

Skills Inventory April 2021



**A Report Submitted in Support of the Labour Market Partnership Project:
*Inclusion of First Nations Communities in the Lower Vancouver Island Workforce***

Canada



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This program is funded by the Government of Canada
and the Province of British Columbia.

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1. Background

As a part of the Labour Market Partnership (LMP) project *Inclusion of First Nations Communities in the Lower Vancouver Island Workforce* Harbour Digital Media (HDM) committed to working with First Nations communities and the lower Vancouver Island business community on the development of a sample of First Nations skills. The intent of this part of the project is to provide examples of the skills of potential First Nations workers. These samples will be included in a future online toolkit along with other resources that will assist lower Vancouver Island businesses to adapt their employment processes so that they are more inclusive. The toolkit is intended to enable employers to adjust their employment processes in ways that will attract potential First Nations workers.

In addition to the skills inventory, HDM is also working with lower Vancouver Island businesses and organizations on the development of job and company profiles that can be broadly disseminated to First Nations communities. The profiles will enable First Nations individuals and organizations to gain insights into the types of work available in the community and the culture of the companies that they might consider approaching for job opportunities. The profiles will also serve as an introduction to human resource managers and leaders responsible for hiring and orienting new staff to their positions. Job and company profiles will also be included in an online toolkit.

2. Rationale for the Development of Skills Inventories and Job Profiles

Through various discussions and meetings over the course of the current and previous LMP projects, First Nations leaders have indicated to HDM, business, and community partners that First Nations members have skills that aren't typically reflected in traditional job descriptions. At the same time, First Nations members did not necessarily have the formal credentials that a number of jobs available in the local community call for. As a result, some individuals from First Nations communities are reluctant to put themselves forward for consideration or they don't see themselves fitting with the culture of local businesses and companies. HDM felt that it was important to illustrate the skills that First Nations community members have while at the same time working with the local business community to describe companies and available types of work in a less traditional manner.

3. Dimensions of a Skills Inventory

Generally, a skills inventory is thought of as a list of an individual's competencies or skills, educational background and work experience. An employer might request a skills inventory from a current employee or potential employee to gauge how well that individual is likely able to fit with the company's organization and culture.

The skills inventory developed for this LMP project includes the following dimensions:

- Knowledge
- Experience

- Competencies
- Personal Attributes

The following matrix provides a visual representation of these four dimensions.



Knowledge and Experience

This area includes knowledge and experience gained through formal, informal, and non-formal learning processes and settings. Formal learning typically involves schools or institutions and results in some form of credential or certification. Informal learning varies in methods and content and builds on the learner's real life experiences and participation. Non-formal learning is primarily gained through experience and involves learning through the home, environment (i.e. community), and workplace.

Competencies

This area includes skills such as: problem solving, critical thinking, innovation, troubleshooting, design sense, artistic sense, and a range of communication skills including verbal communication, body language, writing, storytelling, visual communication, humour, quick wittedness, and listening.

Personal Attributes

This area includes attributes such as: emotional intelligence, self awareness, emotion management, stress management, tolerance of change and uncertainty, taking criticism, adaptability, resilience, self assessment, work-life balance, friendliness, enthusiasm, and empathy.

4. First Nations Workers' Skills

Insights from First Nations Leaders

As a part of the development of this section of the Skills Inventory report, HDM interviewed or communicated with the following First Nations leaders:

- Nadia Salmaniw, employment counselor – Victoria Native Friendship Centre;
- Christina Clark, Director of Director of Economic Development for the Songhees Nation; and
- Lillian Underwood, employment counselor – Tsawout First Nation
- Annie Konopasek, Life Coach – Tsawout First Nation
- Mavis Underwood, Councillor – Tsawout First Nation
- Matt Henry, Foreman, Built Contracting – Malahat First Nation
- Becky Wilson, Executive Assistant – Tsawout First Nation

The interviews and other communications resulted in the following insights:

- It is important for employers to work with First Nations communities to co-create employment processes. This will help employers to understand what applying for a job and providing personal information about skills looks like from the perspective of a First Nations person;
- There is a need to develop processes that enable prospective workers to share their stories. The skills, abilities, and experiences of First Nations people are often embedded in these personal stories;
- A storyboard/visual approach may be one way to capture these stories. Moving away from traditional job interview panels to situations that enable interviewees to 'tell their story' may be one way to capture First Nations skills more effectively;
- First Nations people need the support of an employment counselor/mentor/job coach in order to navigate the employment process;
- Businesses need to commit to the development of more inclusive job descriptions that remove stereotypes and experience barriers;
- Businesses should think about using virtual tours of job sites for potential employees as a way of helping these individuals understand company expectations and how the skills they have are linked to jobs that employers have to offer;
- Jobs should be described in 'lay' terms (rather than technical terms). This will make them more welcoming to a First Nations audience;
- Beyond more accurately describing the skills of First Nations workers and developing more inclusive employment processes, it is important to work toward overcoming other barriers to work including transportation access.

Examples of the Skills of Indigenous Workers

An important consideration for companies when working toward hiring indigenous persons is to understand what types of skills they possess and how these relate to the work that companies have on offer. This section provides examples of worker skills in two forms; first, in relation to the skill inventory described above, and second, in the form of actual resumes submitted as a part of applications for actual jobs.

Sample Skill Sets Related to the Skills Inventory

Based on the Skills Inventory framework outlined above, HDM reached out to Annie Konopasek, Life Coach and Coordinator for the Tsawout First Nation's CELASET¹ program to determine the types of skills students in the program indicated they have. Ms. Konopasek agreed to ask students in the program to describe their knowledge, experience, competencies and personal attributes. CELASET is an education program that helps indigenous youth (age 18 and older) in developing and enhancing their academic and job readiness skills. There are currently 16 students in the program (13 female and three male) ranging in age from 20 years to the mid-30s.

Information related to the Skills Inventory categories was provided by CELASET program students and is outlined below.

Knowledge

The students indicated that they have **knowledge** in the following areas:

- Undertaking basic home maintenance;
- Fixing small mechanical items;
- Sewing and beading;
- Working with hand tools;
- Organizing food hampers as a volunteer for a local food bank;
- Putting up scaffolds and platforms for construction projects;
- Operating a skid steer or small excavator (level 1);
- Harvesting and processing hemp as a volunteer;
- Volunteering and baking at cultural events;
- Undertaking self-study;
- Volunteering with groups helping the homeless population; and
- Playing video games and exploring interest in video game development.

Experience:

The students indicated that they have **experience** in the following areas:

- Cashier;
- Housekeeping;
- Security guard;
- Cowichan Tribes operation and maintenance receptionist;
- Epicure warehouse – experience included how to use the headset and pick orders and to pack and box orders;
- Blade Runners program staff;
- Food Safe training;
- Customer service training;
- Attendant at Co-op full serve;
- Handling of cash;
- Home and audio technician;
- WHMIS training;

¹ For additional information concerning the CELASET program see [CELASET Program - Starts January 2021 - Tsawout First Nation](#)

Skills Inventory – April 2021

- Archeology experience;
- Support worker with children and youth;
- Cooking;
- Barista;
- Receptionist;
- First Aid training; and
- Experience with young children with special needs.

Competencies:

The students indicated that they have **competencies** in the following areas:

- Work well as a team member;
- Work well independently;
- Able to multi-tasks;
- Able to get things done quickly and efficiently;
- Able to navigate social media and technology;
- Enjoy teaching others;
- Fast learner;
- Able to support others; and
- Good with tools, building, and home repairs.

Personal Attributes:

The students indicated that they have the following **personal attributes**:

- Hardworking;
- Dependable;
- Creative;
- Friendly
- Helpful
- Kind
- Strong;
- Communication;
- Family oriented;
- Enjoy being outside in nature;
- Visual learner;
- Crafty;
- Social;
- Dedicated;
- Organized;
- Active listener;
- Interpersonal communication;
- Compassionate; and
- Respectful.

Sample Resumes

HDM also reached out to Christina Clark, Director of Director of Economic Development for the Songhees Nation, to provide sample anonymous resumes from an interview process that the Songhees Nation is conducting as a part of the staffing process for its Seed and Stone cannabis retail stores in Victoria. Information will be provided by Christina Clark in February. These resumes² provide a glimpse into the type of skills that local First Nations workers possess.

Applicant #1

Objectives

- To obtain full/part time employment and learn new skills.

Education

- Building Service Worker Certificate
- Completer Blade Runners Building Service Worker Program April 1st 2010

Experience

- Laborer (Sept 2009 – Oct 2009)
- Khoutzun Forest Services (P.O. Box 967, 200 Cowichan Way, Duncan BC V9L 3Y2)
- Chemical Spray hard wood trees and first aid attendant
- Fire Fighter (June 2009-Sept 2009)
- Khoutzun Forest Services (P.O. Box 967, 200 Cowichan Way, Duncan BC V9L 3Y2)
- Laborer (Sept 2008)
- Northern Woods Construction (30295 Canary Crt, Abbotsford V4X 2N4)
- Construct concrete forms and first aid attendant.
- Fire Fighter (June 2008-Aug 2008)
- Khoutzun Forest Services (P.O. Box 967, 200 Cowichan Way, Duncan BC V9L 3Y2)
- Fire Fighter and first aid attendant.

Applicant #2

Objective: To find full time work that will utilize my skills and assist with the success of your company.

Qualifications:

- Hard worker, punctual
- Reliable, dependable, responsible
- Team player and strong ability to work independently
- Follows directions and has a good rapport with co-workers and supervisors

Education/Training

- First aid/CPR with aed 2018
- Introduction to ship building and repair, IMTARC & Camosun College 2015

² All references and information that could be used to identify individuals has been removed in order to ensure the anonymity of the applicants and to protect the privacy of personal information.

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- Hearing test 2019
- Respiratory fit test 2015
- WHIMIS 2015
- Fall protection 2015
- Confined space 2015
- Forklift ticket 2015
- Fire watch 2015
- Auto mechanic pre apprenticeship Camosun College 2002-2003
- Dogwood Diploma, Belmont Sr. Secondary 1989

Work History

- 2016 - 2020 Michell Excavating Ltd.
- 2014 – 2016 Victoria Contracting & Municipal Maintenance
- 2006 – 2013 Van Isle Bricklok Surfacing and Landscaping Ltd.
- 2005 – 2006 Penzoil eze live

Volunteer experience

- 2006 – 2019 Navy League Cadets of Canada
- 1984 – 1987 Sooke Lions Club

Hobbies

- Camping, kayaking, hiking, reading and learning guitar.

Applicant #3

Career Objective : To secure a full-time position learning new skills

Skills

- Meticulous worker , with attention to fine detail
- Responsible , reliable ,and punctual
- Thrives and enjoys working in fast-paced service environments
- Competent computerized cashier skills
- Neat & friendly and able to communicate easily with customers

Work Experience

Daycare Worker, Island Kids Academy, Victoria BC 2018

- Worked with children from ages 3-5
- Planned age appropriate activities for the children
- Light clean up after the children went home and prepared for the next day

Cashier, Save on Foods, Duncan BC 2016-2018

- Taking customers payments via cash, credit, debit and sometimes purchase orders for organizations
- Light duty cleaning and stocking shelves when it was slow

Cashier, Red Barn Market Victoria BC 2015-2016

Skills Inventory – April 2021

- Handled various cash transactions
- Light duty cleaning for closing the store
- Helped serve Ice Cream when it was slow

Set-up Crew/Cashier, Winners Department Store, Duncan, BC 2009

- Organizing stock for distribution throughout store
- Excellent distribution of stock
- Following written instructions and plan-o-grams
- Time-management skills- getting the job done within set amount of time

Cashier, 711 Convenience Store, Duncan, BC 2008

- Handled various cash transactions
- Strong Organizational Skills
- Excellent Customer Service

Education

Camosun College, Victoria, BC 2015-2018

- Early Childhood Education Year one

Cowichan Adult Learning Centre, Duncan, BC 2003

- Academic Upgrading

Esquimalt Community School, Victoria, BC 2001

Certificates

- WorldHost Fundamentals - 2013
- Bartending Certificate - 2003
- Superhost Fundamentals - 1999
- Superhost Customers with Disabilities - 1999
- Superhost Service Across Cultures - 1999
- Squirrel Training - 1999

Applicant #4

Objective

To obtain a full time job improve skills, increase practical experience and expand knowledge in this industry in a manner that enhances productivity, customer service and sales

Highlights

- Over one year of experience providing customer service
- Physically fit individual, who is comfortable safely lifting heavy merchandise
- Dependable and committed demonstrated by playing in a lacrosse league for 15 years
- Strong interpersonal skills, and quick to learn new duties
- Pays close attention to detail with pride of strong work ethic
- Punctual, reliable and responsible

Relevant Work Experience

Customer Service

- Enjoys talking with customers and sharing about products and their features
- Always working to ask questions and improve my knowledge about store merchandise in order to provide the best service
- Strive to create the friendly environment that was enjoyed as a child while visiting toy stores
- Skilled at handling customers while running a booth during cultural events
- Acted as a security guard for the band office during various Pow-Wow gatherings paying special attention to interacting with individuals assertively and politely

Teamwork

- Played in lacrosse league learned how to move as a team and communication skills and leadership
- Monitored water turbidity for pollution to insure fish stock was protected at a marine construction site
- Took accurate weather readings using specialized equipment to insure construction conditions were favorable and to alert them to any danger
- Alerted crews if marine mammals came within 300 meters of the worksite
- Helped cook large dinners at cultural events, assisting with any errands needed help keep events running smoothly

Organization

- Worked as an environmental monitor using to insure safety of workers as well as the protection of the environment
- Kept accurate records of times, dates, and maintenance performed
- Responsible for paying the workers and distributing gifts at longhouse cultural events
- Arranged woodpiles to insure cured wood was kept at the front of the pile and green wood stayed behind
- Performed equipment checks on the monitoring equipment to ensure its up to date and properly maintained

Work History

Paid Participant	<i>The Pathway Project, Victoria, BC</i>	2013
Environmental Monitor	<i>Golder Associates, Victoria, BC</i>	2011-2012

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Sea food department	Thrifty Foods,1495 Admirals Road, BC	2015-2016
Stockperson/cashier	Dollarama, Mayfair Outlet Center 3082 Blanshard St.	2017
Camp leader	Songhees wellness center,1100 admirals road	2017

Education/Certification

Dogwood Diploma	Esquimalt High School, Esquimalt, BC	2012
First Aid & CPR Level C	Canadian Red Cross, Victoria, BC	2013
FoodSafe	Hospitality Training Plus, Victoria, BC	2013
WorldHost	WorldHost Training, Victoria, BC	2013

Applicant #5

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions – Camosun College, June 20, 2019
- Practicum with Our Place Society May 6 – June 12, 2019
- Certificate: Basics of Medication, Occupational First Aid, CPR Level C/AED First Aid, Food Safe, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Naloxone Training, Tb test
- Clear Criminal Record Check
- Conflict Resolution – Justice Institute
- Administrative professional with over ten years' experience in the public sector
- Administrative professional with over one-year experience in the federal government5 plus years of customer service experience in the retail and hospitality sectors

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Client Support

- Ability to tolerate stress and deal with a wide range of medical, mental health, behavioral and emotional issues
- Handled crisis intervention as necessary including but not limited to conflict resolution
- Critical thinking and solution focused skills
- Demonstrate ethical and responsible behavior and be accountable for own actions and decisions
- A significant understanding of alcohol and drug addiction issues, substance use
- Knowledge of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation
- Demonstrate an ability to develop and enhance therapeutic relationships
- Clear understanding of Emotional Intelligence
- Ability to establish and maintain therapeutic rapport with clients
- Ability to analyze and resolve problems
- Promote positive change and independence

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- Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
- Organize and Prioritize daily tasks with the ability to be flexible
- Work independently and in cooperation with others
- Ability to adjust in services based on individual levels of competence and emotional state
- Working knowledge of community support agencies
- Ability to work with minimal supervision in a busy environment
- Adapts to new situations and learns quickly
- Knowledge of motivational interviewing skills and techniques
- An equivalent combination of education, training and experience
- Operate a personal computer with a variety of Windows based software, proficient in Word and Outlook

WORK EXPERIENCE

Island Health

McCauley Lodge, Greenridge and Eagle Rock
Mental Health Worker
August 22, 2019 - Present

Salish Seaside RV Park

Reservations Clerk
September 2017 – August 2018

Save on Foods

Frontend & Grocery
Westside Village
November 5, 2015 – November 2016

Tim Horton's

Front store
December 2014 – August 17, 2015

Aramark

Save on Foods Memorial Centre
Concession – P/T evenings
December 2009 – December 2011

Federal Government

Service Canada - Intern

Student Work Experience Program
June 2007- August 2008

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Skills Inventory - April 2021

Camosun College

Mental Health and Addictions Program

September 4, 2018 -

Graduate June 20, 2019

University of Victoria

Various general courses

September 2010 - 2012

Camosun College, Indigenous Studies Program

September 2006 - 2008

Appendix 1: Skills Inventory Template

The following template can be used to describe an individual's skills (competencies and personal attributes), knowledge and experience. The competencies and personal attributes are provided as examples. The template can be modified to include additional or alternate competencies that reflect what an individual employer is seeking for a particular position or job. The template can also be used as a way of evaluating individual employment candidates.

Skill Areas		Description
Competencies		
	Able to problem solve and troubleshoot	
	Has a design and artistic sense	
	Has good communication skills (e.g. verbal, interpersonal, visual, writing, storytelling, listening)	
	Has a sense of humour	
	Other	
Personal Attributes		
	Demonstrates emotional intelligence	
	Is self-aware	
	Able to manage stress	
	Tolerant of change and uncertainty	
	Able to take criticism	
	Is adaptable	
	Able to balance work and other aspects of life	
	Is friendly	
	Is empathetic	
Knowledge	Formal	
	Non-formal	
	Informal	

Skills Inventory - April 2021

<i>Experience</i>	Work-related	
	Community-related	
	Other	

In addition to the skill areas outlined in the table, a number of other factors should be considered as a part of inclusive hiring practices. These factors include:

- The extent to which the candidate is likely to be a good fit with the culture of the organization;
- The degree to which the candidate demonstrates interest in working independently vs. working as a part of a team;
- The way that the candidate describes the work that they have been most proud of; and
- How they talk about their life story and what elements it contains that will be determinates of an effective worker.