

Competencies Dictionary

Aboriginal Relations Behavioural Competencies



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Where ideas work

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Summary of Descriptions

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PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS



Commitment

Commitment is visibly putting into action your stated commitments. It means “walking the talk” and following through. It includes communicating information and intentions openly, honestly and regularly, and welcoming the same in others. It is consistently demonstrating ethical behaviour (such as honouring confidentiality and speaking the truth) so that Aboriginal people know what to expect and can trust that action will follow your statement of commitment. It also means anticipating the level of knowledge and understanding needed, and proactively gaining the knowledge prior to entering into relationships with Aboriginal people.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to recognize, understand and directly experience the emotion of another. It involves listening with heart, accepting their message, and staying focused on their experience rather than reacting. It means understanding that the behaviour may be connected to something outside of the immediate situation.

(Sympathy is not empathy. Sympathy means feeling pity and sorrow for someone’s misfortune, or the tendency to want to help them with what you see as something negative. This can send a message that you believe that others cannot arrive at their own solutions.)

Ingenuity

Ingenuity is the quality of being inventive and creative when faced with a variation in BC Public Service objectives and those of Aboriginal people. It involves dealing with problems in original and creative ways that seek commonalities and links rather than gaps and differences. It is approaching issues with a willingness to question one’s assumptions and to take risks outside of common ways of thinking and doing. The value of “courage” may be strongly demonstrated when using ingenuity.

Open Listening

Open Listening is letting go of conventional means of listening. It means listening to and valuing the telling of stories, and letting pauses in conversation extend into silence rather than jumping in to dispute, agree, question, or move on. It is an awareness of personal bias or judgement and its effect on one's ability to hear. It is the desire and ability to set aside physical, mental and emotional distractions in order to be fully focused and listening respectfully and openly. It is staying open to the message even when conversations are filled with raw emotions like sadness or anger, and believing that each person's knowledge and reality is legitimate and valuable. Finally, it requires a willingness to reflect upon a story or message and to derive meaning from it based upon the situation in which it is shared.

Self-Discovery and Awareness

Self-Discovery and Awareness means understanding one's thoughts, feelings, values and background and how they impact the success of the interaction and relationship, or how they may influence one's work. It is recognizing one's own biases by tracing them to their origins, through reflection and by noticing one's own behaviour – and then intentionally seeking a way forward that positively impacts the interaction and relationship. It means maintaining new ways of thinking and acting when situations become difficult or uncertain, or in times of urgency.

Sustained Learning and Development

Sustained Learning and Development means continually increasing your ability to build and maintain respectful and effective relationships with Aboriginal people. Central to this competency is appreciating that there are many other cultural understandings of knowledge and ways of working that have legitimacy and deserve respect – and therefore require our continual learning and development, including direct exposure to cultural and community ways.

It includes an eagerness to continually reflect upon and assess your own level of cultural agility and competence, self awareness, and expertise. It means being willing to learn in new and different ways and appreciating how diverse ways of thinking and acting can ensure the success of the BC Public Service in supporting Aboriginal self-determination.

Competencies that support

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS



Aboriginal-Centred Service Approach

Aboriginal-Centred Service Approach is a desire to serve Aboriginal people, focusing one's efforts on understanding their interests in order to increase the quality of the service and produce better outcomes. It implies a willingness to support Aboriginal people in determining their own future. It involves demonstrating a welcoming demeanour, an attitude of helpful curiosity, and a willingness to enter into the interaction or relationship without judgement or stereotyping. It means being open-minded and flexible in one's attitudes toward people who are

different from oneself and showing respect for the differences. It includes experiencing Aboriginal people as strong, vital, and important to the functioning of British Columbia. Implicit in this is the knowledge that one is responsible for the image and effectiveness of the organization.

Building a Trust-Based Relationship

Building a Trust-Based Relationship requires a fundamental understanding that "relationship" is the foundation from which all activities happen, and that building a good relationship takes time and commitment. It is a willingness to build a personal relationship in addition to a professional one, participating in open exchanges of experiences and culture. It requires a genuine, non-controlling approach and relies upon demonstrated integrity and transparency. Building a trust-based relationship requires a high level of consciousness of the experience of Aboriginal people with Crown relations. It assumes that strengths abound in Aboriginal people, cultures and communities.

Cultural Agility

Cultural Agility is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Aboriginal people. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all. It is openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation. It is examining one's own culture and worldview and the culture of the BC Public Service, and to notice their commonalities and distinctions with Aboriginal cultures and worldviews. It is recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of Aboriginal people. It is the capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and being willing to experience a personal shift in perspective.

Empowering Others

Empowering Others means making a systematic and sustained effort to provide Aboriginal people with information, knowledge, support, and opportunities to be self-determined, based upon the individual or community's level of acceptance towards moving forward. An important step is acknowledging past mistakes and encouraging movement towards a positive future, at a pace and degree determined by Aboriginal people. It also means taking action with employees within the BC Public Service, so that they become empowered and engaged in respectful and effective Aboriginal relations.

Promoting Accord

Promoting Accord involves exploring perspectives and underlying interests to reach outcomes that gain the acceptance of all parties. It is allowing Aboriginal people the time, space and capacity to reach outcomes from their traditional decision making practice. It is being willing to put the problem in the centre to work together on an outcome, rather than "competing" to win. It means making the assumption that everyone involved wants to work together and get the best result for all. It is thinking sideways into another perspective and valuing it as strongly as one's own, focusing on strengths and possibilities. It includes behaving in an honest, open way, and expressing organizational limitations (e.g., funding, time, staffing) up front so that all information is available when working towards agreement. It requires excellent communication skills.

Competencies that support **LEADING PEOPLE**



Change Leadership

Change Leadership is championing the achievement of intended, real change that meets the enduring vision of Aboriginal self-determination in British Columbia. It involves collaboratively developing and implementing ideas to achieve positive change from anywhere in the BC Public Service. The change leader learns from other leaders and elders, models the vision, and encourages members of the public service to commit to and champion the vision. The change leader inspires others into new ways of thinking and doing business. The change leader routinely energizes the change process and removes barriers to change.

Credible Champion

A Credible Champion shows courage and conviction in advocating for change for the betterment of Aboriginal people. This means stepping forward, from a place of respect and knowledge, to name needed change and to champion it. This may mean challenging current business practices and attitudes. A credible champion is admired and respected by Aboriginal people and BC Public Service employees, is deeply knowledgeable in the culture of those with whom s/he works, and demonstrates outstanding performance as identified by Aboriginal people and the public service. A credible champion remains self-aware and maintains effective relationships.

Competencies that support

ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS



Collaborative Planning, Organizing and Coordinating

Collaborative Planning, Organizing and Coordinating involves shared planning, establishing priorities jointly, and assigning resources accordingly, with sensitivity to the competing demands faced by Aboriginal people. It is expressed by building plans together prior to acting, and ensuring that plans and resourcing align with their evolving interests and needs. It involves timely monitoring, evaluation and work refinement to deliver on the BC Public Service mandate of supporting Aboriginal self-

determination. It means developing staff orientation and managing knowledge so that when a new employee takes up a position within an already established relationship, educating the employee does not automatically and continually fall to Aboriginal people.

Managing Organizational Resources

Managing Organizational Resources is the ability to creatively think about allocation of organizational resources (e.g., people, materials, assets, funding) to support the self-determination of Aboriginal people. It may involve taking strategic risks with organizational resources, and incorporating ingenuity to maximize results. It includes the ability to look for improvements that do not require significant resourcing while committing to fully resourcing when indicated. It is collaborating with Aboriginal people to ensure that resources are allocated based on existing and further interests of their people and communities. It incorporates a means of measuring results relevant to both the BC Public Service and Aboriginal people.

Process Orientation

Process Orientation places a priority on “how” things are done. It is a willingness to remain open and follow in new directions. It means setting aside mainstream ways of achieving results and instead following culturally respectful processes that also produce results. It is letting go of agendas or the need to control, and trusting that the appropriate outcome will emerge from a good journey together. It means accepting that both the use of process orientation and a “good relationship” are concrete deliverables.

Strategic Orientation

Strategic Orientation is the ability to link the long-range vision of Aboriginal self-determination to daily work, ranging from a simple understanding to a sophisticated awareness of the full impact of thinking and actions. It is the ability to think and operate broadly, with the goal of sustainability, to further the goals of Aboriginal people in a way that meets the collective public interest. This also means taking responsibility to collaboratively design and implement steps to redress past harms and set frameworks in place to prevent their recurrence.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Why is this important?

"From the Elders, and from experience, I've learned that rather than telling people about my honesty, fairness and sincerity, my commitment is demonstrated through my actions. It is first about who I am and then about what I do. If I fail to honour this, I foster doubt. Trust is established through continuous actions that demonstrate my integrity, authenticity and follow-through, regardless of my job position or situation. The business of government is dynamic, with shifting priorities that impact Aboriginal people. Walking the talk in the midst of changes and challenges builds trust and strengthens the relationship. The beauty of this is that the collective actions of each of us lead to large scale shifts in practice, procedure and policy that serve the greater good of all."

*Peg Christian,
Cherokee/Choctaw descendent
Performance Coach
Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services
and Open Government, Nelson*

Commitment

Commitment is visibly putting into action your stated commitments. It means "walking the talk" and following through. It includes communicating information and intentions openly, honestly and regularly, and welcoming the same in others. It is consistently demonstrating ethical behaviour (such as honouring confidentiality and speaking the truth) so that Aboriginal people know what to expect and can trust that action will follow your statement of commitment. It also means anticipating the level of knowledge and understanding needed, and proactively gaining the knowledge prior to entering into relationships with Aboriginal people.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Follows through on commitments.
- ☐ Meets agreed upon deliverables on time and as promised.
- ☐ Demonstrates honesty, timeliness and consistency in all communications.
- ☐ Honours the confidentiality of information shared by others.
- ☐ Gains knowledge of the culture, situation, and opportunities prior to entering into relationships with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Identifies personal and professional values and how they may differ from those of other cultures.
- ☐ Shows understanding of the past and how it may impact the current relationship.
- ☐ Tells the truth even when to do so may be challenging.
- ☐ Demonstrates an attitude that everyone is acting with the best intentions.
- ☐ Is open to feedback around appropriate behaviour in any Aboriginal cultural context.
- ☐ Changes behaviours that may get in the way of "walking the talk."
- ☐ Demonstrates continuity when leaving the position by ensuring that the relationship is sustained in a good way.
- ☐ Demonstrates patience and seeks understanding when value systems or cultural standards differ.
- ☐ Puts into action commitments even when challenged by shifting priorities.
- ☐ Expects and fosters commitment from others.
- ☐ Aboriginal people indicate respect for the individual and their actions regardless of the situation.

Commitment



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Needs development when....

- ☐ Commits to an action and has trouble following through.
- ☐ Says one thing and does another.
- ☐ Fails to deliver on time and as promised.
- ☐ Harbours personal or work agendas that differ from those stated.
- ☐ Changes behaviour or action only when it is easy to do so.
- ☐ Demonstrates contradictory values.
- ☐ Demonstrates behaviours that tend to maintain old practice, even when following through on commitments demands a change.
- ☐ Enters into interaction with Aboriginal people unprepared and expects them to provide all cultural education and history.
- ☐ Fails to gain full knowledge from others inside the BC Public Service when taking responsibility for a relationship already in progress.
- ☐ Utilizes culturally appropriate protocol without full understanding of and agreement with the intent.
- ☐ Makes commitments prior to understanding the larger picture and how it may impact ability to follow through.
- ☐ Uses position or power to further hidden agenda(s).
- ☐ Promises to maintain confidentiality when to do so compromises employee commitments to the public service.
- ☐ Follows through on commitments but fails to make this visible to Aboriginal people and others outside of the provincial government.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Why is this important?

"Empathy is a value that all people that work with Aboriginal people need to have. There is nothing better in a relationship than people that understand us. It is wonderful to walk away from a conversation and think 'they really did show they understood'."

"Empathy is being with a person using most of our senses. Seeing what their body language is when they are speaking; is it angry or are they quiet and possibly not wanting to talk at all. Does the body language match their tone of voice when you are listening to their story? Can you listen to the anger and hear why it is there? Can you hear the sadness in their voices; can you hear what makes them happy? Can you hear the story and see and understand why they feel the way they do? Can you listen without interruption? Can you say 'I'm sorry you feel this way' and mean it?"

"If you can do all these things you could say you have empathy for why people feel the way they do. Empathy will build relationships faster than anything else."

Jennie Walker, Shuswap,
Canoe Creek/Dog Creek
Health Director Three Corners Health
Services Society, Williams Lake

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to recognize, understand and directly experience the emotion of another. It involves listening with heart, accepting their message, and staying focused on their experience rather than reacting. It means understanding that the behaviour may be connected to something outside of the immediate situation.

(Sympathy is not empathy. Sympathy means feeling pity and sorrow for someone's misfortune, or the tendency to want to help them with what you see as something negative. This can send a message that you believe that others cannot arrive at their own solutions.)

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Identifies one's own feelings and emotions and their impact on others.
- ☐ Demonstrates understanding of what sparks one's own emotions.
- ☐ Stays calm.
- ☐ Listens instead of jumping in to solve the problems of others.
- ☐ Listens openly, without judgement and without interrupting.
- ☐ Recognizes and keeps in check personal biases and assumptions.
- ☐ Acknowledges the experience of others.
- ☐ Operates from a belief that each person has strengths and potential.
- ☐ Continually explores the culture, history, issues and interests of Aboriginal people through a variety of methods.
- ☐ Recognizes and interprets words, body language and non-verbal cues in a culturally appropriate manner.
- ☐ Recognizes underlying concerns, feelings, or interests in others that may not be verbally expressed.
- ☐ Responds appropriately based upon relevant cultural knowledge.
- ☐ Creates opportunities for meaningful conversation.
- ☐ Models empathy so that others can learn from watching and experiencing.

Empathy



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Needs development when....

- ☐ Is unaware of one's own feelings and emotions and their impact upon others.
- ☐ Becomes emotionally provoked and acts upon it.
- ☐ Asks questions that are interrogative or designed to satisfy personal curiosity.
- ☐ Avoids conversations because of feelings of guilt, distress or anger when Aboriginal people talk about historical issues.
- ☐ Identifies personally with the message, feelings and emotions to the point where it gets in the way of fully listening and being present.
- ☐ Shows lack of attention when the feelings of others are expressed.
- ☐ Expresses impatience when others are speaking and/or jumps to conclusions.
- ☐ Demonstrates discomfort when feelings in a conversation are strong.
- ☐ Intervenes or interrupts to fix or solve.
- ☐ Fails to allow feelings to be fully expressed.
- ☐ Judges some messages and emotions to be more important than others.
- ☐ Relies on stereotyped explanations to account for the message and emotions of others.
- ☐ Uses standard responses despite the differences in conversations.
- ☐ Sends Aboriginal people to others when there is potential for emotional conversations.

Ingenuity

Ingenuity is the quality of being inventive and creative when faced with a variation in BC Public Service objectives and those of Aboriginal people. It involves dealing with problems in original and creative ways that seek commonalities and links rather than gaps and differences. It is approaching issues with a willingness to question one's assumptions and to take risks outside of common ways of thinking and doing. The value of "courage" may be strongly demonstrated when using ingenuity.

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Why is this important?

"By taking the risk to think differently, you become part of something bigger than yourself. It takes courage to put your principles into practice, the courage to do things in a creative, open way. A lot of Aboriginal people talk to me about doing things in a "good way." For me, something that's done in a good way is thinking, seeing and hearing differently so that there's a positive impact all around, in the moment and in a sustained way. People then feel validated, heard, and part of something bigger than themselves. The process becomes more robust and meaningful, the work gets done and the solutions last. For me it's been a risk that has paid out big time."

Jan Gottfred, Director
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations
and Reconciliation, Victoria

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Tries something new.
- ☐ Acts to take advantage of new ideas.
- ☐ Engages with Aboriginal people from the start and throughout the process.
- ☐ Responds to creative ideas by listening for and discussing why they might work instead of telling why they won't work.
- ☐ Seeks new ways to do business by finding and starting with links and commonalities (e.g., ideas, principles) between seemingly opposed objectives.
- ☐ Presents a different perspective or challenges the status quo.
- ☐ Uses collaborative brainstorming and keeps all ideas on the table.
- ☐ Demonstrates an understanding that, if goals differ, it doesn't mean one is right and the other wrong.
- ☐ Explores multiple paths to arriving at a solution.
- ☐ Focuses first on desired outcomes and details afterwards.
- ☐ Approaches barriers and setbacks with creativity.
- ☐ Seeks feedback from others on performance and work results to generate options for innovation and change.
- ☐ Demonstrates a belief in equal value of the ingenuity of others.
- ☐ Positively challenges others to employ ingenuity in their work and service to Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Thinks beyond "more money" as the only solution.
- ☐ Sets aside time for creative thinking.
- ☐ Welcomes uncertainty and the unknown as fertile ground from which opportunities arise.
- ☐ Fosters and supports opportunities for ingenuity in challenging times or circumstances.
- ☐ Identifies and manages risk, and proceeds with support.
- ☐ Recognizes when risk taking by others could lead to mistakes; manages risks and supports learning from mistakes.

Ingenuity



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Needs development when....

- ☐ Repeats behaviour, processes and actions proven not to work.
- ☐ Protects information and shows reluctance to share.
- ☐ Accepts existing systems and does not explore improvements.
- ☐ Avoids taking thoughtful risks.
- ☐ Takes risks without adequate risk management and support.
- ☐ Fails to explore suggestions for improvement by Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Acts without creative dialogue with Aboriginal people on how to improve.
- ☐ Is unable to step back from current issues to identify potential opportunities.
- ☐ Does not consider cross-cultural issues.
- ☐ Focuses on deficits and differences rather than commonalities and links.
- ☐ Demonstrates an inflexible "black and white" approach.
- ☐ Makes decisions quickly and without consideration of alternatives.
- ☐ Defends position rather than exploring alternatives.
- ☐ Discards the unfamiliar as impossible.
- ☐ Tries to make standard solutions fit within another cultural setting.
- ☐ Gives up or delays action when barriers and setbacks are present.
- ☐ Discourages the initiative of others to explore and innovate.
- ☐ Makes minor adaptations to existing systems or processes when more sweeping change is called for.
- ☐ Seeks support and influences others to maintain the status quo.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Why is this important?

"I never met my grandmother, but I feel like I know her because my mom told me stories about her. It connects me to a time I don't know about. If I don't listen, I dishonour the person, their family and those who came before."

"Telling stories is a way of honouring those who taught us and shared with us. Sometimes one word or phrase or thought won't do it. The story has to be told. It's a way to allow the listeners to learn in their own way and derive their own meaning. If you pre-judge you miss out on the learning. Look for the value in it."

"Storytellers have as much to say when not talking as they do when talking. It is part of their patterns, and we need to respect their desire to formulate where they want to go next. Translation of a concept from a native language to English can take time, and one word may not embody the concept. Being mindful of what you want to say that will honour others may require some silence for reflecting and preparing. Let the silence do its work."

Barb Ward-Burkitt, Cree,
Executive Director
Prince George Native Friendship Centre,
Prince George

Open Listening

Open Listening is letting go of conventional means of listening. It means listening to and valuing the telling of stories, and letting pauses in conversation extend into silence rather than jumping in to dispute, agree, question, or move on. It is an awareness of personal bias or judgement and its effect on one's ability to hear. It is the desire and ability to set aside physical, mental and emotional distractions in order to be fully focused and listening respectfully and openly. It is staying open to the message even when conversations are filled with raw emotions like sadness or anger, and believing that each person's knowledge and reality is legitimate and valuable. Finally, it requires a willingness to reflect upon a story or message and to derive meaning from it based upon the situation in which it is shared.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Creates mental and physical space to fully listen without distractions.
- ☐ Continually seeks understanding of the culture, protocol, and communication processes of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Uses silence as a means of communication.
- ☐ Listens without dividing attention between listening and another task, such as typing on a computer or texting (multi-tasking).
- ☐ Shows attentiveness, including the use of non-verbal techniques such as nodding one's head.
- ☐ Seeks meaning beyond the spoken word.
- ☐ Shows awareness of and sensitivity to subtle nonverbal cues.
- ☐ Confirms understanding by reflecting, then paraphrasing, repeating or clarifying to ensure proper understanding.
- ☐ Balances curiosity and need to ask questions with a willingness to share silence.
- ☐ Builds rapport and introduces questions with a more conversational approach.
- ☐ Asks questions in a manner that avoids the perception of an interrogative approach.
- ☐ Demonstrates patience and respects the speaker's need for reflection.
- ☐ Follows the lead of Aboriginal people in regard to protocol, such as appropriate eye contact.
- ☐ Makes a conscious effort to defer bias and assumption when listening and responding.
- ☐ Delivers messages clearly with a goal of shared understanding.
- ☐ Allows for diversions from agenda as a means for providing background for the larger conversation.
- ☐ Shows interest in hearing "stories" and understands their value in their underlying messages. May offer stories of one's own.
- ☐ Makes use of opportunities to improve skills in the speaker's traditional or preferred language.
- ☐ Demonstrates a complex understanding of the culture, issues and interests of the speaker.
- ☐ When feeling ambiguity, respectfully seeks confirmation of intent.
- ☐ Responds to concerns in a manner that promotes trust.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Open Listening

Needs development when....

- ☐ Interrupts the speaker.
- ☐ Multi-tasks during a face-to-face or telephone conversation.
- ☐ Makes critical or judgemental gestures or sounds (like eye rolling or sighing with impatience).
- ☐ Makes assumptions rather than listening.
- ☐ Rushes to suggest solutions or problem solve.
- ☐ Uses interrogative, relentless approach to questioning.
- ☐ Interrupts the listening process with well meaning questions based upon curiosity rather than listening and reflecting for the meaning.
- ☐ Responds with a literal view when a metaphorical view is called for.
- ☐ Minimizes the message by trying to cheer them up or tell them things aren't so bad.
- ☐ Criticizing.
- ☐ Shows discomfort or will not allow silence.
- ☐ Notifies the speaker that they are "off topic" in their message.
- ☐ Unreceptive and slow to adapt.
- ☐ Allows personal bias to prevent one from hearing the speaker.
- ☐ Shows impatience when others take longer to speak or seem to be off topic.
- ☐ Lacks clarity or sends mixed messages when speaking.
- ☐ Aboriginal speaker becomes disengaged and is clearly reluctant to continue speaking.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Self-Discovery and Awareness

Self-Discovery and Awareness means understanding one's thoughts, feelings, values and background and how they impact the success of the interaction and relationship, or how they may influence one's work. It is recognizing one's own biases by tracing them to their origins, through reflection and by noticing one's own behaviour – and then intentionally seeking a way forward that positively impacts the interaction and relationship. It means maintaining new ways of thinking and acting when situations become difficult or uncertain, or in times of urgency.

Why is this important?

"Who are you representing? Where are you from? Acknowledge your past. Reflect on what has happened to bring us to where we are and where we want to go. Our history since colonization has been quite dark, and in many cases in order to go forward, we all have to acknowledge and reflect upon what happened, to heal. Then we can go forward. All of us have to start changing personally, for ourselves, in order for things around us to change. Self-awareness shows respect, and you offer the gift of your own awareness of your thoughts and feelings; your background. This connects us."

Victoria Morgan,
Secwepemc/Nuu-chah-nulth,
Aboriginal Youth Intern
Ministry of Transportation
and Infrastructure, Burnaby

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Observes own behaviour and actions.
- ☐ Recognizes impact of own behaviour and actions upon others.
- ☐ Seeks feedback and considers it carefully.
- ☐ Is open to new perspectives and different ways of thinking and working.
- ☐ If uncomfortable with unfamiliar experiences, expresses misgivings or discomfort and seeks help to move forward.
- ☐ Seeks guidance and support on ensuring personal perspective is sensitive and responsive to the needs and interests of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Is aware of one's biases and monitors them to avoid misunderstanding.
- ☐ Manages one's thoughts and feelings when challenged. Looks at differences as opportunities, not threats.
- ☐ Speaks honestly about one's own biases and assumptions.
- ☐ Demonstrates awareness of personal biases when writing, or when interpreting the written word.
- ☐ Acknowledges the thinking, emotions and behaviours of others.
- ☐ Suspends judgement or decision making until fully understanding the situation.
- ☐ Shows emotions that are genuine, culturally appropriate and that honour the relationship.
- ☐ Continually looks for opportunities to improve self-awareness.
- ☐ Seeks self-discovery by spending time with Aboriginal people in their community or in other settings.
- ☐ Recognizes how personal values are shaped by one's ideas, belief systems and opinions. Recognizes assumptions and biases that surface when that value system is offended.
- ☐ Adapts behaviour in the moment to be more culturally appropriate and to honour the relationship.
- ☐ Avoids safe and predictable environments. Pushes self into uncomfortable and ambiguous situations to increase self-awareness.
- ☐ Notices and manages personal uncertainty and the fear of the unknown.
- ☐ Provides feedback that is truthful and candid. Coaches others towards self-awareness.
- ☐ Creates opportunities for the development of self-awareness, personally and in others.



PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Self-Discovery and Awareness

Needs development when....

- ☐ Is closed or defensive when receiving feedback.
- ☐ Behaviour shows lack of awareness of one's feelings and thoughts and their impact upon others.
- ☐ Fails to question own feelings and responses to people and situations.
- ☐ Fails to clarify assumptions.
- ☐ Stresses importance of own thoughts and feelings, but not those of others.
- ☐ Feels unhealthy guilt for historical actions taken against Aboriginal people, which inhibits continued self-discovery.
- ☐ Does not admit mistake and learn from it.
- ☐ Avoids interactions and situations involving Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Demonstrates lack of awareness of personal biases in thinking when writing, or when interpreting the written word.
- ☐ Personalizes messages and responds in an emotionally charged manner.
- ☐ Shows strong emotion that inhibits the relationship and the situation.
- ☐ Perceives differences in opinion as a threat.
- ☐ Lets emotions associated with differences surface.
- ☐ Erects personal emotional barriers that deter relationship building and achieving results.
- ☐ Seeks the familiar and avoids potentially challenging situations.
- ☐ Demonstrates a barrier to understanding differences and looks for ways to reinforce personal beliefs.
- ☐ Actions reflect a belief that no self-discovery is needed.
- ☐ Actions reflect a position that it is others who need to grow and develop in order to understand one's perspective.
- ☐ Allows fear of the unknown to stop understanding of the origin and true meaning of differences and similarities.

Related to corporate competencies: *Self-Control, Continuous Development, Concern for Image Impact*



EFFECTIVENESS

Why is this important?

"Learning and development may be one of the central reasons we are here. Integral to living in this world is the ability to form and maintain relationships with one another. Without our connections, we are nothing. Lifelong learning is foundational in strengthening our abilities to live with one another in a good way. Every situation and person encountered offers an opportunity to learn, grow, and develop healthy relationships.

"Teachings we encounter through life experiences must be woven into how we live and conduct business with one another. It goes beyond school and employment training. We need teachers and challenges. A teacher can be anyone or anything, including the land, and a challenge can be anything that leads to development or change beyond who we are now.

"To learn, to know, to master, to teach: this is important to being a healthy, balanced person and community member."

Patricia Geddes, Mi'kmaw,
Aboriginal Youth Intern
Ministry of Advanced Education,
Victoria

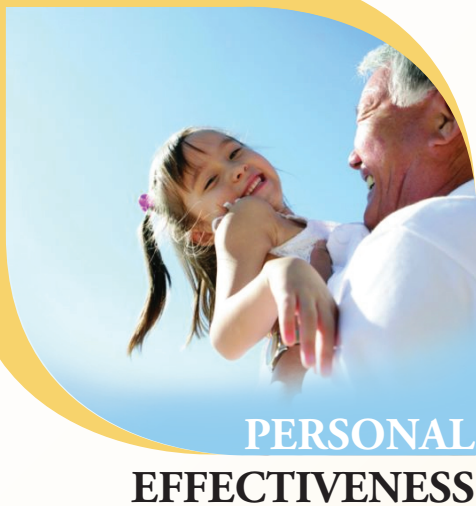
Sustained Learning and Development

Sustained Learning and Development means continually increasing your ability to build and maintain respectful and effective relationships with Aboriginal people. Central to this competency is appreciating that there are many other cultural understandings of knowledge and ways of working that have legitimacy and deserve respect – and therefore require our continual learning and development, including direct exposure to cultural and community ways.

It includes an eagerness to continually reflect upon and assess your own level of cultural agility and competence, self awareness, and expertise. It means being willing to learn in new and different ways and appreciating how diverse ways of thinking and acting can ensure the success of the BC Public Service in supporting Aboriginal self-determination.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Listens with curiosity.
- ☐ Demonstrates receptiveness to new experiences.
- ☐ Welcomes and reflects upon different perspectives.
- ☐ Seeks meaning and applicability in the learning.
- ☐ Enters into a learning situation in a culturally respectful way.
- ☐ Challenges oneself to see things differently.
- ☐ Demonstrates recognition of value of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and science.
- ☐ Applies learning to work.
- ☐ Reflects upon mistakes and misunderstandings to use as an opportunity to learn.
- ☐ Confidently and freely shares learning with others.
- ☐ Acts to maintain an in-depth understanding of key Aboriginal issues and their implications.
- ☐ Goes to Aboriginal communities and organizations to learn about their culture and business as part of learning and development plan.
- ☐ Seeks and utilizes informal learning situations responsibly.
- ☐ Examines one's own performance and seeks feedback internally and externally to improve performance.
- ☐ Integrates feedback into development plans and activities.
- ☐ Designs one's learning and development plans with an eye towards supporting Aboriginal self-determination.
- ☐ Draws upon learning to generate development and change.
- ☐ Positions the public service and Aboriginal people for learning and development that leads to mutual success.
- ☐ Promotes a new way of learning (informal learning) by determining avenues for its measurement and effectiveness.
- ☐ Creates and supports methods of adapting public service practices to include innovative approaches to learning and development.
- ☐ Models and champions sustained learning.
- ☐ Ensures learning and development are ongoing at an organizational level and happening in ways that promotes cultural sensitivity



Sustained Learning and Development

Needs development when....

- ☐ Determines learning and development goals (for self or direct reports) that don't contribute to concrete results.
- ☐ Shows or expresses resistance to learning and development opportunities.
- ☐ Demonstrates a closed attitude to trying a new idea, approach or action.
- ☐ Is satisfied with current knowledge level and sticks to familiar projects and tasks.
- ☐ Offers feedback that reduces rather than builds opportunities for the development of others.
- ☐ Resists or criticizes perspectives of others.
- ☐ Fails to seek feedback, reflect and integrate.
- ☐ Refuses to consider a change to one's idea or viewpoint based on feedback.
- ☐ Fails to examine one's own performance.
- ☐ Demonstrates lack of cultural sensitivity in learning and development situations that call for it.
- ☐ Waits for others to instruct on new approaches.
- ☐ Is reluctant or refuses to engage in learning from Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Takes steps to upgrade skills and knowledge only when directed to.
- ☐ Minimizes performance shortfalls and views them as unchangeable.
- ☐ Attends courses/conferences that do not address a specific learning need.
- ☐ Does not apply learning to work and relationships.
- ☐ Unable to share knowledge of Aboriginal relations in context of current job.
- ☐ Refuses to support others in learning and gaining knowledge through informal means.
- ☐ Generates change without adequate knowledge.
- ☐ Fails to ensure accountability (clear purpose and outcomes, application on job) of employees when they utilize informal learning opportunities.

Related to corporate competencies: *Continuous Development, Commitment to Continuous Learning*



INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Why is this important?

"My heart says this approach would be welcomed and supported. If Aboriginal people experience this, it will facilitate respectful relations, the development of the business, and better outcomes. You'll need background information on protocol that will shave off what may be seen as a hard approach – and also, tell us you are committing to this competency. When we hear this then we can also soften our approach instead of carrying our stereotypes of 'the government.' This will look good on the BC Public Service and increase their status within the citizen population. It will bolster relations, facilitate a good end result and make a better BC."

Erralyn Thomas,
Snuneymuxw First Nation,
Youth Council Representative
BC Assembly of First Nations,
Vancouver

Aboriginal-Centred Service Approach

Aboriginal-Centred Service Approach is a desire to serve Aboriginal people, focusing one's efforts on understanding their interests in order to increase the quality of the service and produce better outcomes. It implies a willingness to support Aboriginal people in determining their own future. It involves demonstrating a welcoming demeanour, an attitude of helpful curiosity, and a willingness to enter into the interaction or relationship without judgement or stereotyping. It means being open-minded and flexible in one's attitudes toward people who are different from oneself and showing respect for the differences. It includes experiencing Aboriginal people as strong, vital, and important to the functioning of British Columbia. Implicit in this is the knowledge that one is responsible for the image and effectiveness of the public service.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Demonstrates availability, curiosity, and willingness to address questions or concerns.
- ☐ Provides respectful service that reflects an understanding of differences in culture and history (unique responses for unique customers).
- ☐ Hears customer issues and interests as legitimate and works diligently to resolve.
- ☐ Seeks to first understand what the customer¹ values, and then determines best process and direction.
- ☐ Challenges oneself to objectivity and equality in service.
- ☐ Takes ownership by following up or ensuring follow up by others.
- ☐ Monitors satisfaction, formally and informally.
- ☐ Demonstrates personal accountability in ensuring satisfactory resolution of the issue.
- ☐ Says "no" when necessary and brainstorms alternatives with customer.
- ☐ Empowers Aboriginal people by shifting idea of the public service employee in power, to an approach of equal partnering.
- ☐ Serves as facilitator of Aboriginal people defining their issues and interests and determining their solutions. Provides resources to support.
- ☐ Shows understanding that interactions with customers are part of an overall relationship between the public service and Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Seeks root causes of issues and works to address them for long term resolution.
- ☐ Designs services, systems and policy that empower Aboriginal people to conduct business in a way that works for them.
- ☐ Designs self-service technology that demonstrates understanding of economic, social and cultural barriers to its availability and effective use.
- ☐ Challenges processes that show they are not effective.
- ☐ Notices and recognizes excellence in Aboriginal-centred service delivery.
- ☐ Provides specific feedback on areas of excellence and developmental opportunities.
- ☐ Facilitates availability of learning opportunities for staff.
- ☐ Puts customer interests at the heart of processes and addresses them in the over-arching business strategy.

¹ The reference to "customer" is specifically Aboriginal customers and partners, and is interchangeable with "Aboriginal people."



Aboriginal-Centred Service Approach

Needs development when....

- ☐ Actions towards customers reflect attitude of blame or judgement for the problem or situation.
- ☐ Does not seek to understand the needs of the population to be served.
- ☐ Body language reflects avoiding or negative attitude towards customer.
- ☐ Multi-tasks on non-related issues while working with customer.
- ☐ Unwilling to look for alternative approaches to policy or operational barriers.
- ☐ Jumps to resolution without fully engaging with the customer.
- ☐ Works in a way that is easy and comfortable for the service provider rather than Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Operates in a way that forces Aboriginal people to adapt to organizational service practices and systems.
- ☐ Uses role to exert power over customers.
- ☐ Witnesses
 - ☐ inappropriate or unfair service delivery and does not speak up.
 - ☐ Deals with interests and issues at face value without exploring the root cause.
 - ☐ Says yes to everything from the customer because it's easier or because of lack of understanding.
- ☐ Awkward or avoiding in customer interactions.
- ☐ Uses standard response in every situation because that's the job.
- ☐ Does everything for the customer, perpetuating dependency.
- ☐ Gives all responsibility to customers.
- ☐ Deals with customer interactions as isolated incidents rather than part of an overall relationship between the public service and Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Focuses on meeting the needs or mandate of the public service or work unit to the exclusion of the customer.
- ☐ Sees opportunity for improvement in operations and approaches but doesn't speak up.
- ☐ Designs and implements self-service technologies that fit for the public service rather than the customer.
- ☐ Builds strategic, operational or service delivery plans without full Aboriginal customer engagement and responsiveness to cultural considerations.
- ☐ Expects excellent employee service without providing learning and motivation.
- ☐ Fails to model the standard.



Building a Trust-Based Relationship

Building a Trust-Based Relationship requires a fundamental understanding that “relationship” is the foundation from which all activities happen, and that building a good relationship takes time and commitment. It is a willingness to build a personal relationship in addition to a professional one, participating in open exchanges of experiences and culture. It requires a genuine, non-controlling approach and relies upon demonstrated integrity and transparency. Building a trust-based relationship requires a high level of consciousness of the experience of Aboriginal people with Crown relations. It assumes that strengths abound in Aboriginal people, cultures and communities.

Why is this important?

“Perhaps one of the most difficult concepts non-Aboriginal people face is the idea that Aboriginal people may not trust the government, regardless of the behaviour of the individuals who work within it. For people who represent a government entity, their ability to build trust is critical. Trust is built individually by fostering honest and open relationships over time, and is based upon actions and results.

For government employees, thinking of a relationship as a deliverable may require a new mindset. As a government worker, when you are passionate about the work and the relationship, focusing upon the best interest of Aboriginal peoples, the climate is right for building trust. Where trust occurs, good things happen for all involved.”

Tanya Clarmont,
Teme-Augama Anishnabai
BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres, Saanichton

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Goes without agenda to the person, community or organization to listen and understand their experience.
- ☐ Willing to adjust behaviour or approach in the interest of building a relationship.
- ☐ Makes a conscious effort to establish and build rapport, including discussion about weather, current events, family, etc.
- ☐ Identifies and refers to areas of mutual interest as a means of establishing a relationship.
- ☐ Demonstrates valuing Aboriginal and Western knowledge equally.
- ☐ Learns from interactions and makes adjustments.
- ☐ Shares information honestly and openly.
- ☐ Schedules an appropriate amount of time for both business and relationship building when meeting with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Draws on key expressions and words from the traditional language to build trust and show respect.
- ☐ Nurtures the relationship over time.
- ☐ Meets regularly and informally with objective of relationship building.
- ☐ Involved in Aboriginal community and/or cultural activities.
- ☐ Maintains regular contact to nurture long term relationships.
- ☐ Incorporates relationship deliverables into work plans, project plans and strategic plans.
- ☐ Initiates opportunities to improve the longer-term working relationship, such as introducing Aboriginal people to trusted others who can provide useful information or services.
- ☐ Nurtures the relationship despite differences in opinion or other conflicting situations.



Building a Trust-Based Relationship

Needs development when....

- ☐ Engages in transactions to the exclusion of relationship building.
- ☐ Resists the concept of relationship as a deliverable.
- ☐ Incorporates only task related deliverables into plans.
- ☐ Declines invitations to gatherings, ceremonies or meetings.
- ☐ Feels a need to check in on Aboriginal people to make sure they are "doing it right."
- ☐ Overlooks or discounts opinions and ideas of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Dominates conversations or does not allow for silence.
- ☐ Considers the relationship as a failure if differences arise.
- ☐ Sticks to the agenda, when a deviation would serve and strengthen the relationship.
- ☐ Withholds information.
- ☐ Does not communicate regularly and openly.
- ☐ Focuses on short term results without considering long term impact upon the relationship.
- ☐ Focuses only on government interests and needs and refuses to discuss anything outside of those parameters.
- ☐ Withholds information that may be useful or that may cause discord.
- ☐ Reluctant to participate in Aboriginal community and/or cultural activities.
- ☐ Aboriginal people avoid working with the employee, or indicate dissatisfaction.
- ☐ Ends the relationship when the work is done.

Related to corporate competencies: *Building Partnerships with Stakeholders, Relationship Building, Customer/Client Development, Concern for Image Impact, Engaging External Partners*



Cultural Agility

Cultural Agility is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Aboriginal people. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all. It is openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation. It is examining one's own culture and worldview and the culture of the BC Public Service, and to notice their commonalities and distinctions with Aboriginal cultures and worldviews. It is recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of Aboriginal people. It is the capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and being willing to experience a personal shift in perspective.

Why is this important?

"Cultural agility is respect. It's pausing and appreciating that there are differences, and looking at those with a view to the celebratory rather than seeing difficulties. I think it's a cornerstone of building relationships. To accept our world view as valid is really important so that we feel respected and valued. Relationships can't be built unless you have this capacity, and we can't work together until the relationship is there. It becomes part of your business."

Christa Williams, Nlaka'pamux,
Executive Director
BC First Nations Public Service
Secretariat, West Vancouver

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Accepts that other points of view are reasonable and valid.
- ☐ Shows interest in learning Aboriginal value systems and cultural protocols.
- ☐ Gracefully acknowledges own shortcomings with regard to cultural agility.
- ☐ Assesses and recognizes the impact of one's behaviour upon Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Shows flexibility in approach to achieve outcomes.
- ☐ Recognizes diversity both between and within Aboriginal cultures and communities.
- ☐ Demonstrates quality service to Aboriginal people by providing it within their cultural values and norms.
- ☐ Takes into account the social and cultural conditions, norms and beliefs in assessing the credibility or plausibility of the actions of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Demonstrates belief that Aboriginal culture is valid and important.
- ☐ Questions personal and organizational assumptions in a cultural context.
- ☐ Proactively seeks to understand the experience of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Seeks out Aboriginal cultural experiences that are unfamiliar.
- ☐ Takes risks to learn when in unfamiliar cultural situations.
- ☐ Challenges bias and intolerance.
- ☐ Addresses any personal issues with lack of confidence, nervousness or fear of "losing face" before attending ceremonies or events.
- ☐ Addresses any religious conflict with ceremonies before the ceremony, to ensure mutual respect.
- ☐ Acknowledges the impact of colonial history on Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Allocates resources to Aboriginal cultural learning and development for employees.
- ☐ Shifts strategic direction when culturally indicated in order to achieve outcomes.

Cultural Agility



Needs development when....

- ☐ Results of actions create shame or hostility in Aboriginal people, either directly or indirectly.
- ☐ With good intentions, violates cultural protocol or cultural identity.
- ☐ Does not act or avoids tasks due to fear of violating cultural protocol.
- ☐ Blames victims of historical processes for their current situation.
- ☐ Acts to diminish the cultural identity of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Operates from assumption that all Aboriginal cultures and people are similar.
- ☐ Assumes that all Aboriginal people follow an Aboriginal cultural tradition.
- ☐ Actions reflect an assumption that Métis, First Nations and urban Aboriginal issues and history are the same.
- ☐ Learns about Aboriginal cultures and people only when mandated.
- ☐ Delivers service the same way regardless of cultural differences.
- ☐ Avoids attending events, ceremonies or community gatherings because of lack of confidence, nervousness or fear of "losing face."
- ☐ Does not address any potential religious conflict with ceremonies, before the ceremony.
- ☐ Witnesses bias and intolerance and does not act.
- ☐ Sticks to position regardless of the situation.
- ☐ Maintains strategic direction regardless of cultural indicators that a shift is necessary.

Related to corporate competencies: *Relationship Building*



INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Why is this important?

"While working as a member of a student run organization, I had the honour of experiencing empowerment first hand. Not only was our organization focused on sharing knowledge for the sake of individual student growth, but we also focused on co-creating social support for our group through emphasizing communal health, communal partnerships, and a culture of coaching. To empower each other, we used a holistic model where knowledge was freely given, received, and shared among the community. We experienced forward momentum with a group process rather than as a feat of individual achievement."

"Similar to the practices of our student run organization, empowering others as BC Public Service employees involves the creation of social solidarity with Aboriginal peoples and communities. This helps build positive, longstanding, and effective relationships, based on reciprocity and dialogue."

Ashley Johnston, Cree/Métis,
Aboriginal Youth Intern
Ministry of Labour, Citizen's Services
and Open Government

Empowering Others

Empowering Others means making a systematic and sustained effort to provide Aboriginal people with information, knowledge, support, and opportunities to be self-determined, based upon the individual or community's level of acceptance towards moving forward. An important step is acknowledging past mistakes and encouraging movement towards a positive future, at a pace and degree determined by Aboriginal people. It also means taking action with employees within the public service, so that they become empowered and engaged in respectful and effective Aboriginal relations.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Co-creates goals.
- ☐ Recognizes the skills and abilities of others.
- ☐ Uses language that can readily be understood by all, and avoids public service specific terms and acronyms.
- ☐ Encourages others to learn, act and lead based upon their own assessment of their readiness.
- ☐ Creates opportunities for Aboriginal people to determine their level of engagement and to determine small or big steps forward in the spirit of empowerment.
- ☐ Accepts and supports perspectives, recommendations, or actions of others.
- ☐ Gracefully welcomes feedback on work or professional behaviour and acts upon it.
- ☐ Proactively shares information and resources to enhance Aboriginal empowerment.
- ☐ Positions Aboriginal people for success by creating a positive environment for them to contribute and lead.
- ☐ Uses leadership or influence to increase empowerment of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Shares or delegates authority and responsibility to others.
- ☐ Removes barriers to the empowerment of others; "clears the way."
- ☐ Demonstrates trust in others by giving them room to learn and succeed, and to learn from mistakes.
- ☐ Publicly credits the achieved results to the relationship and to Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Encourages those in the public service who do not directly work with Aboriginal people to learn more and take action that supports Aboriginal self-determination.



Empowering Others

Needs development when....

- ☐ Criticizes or blames others.
- ☐ Gives feedback while not welcoming it themselves.
- ☐ Directs others rather than letting them do it on their own.
- ☐ Pushes Aboriginal people when they are not ready to engage at the next level, or are moving at a pace that works for them.
- ☐ Changes direction and does not provide background and reason for the change.
- ☐ Conducts decision making independently of those impacted by the decision.
- ☐ Does not understand the role of Aboriginal people in creating and sustaining their own way forward.
- ☐ Makes no effort to learn or use Aboriginal history and cultural knowledge in a way that empowers Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Reduces the relationship to a document.
- ☐ Shares information and resources with Aboriginal people based upon one's own determination of what they need and when they need it.
- ☐ Perceives one's role as doing the job for the community instead of taking on the role of facilitator.
- ☐ Looks for a quick, short-term solution as opposed to sustainable outcomes.
- ☐ Fails to provide adequate education or support to Aboriginal people to enable them to sustain results.
- ☐ Refuses to allow others to take measured risks.



INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Why is this important?

"Most of my work, and I think a lot of successes I've had in my professional life, have been because of the ability to establish relationships. To move ahead we must at least have a neutral relationship and hopefully a positive one. It's easy to see whether you have a willing partner or associate on the other side of the table. If you are just 'putting in the time' rather than really wanting to address the circumstances, you are not invested. It is better to think, 'How can we be innovative, how can we overcome the problems in addressing policy restraints?' The personal touch – to explore, propose and follow up – could open up other doors."

Gerald Wesley,
Member of Kitsumkalum First Nation,
Chief Negotiator
Tsimshian First Nation Treaty Society,
Terrace

Promoting Accord

Promoting Accord involves exploring perspectives and underlying interests to reach outcomes that gain the acceptance of all parties.

It is allowing Aboriginal people the time, space and capacity to reach outcomes from their traditional decision making practice. It is being willing to put the problem in the centre to work together on an outcome, rather than "competing" to win. It means making the assumption that everyone involved wants to work together and get the best result for all. It is thinking sideways into another perspective and valuing it as strongly as one's own, focusing on strengths and possibilities. It includes behaving in an honest, open way, and expressing organizational limitations (e.g., funding, time, staffing) up front so that all information is available when working towards agreement. It requires excellent communication skills.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Takes time to prepare with background knowledge and information about what Aboriginal people need and value.
- ☐ Understands the variation between BC Public Service protocols and Aboriginal protocols and uses a respectful approach.
- ☐ Proceeds with care to test assumptions of cultural knowledge.
- ☐ Shares information openly, with focus on the trust-based relationship, and encourages others to reciprocate.
- ☐ Uses a consensus-building approach wherever possible, as opposed to voting or imposition of own ideas and solutions.
- ☐ May step out of an active decision making role as traditional decision making practice happens.
- ☐ Is aware of and manages own motivations that may directly or indirectly influence the process (core values, cultural values, etc.).
- ☐ Gives equal merit to other ways of looking at the situation.
- ☐ Engages in joint planning throughout each phase.
- ☐ Looks for common ground, links, and similarities in interests and issues.
- ☐ Seeks understanding of underlying interests.
- ☐ Analyzes the potential impact of own actions and words before acting.
- ☐ Notices and lets go of competitiveness, need to win, or need to be right.
- ☐ Cuts through to the heart of the matter, respectfully naming issues that may be obstructing agreement (the "elephant in the room").
- ☐ Speaks the truth with respect and takes responsibility for errors.
- ☐ Tackles the substantive issues in an open and sincere way.
- ☐ Adjusts behaviour to move the process forward.
- ☐ Demonstrates empathy and open listening during emotional expressions.
- ☐ Realizes that situations where emotions are triggered may create resistance or inflexibility in self and others.
- ☐ Negotiates from a determination to preserve the relationship.
- ☐ Refuses to become positional in conflict. Acknowledges the current situation, names it, and reframes to the future (possibility).
- ☐ When events result in less than the desired result, works to find an alternative solution that still meets mutual needs.
- ☐ Names indicators of progress that show movement towards accord and agreement.
- ☐ Initiates and models cooperation to encourage cooperation in others.
- ☐ Uses a position of power to encourage cooperation and mutual satisfaction.



Promoting Accord

Needs development when....

- ☐ Engages in a process or relationship unprepared.
- ☐ Fails to seek out and apply knowledge of cultural values and appropriate protocols.
- ☐ Chooses meeting locations and times according to own schedule and guided only by considerations of cost-savings or personal convenience.
- ☐ Waits to engage Aboriginal people until all decisions have been made.
- ☐ Does not disclose information early and openly.
- ☐ Avoids addressing issues of others.
- ☐ Interprets all statements, expressions and stories literally.
- ☐ Stays on the surface of the issue instead of exploring the root causes to look for mutual interests.
- ☐ Uses mainstream approaches to arrive at a solution, such as imposing or voting.
- ☐ Shows preoccupation with "selling" own position as opposed to exploring underlying interests and possibilities.
- ☐ Pushes to a solution before safety and trust are present.
- ☐ Points out gaps and deficits in getting to agreement.
- ☐ Argues or avoids when the situation calls for active cooperation.
- ☐ Demonstrates a need to look good to the people they represent at the cost of others.
- ☐ Demonstrates evasiveness when decisiveness is called for.
- ☐ Fearing unknown consequences leads to using processes proven not to work.
- ☐ Uses competitiveness, need to win, or need to be right to get to a result.
- ☐ Argues over words and phrases as agreement emerges, and stalls the process.
- ☐ Becomes entrenched and refuses to re-think position.
- ☐ Escalates situations of diverse perspectives into full blown conflict.
- ☐ Places responsibility for getting to an outcome on others.
- ☐ Uses position to express power over others.
- ☐ Takes action that meets public service needs but harms the relationship.



LEADING PEOPLE

Change Leadership

Change Leadership is championing the achievement of intended, real change that meets the enduring vision of Aboriginal self-determination in British Columbia. It involves collaboratively developing and implementing ideas to achieve positive change from anywhere in the BC Public Service. The change leader learns from other leaders and elders, models the vision, and encourages members of the public service to commit to and champion the vision. The change leader inspires others into new ways of thinking and doing business. The change leader routinely energizes the change process and removes barriers to change.

Why is this important?

"The commitments of the provincial government to Aboriginal people mean that we need to move forward together. Ensuring that all employees work effectively and respectfully with Aboriginal people, communities and organizations requires a cultural shift across government. The task then becomes all of us leading from where we are, inspiring those within our sphere of influence to learn, stretch and act in ways that support and sustain Aboriginal self-determination, and support Aboriginal people in change leadership ourselves."

Lisa Mercure, Mikisew Cree
Aboriginal Friendship Centre
Program – BC Region
BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres, Saanichton

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Understands the need for change and its benefits to Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Actively seeks out, listens to and learns from Aboriginal people, leaders and elders about what change is needed and how it should happen.
- ☐ Partners with Aboriginal people to define a specific area where change is needed.
- ☐ Partners in the design and explicit vision for change, sometimes redefining a previous vision.
- ☐ Challenges the status quo and is gently persistent in furthering change.
- ☐ Demonstrates patience during the transition and is comfortable with "growing pains."
- ☐ Champions the change from within one's own sphere of influence (work unit, branch, with colleagues, etc.).
- ☐ Takes specific and sustained action to ensure the successful implementation of the change.
- ☐ Reinforces the change message with personal attitude, behaviours and actions.
- ☐ Identifies potential risks and challenges to change vision and plans for them, thinking through all potential consequences from a cross-cultural perspective.
- ☐ Takes definitive action to align organization (policy, operations, budget, etc.) with the change vision.
- ☐ Publicly recognizes individuals who are demonstrating behaviours consistent with the new direction.



LEADING PEOPLE

Change Leadership

Needs development when....

- ☐ States that Aboriginal people already get enough government support.
- ☐ Resists change and finds reasons for not making changes.
- ☐ Complains about the process of change or the reason for change.
- ☐ Shows frustration or gives up when change is slow or doesn't happen.
- ☐ States that supervisors and managers, or executive level employees, are the only leaders that can affect change.
- ☐ Designs a vision for change without Aboriginal people and then presents it to them, either for validation or approval.
- ☐ Places other priorities ahead of championing the change and aligning work to the new vision.
- ☐ Expects others to change while not modeling the actions and behaviours themselves.
- ☐ Remains silent when seeing potential risks or challenges that seem unaddressed in the change vision.
- ☐ Consistently refuses to lead and champion the change from within one's own sphere of influence.
- ☐ Enters into a token consultation with Aboriginal people and then proceeds without full collaboration.



LEADING PEOPLE

Why is this important?

"For years I've worked with First Nation, Métis and urban Aboriginal leaders and organizations, and I see the impact of the last 150 years of history on these populations. Yet too often, our policies, programs and services are not designed to best address the challenges and opportunities."

"To truly engage with respect, so that new directions can be co-developed and capacity in these communities built in sustainable ways' – this is a vision grounded in what the research tells us works. It takes persistence and a long term view. We are setting the stage for the next generations so that improvements are realized over time. We have to balance government's goals with those of our partners in ways that become "win-win."

"We must work with integrity, persistently finding innovative solutions, showing optimism in our willingness to listen and try new things, communicating why it's important to do things differently, and bringing the stories of success. We have to cultivate the fundamental understanding that these are unique populations with special status under the Canadian Constitution, who cannot be minimized as simply another stakeholder group. Success in closing the socio-economic gaps will only occur when we're all working to engage in very different ways. I think that's what being a Credible Champion is all about."

Arlene Paton, Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health, Victoria

Credible Champion

A Credible Champion shows courage and conviction in advocating for change for the betterment of Aboriginal people.

This means stepping forward, from a place of respect and knowledge, to name needed change and to champion it. This may mean challenging current business practices and attitudes.

A credible champion is admired and respected by Aboriginal people and BC Public Service employees, is deeply knowledgeable in the culture of those with whom s/he works, and demonstrates outstanding performance as identified by Aboriginal people and the public service. A credible champion remains self-aware and maintains effective relationships.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Readily shares knowledge.
- ☐ Operates from a position of possibility rather than from one of risk avoidance.
- ☐ Balances the activities of championing with work expectations and deliverables.
- ☐ Asserts the primary position of Aboriginal people upon the land relative to all later arrivals.
- ☐ Demonstrates respect in all advocacy and championing activities.
- ☐ Immerses oneself in Aboriginal cultures and communities.
- ☐ Models openness to diverse perspectives and respect for diversity in culture.
- ☐ Seeks knowledge and feedback from Aboriginal people for appropriate advocacy.
- ☐ Recognized as credible and well respected across cultures.
- ☐ Challenges behaviours, practices and policies while preserving healthy relationships with individuals.
- ☐ Supports others in their enthusiasm to learn, improve and excel in Aboriginal relations.
- ☐ Remains aware of the strategic perspective during individual conversation.
- ☐ Provides a credible business case or motivation for change.
- ☐ Actively supports the advocacy and championing activities of others.
- ☐ Recognizes and analyzes power imbalances and institutional discrimination, and facilitates change.
- ☐ Actively lobbies to empower a critical mass of people to accept change.



LEADING PEOPLE

Credible Champion

Needs development when....

- ☐ Defends the status quo regardless of the information.
- ☐ Avoids taking a risk when it feels daunting.
- ☐ Acts without awareness of impact.
- ☐ Waits for changes to be mandated and then complies.
- ☐ Takes a position of neutrality when advocacy and championing are indicated.
- ☐ Waits for others to champion and then follows.
- ☐ Lets personal beliefs get in the way of hearing the perspectives of others.
- ☐ Demonstrates upset or anger when challenged.
- ☐ Is impatient with perceived resistance to change.
- ☐ Advocates for oneself and one's advancement rather than for the betterment of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Uses position of champion to further personal agenda.
- ☐ States knowledge of what is "right."
- ☐ Shows inflexibility.
- ☐ Alienates others when championing.
- ☐ Loses sight of long term implications when championing.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Why is this important?

"I have yet to work for or with a First Nation where the importance of working jointly with government on resource management has not been raised. The desire of Aboriginal people to be a part of 'shared planning, establishing priorities jointly and allocating resources accordingly' is at the very core of their cultures. It is extremely important for Aboriginal people to be genuinely involved in collaborative management of our resources. This concept will remain an issue between governments and Aboriginal people until we have true collaboration between the parties. As part of the collaboration, effective knowledge management within government will provide Aboriginal people with some certainty that we care about ensuring our staff are knowledgeable and ready to competently interact with them."

Bruce Low, Manager Northeast
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations
and Reconciliation, Fort St. John

Collaborative Planning, Organizing and Coordinating

Collaborative Planning, Organizing and Coordinating involves shared planning, establishing priorities jointly, and assigning resources accordingly, with sensitivity to the competing demands faced by Aboriginal people. It is expressed by building plans together prior to acting, and ensuring that plans and resourcing align with their evolving interests and needs. It involves timely monitoring, evaluation and work refinement to deliver on the BC Public Service mandate of supporting Aboriginal self-determination. It means developing staff orientation and managing knowledge so that when a new employee takes up a position within an already established relationship, educating the employee does not automatically and continually fall to Aboriginal people.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Shows understanding of the cultural distinctions around collaboration.
- ☐ Demonstrates trust that Aboriginal people can best define their success and what is needed to ensure success.
- ☐ Provides resources and support while taking a contributor role in meetings and gatherings (rather than asserting power).
- ☐ Proactively and jointly assesses risks and how to address them.
- ☐ Develops accurate work, operational and/or project plans that reflect the results of collaboration.
- ☐ Implements plans that honour agreements resulting from collaborative processes.
- ☐ Follows agreements by organizing and co-ordinating the allocation of resources.
- ☐ Communicates openly and regularly with all involved.
- ☐ Ensures timely delivery of quality products and services through monitoring and evaluating collaboratively.
- ☐ Ensures everyone, including new staff, is up-to-date on current processes and commitments with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Analyzes organizational goals and looks for ways to support Aboriginal self-determination.
- ☐ Collaboratively determines measures to assess progress and compliance.
- ☐ Takes initiative to gather all stakeholders when progress reports show a need to adjust.
- ☐ "Clears the way" for staff to implement plans, allowing adequate time for collaboration as necessary.
- ☐ Utilizes a strong understanding of relationships, to facilitate between Aboriginal goals and the goals of the public service.



**ACHIEVING
BUSINESS
RESULTS**

Collaborative Planning, Organizing and Coordinating

Needs development when....

- ☐ Makes mistakes due to lack of understanding of the cultural distinctions around collaboration.
- ☐ Maintains records and plans that are disorganized or confusing.
- ☐ Moves ahead without collaboration due to sense of urgency.
- ☐ Interprets work and organizational goals solely from public service perspective.
- ☐ Takes well-intentioned action without collaboration.
- ☐ Fails to fully educate and/or put into place transition reports when leaving a work position that includes collaboration and relationship with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Leaves the job of educating new staff to Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Fails to translate collaborative results into planning.
- ☐ Unconsciously returns to old ways of doing business in developing plans or measuring plan progress and compliance.
- ☐ Fails to demonstrate sensitivity to the resource capacity of Aboriginal people when designing timelines.
- ☐ Makes changes without first jointly evaluating, analyzing and refining work products and services.
- ☐ Asserts power to lead meetings or takes over during meetings.
- ☐ Waits for problems to occur prior to taking action to adjust or address.
- ☐ Fails to collaborate prior to making adjustments.
- ☐ Fails to communicate openly and regularly with all involved.
- ☐ Resists allocating resources to support goals leading to Aboriginal self-determination and to support Aboriginal people in general.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Why is this important?

"This is an important and high level competency if we are to be successful. If we promote Aboriginal self-determination, then we have an obligation to share knowledge and resources with Aboriginal communities. I do this by listening to what the community has to say and then adapt language and practices to build a foundation within a community. It requires translation from their needs to our resources, and some creativity. It's a matter of looking at how our business intersects with what is important to the community. I look for opportunities to adapt and find solutions for what the community needs, and work toward this."

Rob Rail, Director
Ministry of Children and Families,
Prince George



Where ideas work

Managing Organizational Resources

Managing Organizational Resources is the ability to creatively think about allocation of organizational resources (e.g., people, materials, assets, funding) to support the self-determination of Aboriginal people. It may involve taking strategic risks with organizational resources, and incorporating ingenuity to maximize results. It includes the ability to look for improvements that do not require significant resourcing while committing to fully resourcing when indicated. It is collaborating with Aboriginal people to ensure that resources are allocated based on existing and further interests of their people and communities. It incorporates a means of measuring results relevant to both the BC Public Service and Aboriginal people.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Maximizes results with reduced resources.
- ☐ Listens to understand resource issues of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Works creatively in allocating resources for optimum results.
- ☐ Willing to take a risk and consider alternative ways of resourcing.
- ☐ Demonstrates understanding that actions with good intentions are not a substitute for understanding and collaboration.
- ☐ Engages Aboriginal people in determining allocation based upon joint organizational and Aboriginal understanding of "effective."
- ☐ Maintains balanced perspective between public service and Aboriginal resource needs.
- ☐ Offers thoughtful and detailed ideas on resource allocation that support Aboriginal self-determination.
- ☐ Implements and supports results measurement that provides relevant, valuable information to the organization and Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Leverages feedback to increase excellence in managing resources.
- ☐ Motivates others to carry out efficient, effective, and quality processes and practices.
- ☐ Shares resources ethically across boundaries when serving goals and objectives.
- ☐ Makes decisive choices in resource allocation that serve Aboriginal self-determination.
- ☐ Leads in innovation with regard to managing organizational resources in an Aboriginal context.
- ☐ Deploys resources strategically to meet shared short and long term goals.



**ACHIEVING
BUSINESS
RESULTS**

Managing Organizational Resources

Needs development when....

- ☐ Resists collaboration with Aboriginal people on deciding resource allocation.
- ☐ Makes decisions on resource allocation without Aboriginal collaboration.
- ☐ Plans resource allocation and implementation without options for input or refinement.
- ☐ Utilizes accepted management practices despite opportunity for change.
- ☐ Disregards Aboriginal input and perspective.
- ☐ Discourages ideas and innovations around resource management.
- ☐ Avoids resource allocation or management that deviates from the norm.
- ☐ Implements results measurement that serves only the needs of the public service.
- ☐ Fails to use all feedback for improving allocation and management of resources.
- ☐ Abandons ideas for resource allocation that support Aboriginal self-determination when not accepted, rather than seeking ways to understand, refine and succeed.
- ☐ Makes short term decisions that negatively impact long term goals.
- ☐ Allocates resources without ethical considerations inherent with being a public service employee.
- ☐ Offers resources that cannot be allocated or deployed due to ethical or legal implications.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Why is this important?

"Concepts of time differ. There are differences even for Aboriginal people between today's society and yesteryear's society. Indian time is the time in which it takes to get things done. It is when the salmon berries are out, when the deer are plentiful, when the salmon are running – traditional ceremonies always take place during this framework of time. Indian time requires flexibility, because sometimes the herring spawn early, sometimes late. It's whatever the situation and the people tell us is right.

"So traditionally we take time to think things through, to ask elders, to ask our family members, to make the right decision. We bring all this to our business with you. If you disregard the journey then you've gotten away from the outcome that you set. You really just have to immerse yourself in the community and the culture to understand how that relationship will develop and how the process will lead to the outcomes."

Cody Caruso, Heiltsuk Nation,
Aboriginal Youth Intern
Ministry of Health, Vancouver

Process Orientation

Process Orientation places a priority on "how" things are done. It is a willingness to remain open and follow in new directions. It means setting aside mainstream ways of achieving results and instead following culturally respectful processes that also produce results. It is letting go of agendas or the need to control, and trusting that the appropriate outcome will emerge from a good journey together. It means accepting that both the use of process orientation and a "good relationship" are concrete deliverables.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Shows interest in new ways of doing business that work better for Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Accepts that ways of being and doing differ across cultures.
- ☐ Challenges self to follow Aboriginal leadership in determining and facilitating the process.
- ☐ Demonstrates understanding focusing on the process builds relationships.
- ☐ Adapts readily to a change in process.
- ☐ Adapts to a range of different social and cultural situations.
- ☐ Prepares for meetings and interactions by learning appropriate protocol (from others in the BC Public Service and Aboriginal people), the intent and meaning behind the protocol, and when it should be used in a particular setting.
- ☐ Shares early, openly and honestly any time constraints that may influence the process.
- ☐ Welcomes a meeting agenda that emerges from dialogue.
- ☐ Acknowledges that other ways of doing business are valid and valuable.
- ☐ Adapts business timelines and expectations to reflect flexibility.
- ☐ Plans contingencies for when the process may take longer than expected.
- ☐ Takes time to build relationship prior to doing business.
- ☐ Presents gifts and honorariums that follow public service and Aboriginal protocol.
- ☐ Expresses appreciation of time and effort of Aboriginal people in the process.
- ☐ Prioritizes process orientation in work with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Challenges one's tendency to value getting tasks completed over letting the process unfold.
- ☐ Helps others adjust timelines and balance between process and task orientation.
- ☐ Leads, champions and mentors in process orientation.
- ☐ Provides resource support for process orientation in work with Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Formalizes process orientation – and the concept of "relationship" as a deliverable – as an integral part of achieving business results.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Process Orientation

Needs development when....

- ☐ Sticks rigidly to timelines and methods of operation.
- ☐ Resists new ideas or ways of doing things.
- ☐ Is slow to learn from Aboriginal people or Aboriginal relations specialists and adapt processes.
- ☐ Has an agenda and follows it without consideration of what's needed for the situation.
- ☐ Wants to be respectful so doesn't share time parameters or other factors that may impact the process.
- ☐ Resists change without full consideration of what is proposed.
- ☐ Becomes so oriented to process that deliverables are not met.
- ☐ Displays frustration when following the process lead of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Interrupts speakers, reminding them of the timeline or agenda.
- ☐ Rushes the process.
- ☐ Jumps into a silence to push ahead.
- ☐ Consistently seeks to lead and control interactions.
- ☐ Pushes to get to a result or deliverable, when attention to the process would achieve results and serve the relationship.
- ☐ Focuses exclusively on getting things done.
- ☐ Unnecessarily uses the status of "urgent" and "high priority" to push to a result.
- ☐ Allows cultural incompetence to put the relationship and the business at risk.
- ☐ Aboriginal people indicate frustration with the way employee conducts the process.
- ☐ Misuses the concept of process orientation to justify underperformance.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Why is this important?

"I got involved in First Nations relations because I live in rural BC and the issues of reconciliation are tearing apart our communities. I have a view that we live in a community and the issues and interests of First Nations need to be addressed from multiple perspectives – and this means listening to everyone. Our job is to find solutions by working with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together, working through to balance often competing goals. Everyone needs to see themselves as a part of it."

Kevin Kriese,
Assistant Deputy Minister, North Area
Forests, Lands and Natural Resource
Operations, Smithers

Strategic Orientation

Strategic Orientation is the ability to link the long-range vision of Aboriginal self-determination to daily work, ranging from a simple understanding to a sophisticated awareness of the full impact of thinking and actions. It is the ability to think and operate broadly, with the goal of sustainability, to further the goals of Aboriginal people in a way that meets the collective public interest. This also means taking responsibility to collaboratively design and implement steps to redress past harms and set frameworks in place to prevent their recurrence.

Demonstrates the behaviour when...

- ☐ Understands how the goal of Aboriginal self-determination influences the work.
- ☐ Understands and implements goals and strategies developed by others.
- ☐ Aligns work to the BC Public Service and Aboriginal government/community goals in a way that serves all provincial populations.
- ☐ Thinks beyond daily activities, to the future and towards sustainability.
- ☐ Initiates deep Aboriginal engagement in a collaborative and culturally respectful way to determine long-term issues, opportunities and direction.
- ☐ Learns how success looks for Aboriginal people and derives motivation from that understanding.
- ☐ Integrates new information with old knowledge in a creative and insightful way.
- ☐ Considers Aboriginal interests and issues in the greater context of all citizens and all communities.
- ☐ Seeks new ways to include and integrate Aboriginal interests into a larger context.
- ☐ Stays current with BC Public Service and Aboriginal changes and trends (like treaty ratifications) and analyzes their impact on current and future goals.
- ☐ Outlines multiple strategies with their strengths, possibilities and risks.
- ☐ Maximizes what is available to move towards goal achievement.
- ☐ Recognizes the network of relationships within any strategy and the impact (between the public service and Aboriginal people, between goals, between work units and areas of the organization, between self and Aboriginal people).
- ☐ Devises or champions small and broad-scale strategies designed to persist across shifting political environment and resourcing fluctuations.
- ☐ Looks for and leverages links and commonalities between the goals of the public service and those of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Develops, monitors and adjusts contingency plans.
- ☐ Maintains sensitivity to the multiple goals, the background and circumstance, and the people served, when implementing strategies.
- ☐ Develops long-term goals and strategies that further the direction of the public service to support Aboriginal self-determination.



ACHIEVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Strategic Orientation

Needs development when....

- ☐ Uses repetitive behaviour and actions, maintaining low awareness, and only meeting immediate goals.
- ☐ Demonstrates little initiative to expand one's perspective.
- ☐ Exhibits little or no understanding of how the goal of Aboriginal self-determination drives the work.
- ☐ Is in a hurry to act on a "good enough" solution without considering the impact over the long term.
- ☐ Prioritizes goals of the public service without considering Aboriginal self-determination goals.
- ☐ Does not seek to develop the capacity to think strategically.
- ☐ Cannot define the importance of understanding complex relationships as part of a strategic orientation.
- ☐ Makes strategic decisions without full engagement of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Dismisses old knowledge and uses only current information.
- ☐ Fails to value and use Aboriginal perspective and information.
- ☐ Designs strategies based on current political climate that may not be sustainable.
- ☐ Sees only differences, deficits and gaps between the goals of the public service and those of Aboriginal people.
- ☐ Is unprepared when direction change or refinement is called for.
- ☐ Fails to consider potential impacts of furthering Aboriginal goals on the wider population.
- ☐ Demonstrates rigidity in furthering Aboriginal goals when a larger community interest should also be incorporated.

Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal Relations
Behavioural Competencies



Brought to you by the
BC Public Service Agency



Where ideas work

Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal people – We recognize and honour that British Columbia’s Aboriginal population is distinct and diverse. For the purposes of reference in the BC Public Service Agency Aboriginal Relations Competencies, “Aboriginal people” shall include all First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples of British Columbia. It also encompasses individuals, communities, bands, nations, organizations and urban groups.

Aboriginal relations – developing and maintaining effective business relationships between the BC Public Service and Aboriginal people, communities and organizations based on respect and recognition and firmly rooted in principles of justice and fairness. It entails ministries and individuals working collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples to achieve a better future built on positive and lasting relationships, so that Aboriginal communities are healthy, prosperous, sustainable and self-determining.

Aboriginal science and cultural knowledge – traditional (ancient) ways of knowing; a culturally connected way of understanding ideas to show how all things are living and interconnected. Some Aboriginal knowledge is sacred and may not be available publicly.

bias – a personal and sometimes unconscious preference for or dislike of something, which can lead to unfair ways of perceiving and acting

body language – a way of communicating using the body instead of the voice, such as facial expressions, gestures, and stance. Body language and other non-verbal cues are integral to many Aboriginal traditional ways of communication and should be experienced as important.

collaboration – people or groups starting together, and continuing to work together, in a mutually respectful relationship to achieve shared goals. A true process of collaboration works for all involved.

colonial contact – the time of the first contacts of European colonial representatives with the original people of the land that put into action the process of colonization and forever altered the experience of Aboriginal people

colonizing; colonial – the process of European settlement and exertion of power over the territory, resources and the original people of the land. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and applied by the colonial rulers in pursuit of the interests of the country of their origin. Colonial principles include a belief that their way is best and they are destined to rule over others. In colonizing, steps are taken to suppress the culture of others and impose new ways of being and doing.

cooperation – working together with a shared good intention and willingness

consensus – agreement among all those involved; a process of ensuring agreement of all involved, where all agree to support what they have agreed to. The process of consensus varies across cultures.

“elephant in the room” – a problem or issue that individuals are aware of but avoid naming and addressing because it may be uncomfortable or have negative consequences

external – outside of the BC Public Service organization (e.g. external customers or organizations)

facilitate – to make something possible or easier to do; to be of service to others in their empowerment

feedback – a process of open, honest communication between two or more people where useful comments and suggestions either reinforce current behaviors that contribute to a positive relationship and outcome or provide constructive ideas for improvement

indicator – a way to notice and evaluate one's ability to demonstrate a competency. Indicators help to take concepts (competency definitions) and describe how they look in action.

informal learning – learning that happens in many different settings outside of an educational setting such as a workshop. This may include visiting Aboriginal communities and organizations, listening to elders, reading articles or books, connecting across lines of business, conducting research on the internet, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning, volunteering for Aboriginal events, and more.

internal – within the BC Public Service organization (e.g. internal policies)

losing face – to be embarrassed in front of a person or group; to lose status or become less respectable

mainstream – the culture of the prevailing group that defines the norms and structures of a society. The culture is often not seen by those who belong to the prevailing group. Those from differing cultures join the mainstream in order to succeed in that society.

metaphorical – a figure of speech using something symbolic to represent something or someone, rather than in a literal way (e.g. saying that someone is an early bird). Storytelling is often a metaphorical way of expressing something where each person can derive their own meaning and learning from it.

multitask – activity in which people believe they can perform two or more tasks simultaneously as effectively as one. The brain cannot fully focus when multitasking, which means longer completion times and more errors. When multitasking during a conversation (e.g. looking up something on the internet while talking to someone on the phone) it is impossible to fully focus on what the other person is saying and detracts from having a meaningful conversation.

non-verbal cues – information expressed without words, indicating ways of thinking and being that reflect the culture: body language (e.g. pointing with the lip); the tone, volume, pace and inflection of the voice; how one dresses; where one takes their place in a procession (e.g. front of the line); how one participates in conversation (e.g. listening without interrupting). Non-verbal cues are integral to many Aboriginal traditional ways of communication and therefore should be experienced as important. The differences between Aboriginal and mainstream non-verbal communication are readily experienced in how each culture relates to silence, listening and the concept of time.

paternalism – an attitude, policy and/or practice of treating or governing people in a fatherly way, especially by providing for their needs without giving them any responsibility or freedom of choice. This perpetuates dependence upon the provider of the resources, and hinders the governed people from achieving self-determination.

process – the way in which something is carried out; how people are present together; how something is communicated. "Process" keeps the atmosphere centred on the people and their interconnection with each other. The course of business follows the direction of the relationship, respectfully moving along in a way that empowers individuals and the group.

relationship – having a connection or a link with all living things on the earth, being one part of a fully interconnected world; the connection existing between people related to or having interactions with each other; a way of being connected with each other through mutual dealings, connections, or feelings that exist. Relationships define who people are, where they come from, and how they belong.

respect – a feeling of courteous regard towards a person, the land, or other living thing; showing proper acceptance or courtesy; acknowledgment; to feel regard for and show esteem; a willingness to show consideration or appreciation

self-determination – the right of a people to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development; and to dispose of and benefit from their wealth and natural resources (Assembly of First Nations, www.afn.ca)

stereotyping – simplified and standardized views of people based on assumptions. Stereotyping can result from bias. Stereotypes are usually learned in early years from parents, teachers, peers, and the media. Once a stereotype is learned and believed, it becomes automatic thinking for the individual and influences behaviour and actions.

The New Relationship – The New Relationship is a vision for improved government-to-government relations with First Nations that will achieve the B.C. Government's goals of restoring, revitalizing and strengthening First Nations communities. Designed by representatives of the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the B.C. Assembly of First Nations, and the B.C. Government, it is based on respect, recognition and accommodation of Aboriginal title and rights. Through this new relationship, there is common commitment to reconciliation of Aboriginal and Crown titles and jurisdictions. There is commitment to work together in the new relationship to achieve strong governments, social justice and economic self-sufficiency for First Nations which will be of benefit to all British Columbians and lead to long-term economic viability.

"walk in both worlds" – The necessity for Aboriginal people to adapt to and operate in a mainstream, colonial-based society, while at the same time identifying with their own history, culture and traditions. This conflict can contribute to stress, hardship, and a loss of connection and relationship with one's culture and community. Conversely, for non-Aboriginal people "walking in both worlds" means choosing to learn, understand, and adapt to Aboriginal cultures and protocols in order to work respectfully with Aboriginal people.

"walk the talk" – to back up what one commits to with actions that fulfill the commitment; to model what one promotes and asks for in others; the demonstration of integrity

Western – reference to a culture originating with Greece and Rome; the set of literary, scientific, political, artistic and philosophical principles that set the culture apart from other civilizations

world view – the overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world; a collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group; a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart about the basic construction of reality that provides the foundation on which one lives and moves and has their being