Many Canadians often ask me, "Why is it that Chinese people don't like to talk? Are Chinese people very shy?" I always reply that they don't like to talk because they do not feel confident about speaking English. If you are living in a city in China, you will find that people in China are very exuberant people. They too like to joke around.

China is a large country, there are many differences between people from different regions. For example, people from the North tend to be louder in their tone and more direct whereas Southerners are more reserved. However, no matter where they are from, the Chinese enjoy partying and tea-drinking. Usually in restaurants, dinner tables are large enough to seat 8-10 persons. So in general, Chinese people are not shy as long as there are no language barriers!

Similarly, I have many Chinese friends who work in IT (if they are male) or are involved in accounting (if they are female). A lot of my Canadian friends often joke about how Chinese people are so smart since they tend to work in the fields of math and science. But in reality, I believe Chinese people do those jobs not because they are smart, but because IT is a very new field with a lot of career opportunities, and where English fluency seems

to not be so important. The skills and education that they have obtained in China are easily transferable to those that are sought in Canada so it is easier for them to get jobs when they are competing against Canadians. Accounting is considered to be a good profession for Chinese women because traditionally speaking, women are considered to have a detail oriented nature that lends itself well to this field.

China is a large country that consists of over 50 groups of minorities. After several thousands of years of continuous development and interactions between groups, it is very difficult to find a few words or sentences to sum up the Chinese. From north to south, and east to west, there are many differences between work and living habits, including language, culture, fashion, and food. Each quarter we will explore different aspects of Chinese culture to help you with your business interactions. If you have a question or suggestion for our next issue, please email me.



Wen Zou is a Professional Project Manager and former Senior Manager of China Beijing Zhongbongxu Informational Technology Company, a subsidiary of China's largest telecommunications company at the time. Based in London, Ontario Wen continues to do business in China and has a large network there. If you would like to contact Wen for advice regarding Chinese business culture or ethnic marketing please e-mail him at: zouwen99@gmail.com

ASK THE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER

Dear Ask the Elocution Instructor:

I'd like to know if you could tell me how to use a dictionary. And what is the best dictionary to use? I have bad spelling and I think I need better pronunciation. My new job requires me to communicate better.

Signed: My New Job

Dictionaries are reference materials, a type of compass that can point our direction in times of need. Every dictionary has the potential of being a learning tool: sharpening our spelling, expanding our understanding and vocabulary and/or improving our pronunciation. Remember that in the learning process consistency, frequency and focus will determine our success. It is ultimately the reader who holds the key to a dictionary's use.

In response to your question: Is there a right way to use a dictionary? Yes. All dictionaries contain within their opening pages an introduction on how to use them. Each is distinctive from the others therefore read it with care. This is particularly true of dictionaries where pronunciation stress and phonetic symbols need to be understood beforehand.

Among the many dictionary features to look for here are some you'll benefit from:

- **American or British English editions** – important: there exist many linguistic variations
- **Highlights the Part of Speech** – is the word a noun, a verb, and

adjective...?

- **Synonyms & Antonyms** – words that are similar in meaning or opposite in meaning

For pronunciation purposes:

- **Word Stress** – indicates which syllable within a word receives the strongest sound
- **Phonetic Transcription** – how to pronounce a word by reading using phonetic symbols

I take from your entry that you might wish to know both how to use a monolingual (English to English) dictionary, like a *thesaurus* (a dictionary that gives meanings, word origins, synonyms and antonyms), and a language dictionary that translates words from English into another language or vice versa. The next three are up-to-date, concise and user friendly:

Oxford Dictionary Canadian Edition

Cambridge Dictionary of American English 2nd Edition

Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary

For more advance use – a writer's manual (includes: grammar, diction, punctuation, spelling, etc.):

Harbrace Handbook for Canadians Fifth Edition & Workbook

Also, consult these books from the Cambridge Adult Education section:

Clear Speech – develops your understanding and application of pronunciation skills

Grammar in Use & Vocabulary in Use –

expands your grammar and use of vocabulary

Writing from Within – assists in organizing ideas and

developing good writing form.

The web can as well be your greatest resource. Below are sites I find most valuable, but remember that they remain personal choices base on use, content, format and/or design.

WordReference.com

- Free
- English to English & inclusive of a variety of languages
- Contains Principal & additional translations
- Compound forms
- Language forums
- Symbols of pronunciation

Cambridge Dictionaries Online

- Free
- Both British & American English Dictionaries
- Pronunciation box to hear
- Word transcription
- Activities

For direct translation into most languages:

TraduKtor

- Free & Great!
- Translates complete sentences

Google Translate

- Free
- Translates complete sentences
- Box to read phonetic transcription

All journeys begin with the first step. Knowing what to look for will assist in helping you make an informed decision. You may find that not one dictionary or website will provide you with all the answers you're looking for. But like the journey taken – you'll then know the necessary steps to take to get there.



Alfredo Garcia

Is an ESL teacher working for the Toronto School Board and an English pronunciation and Spanish teacher with Diversity at Work in London Inc.

"In the learning process consistency, frequency and focus will determine our success"

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Test your knowledge

Myth: Employment equity means that everyone must be treated the same way.

Reality: Employment equity means that everyone must be treated fairly and everyone's differences must be taken into account.

Myth: Employment equity results in "reverse discrimination."

Reality: Employment equity means that everyone is offered the same employment opportunities, not just a select group.

Myth: Employment equity is a matter of quotas.

Reality: The Employment Equity Act expressly prohibits quotas.

Myth: Employment equity means that unqualified people must be recruited.

Reality: Employment equity means that everyone who is qualified or who might become qualified is offered the same employment opportunities, not just a select group.

Myth: Employment equity threatens the principle of seniority.

Reality: Employment equity and the principle of seniority are both aimed at guaranteeing equal employment opportunities, with no favouritism or discrimination.

Myth: Employment equity is equivalent to lowering employment standards.

Reality: The principles of employment equity require that employment standards

are reviewed, to ensure that the criteria are realistic and related to the job.

Myth: It is too difficult and too costly to adapt the workplace to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Reality: It generally costs less than \$500 to modify a workstation to meet the needs of a person with disabilities.

Myth: Employment equity is only achievable in a prosperous economy.

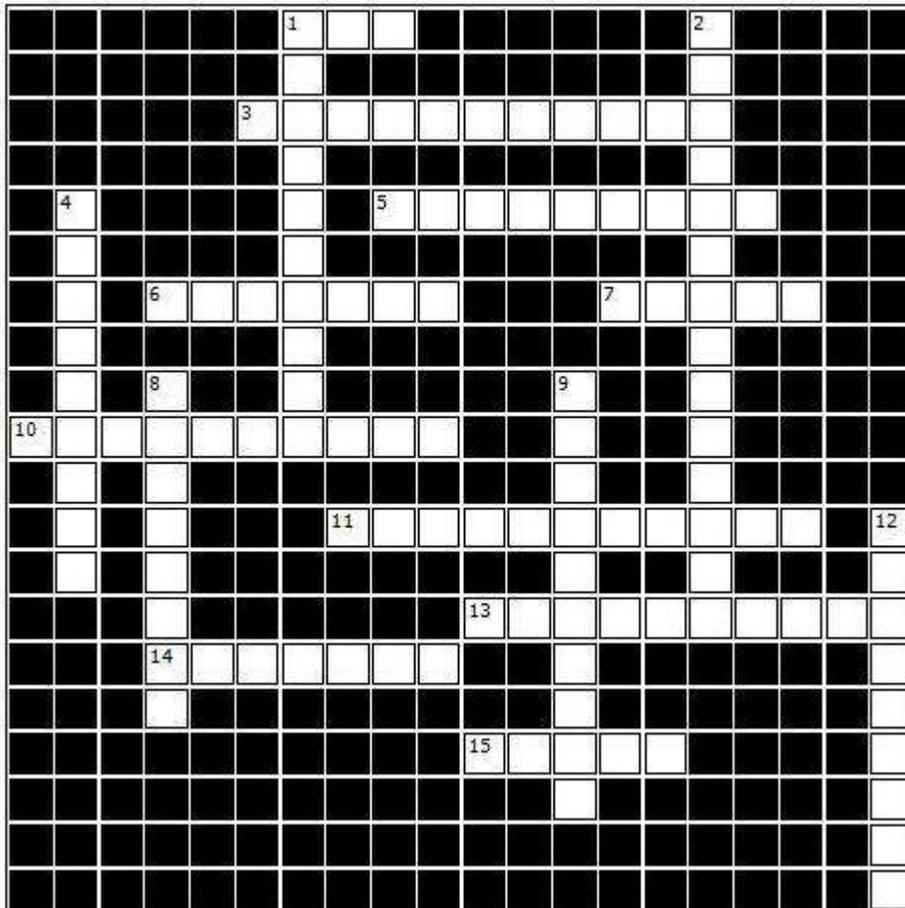
Reality: Employment equity is the rule for both good and bad economic times.

Source:
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/labour/equality/employment_equity/index.shtml

“Employment equity means that everyone must be treated fairly and everyone’s differences must be taken into account.”



EMPLOYMENT EQUITY QUIZ



ACROSS

1. The Employment Equity _____.
3. Federal _____ Program is for businesses that have 100 or more employees.
5. The legislation is _____ for all federally regulated employers.
6. Type of minorities designated in the Act.
7. Have highly benefitted from Employment Equity.
10. Persons with a _____ are a designated group.
11. _____ Action is American legislation to address systemic barriers.
13. The Act supports these groups.
14. A form of discrimination sometimes attributed to the Act.
15. The Act is not based on a _____ system.

DOWN

1. First Nations, Metis and Inuit would belong to this designated group.
2. The Act is intended to this problem in the workplace.
4. Fairer hiring _____ can create equity.
8. The Act eliminates and identifies these in organizations.
9. A Royal _____ led to the Employment Equity Act.
12. _____ regulated employees are included.

For the answers see page 16

RESOURCES ABOUT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Employment Equity Act

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/E-5.401.pdf>

Employee Self-Identification Form

<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/gui/iden2-eng.asp>

Accessible Procurement Toolkit

A web-based application that presents access standards and requirements to apply to mainstream equipment and standards to ensure that they are usable by people with the widest range of functional abilities.

www.appt.gc.ca

Developing a Workplace Accommodation Policy by the Canadian Human Rights Commission

A template to guide the development of an accommodation policy.

www.chrc-ccdp.ca/policies_guides_politiques/guides-eng.aspx

Managing Episodic Disabilities: Accommodation Best Practices

An on-line course on accommodation for human resources practitioners

www.hivandrehab.ca/EN/information/employers/MEDAaccommodationsCourse.php

Creating A Welcoming Workplace for Employees with Disability by Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

7 steps for creating a disability-positive workplace.

www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/tb_852/cwwed1-eng.asp#Introduction

Aboriginal Human Resource Council newsletter

www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/resources/newsletter

Promising Practices of Aboriginal Inclusion

<http://www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/resources/promising>

Employers Invested in Aboriginal Inclusion

<http://www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/about/partners>

Tip Sheets

http://www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/resources/Inclusion_Tips

How to Climb the Inclusion Continuum

<http://www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/programs/MAI/explore>

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Managing Cross-Cultural Conflict in the Workplace

On Demand

Conflict in the workplace is stressful enough, but add cultural misunderstandings to the pot and things quickly become complicated.

In this webinar you will learn:

- How to recognize if a conflict is culturally based.
- How to identify the stages of conflict.
- Strategies for dealing with cross-cultural conflict when it arises.
- How different cultures approach and resolve conflicts.
- Why a one-size-fits all approach does not work when dealing with cross-cultural conflict.
- Ways of preventing or minimizing cross-cultural conflict in the future.

Length: Audio portion approximately 1.5 hours.

Additional bonus: Supplementary readings, links, glossary, personal conflict style quiz, case scenarios.

Once you register for your webinar you will receive a password that will be valid for one week. Any member of your business can access this training within a five day period.

You pay only \$225 including taxes whether you train one person or 100!



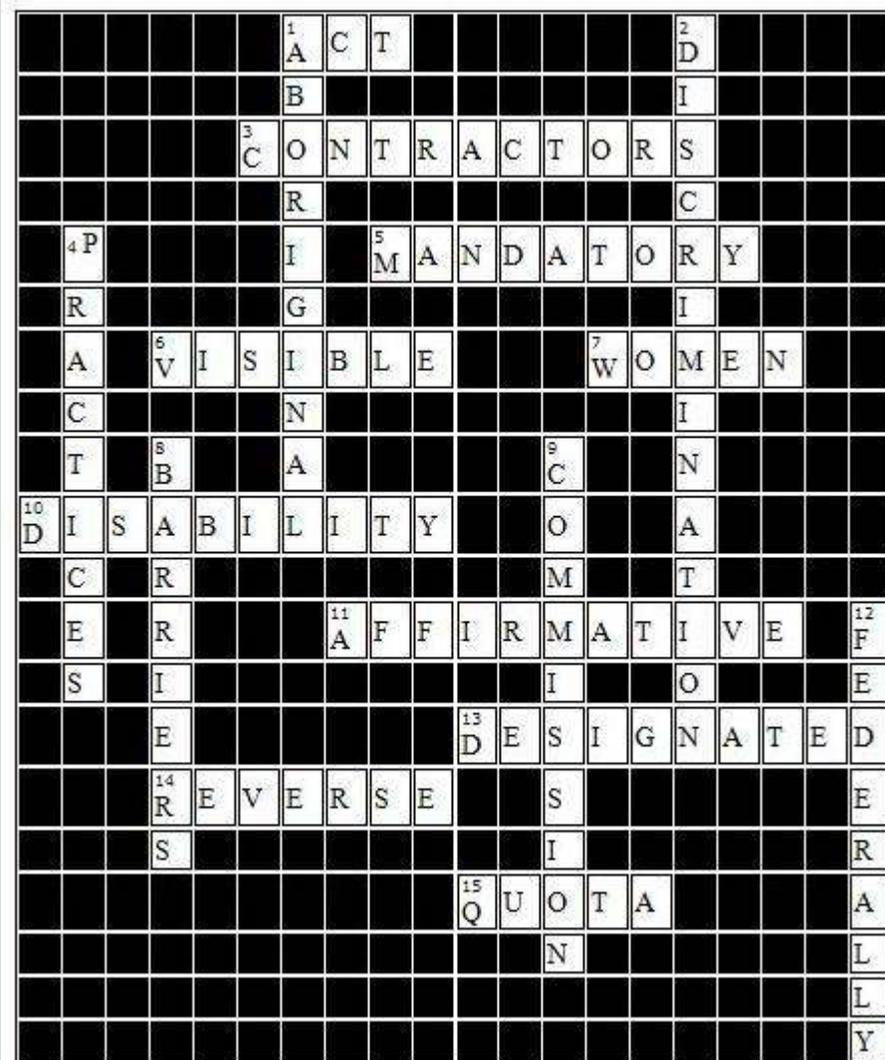
Diversity at Work
in London

To purchase this webinar please visit:

<http://www.yourdiversityatwork.com/webinars/>

For more information contact 519-659-4777

ANSWERS EMPLOYMENT EQUITY QUIZ



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