

ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

Program Area:	2.0	Workforce Development
Sub Program:	2.3	Supporting Recruitment, Retention and Advancement
Template:	2.3.4	Career Access Program (CCAP)
Sponsor(s)	<i>Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)</i>	

1. Objective

To increase representation of Aboriginal people at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

2. Description

The CIBC Career Access Program (CCAP) was developed by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Canada (CIBC) as a career development initiative to provide support to Aboriginal people and Persons with Disabilities. During the pilot year, 12 internship positions were made available across Canada. However, placements, the employment and career development needs of the community required adapting the program to accommodate for the wide-range of skills and experience of job seekers from the Aboriginal Community.

For this reason, the CCAP evolved into a multi-path strategy intended to provide an appropriate level of supports to a greater number of job seekers from the targeted equity groups. These pathways include:

1. Direct Hire; provides coaching on resume writing, interview preparation, and career planning in addition to internal advocacy in job competitions that the individual is a strong match.
2. Career Development; uses contract employment opportunities to candidates who need to build experience in their chosen field. Career planning advice also offered to candidates in this pathway.
3. Skills Training; enhances skills of entry-level candidates through a six-week training program provided by an external partner organization. Employment is assured for candidates who successfully complete the training component.
4. Student Supports; provision of scholarships, summer employment opportunities, and co-op placement for third year students in a relevant college or university program.

To receive supports, applicants must demonstrate that they are 'job ready', which is defined as having the relevant training and experience for their career stream of choice (i.e., sales, marketing, technology, etc.). The pathway chosen is determined by this level of job readiness and the relevance of their career goal to the jobs that exist within CIBC.

The CCAP is implanted by a centralized team of human resource personal with the understanding and experience the challenges that impact the employment of Aboriginal people.

Outreach strategy to raise awareness of the program include participating in career fairs and events that serve the Aboriginal community, placement of advertisements in community-based media (e.g., Windspeaker Magazine, Say Magazine, etc.), conducting information sessions at Friendship Centres, and broadcast of job opportunities through the Inclusion Network.

These activities are intended to create a networking that provides a pipeline of potential applicants.

3. Implementation

Some of the key elements for implementation and management of this program are set out below:

1. Companies must make the environment appropriate. In doing so, they must consider the culture, type of operations and history with the particular group. For example, specialized training may be required to dispel myths if the organization has little direct experience with members of a particular group;
2. The organization's C.E.O. must be very strong and clear that 'we are all welcome here.' Furthermore, there must be additional champions to assure that this message 'trickles down' to all level. It is estimated that 1 champion is needed for every 5 managers, to keep the message consistent and clear;
3. It helps to give managers and recruiters concrete tools in order to accommodate for cultural differences and differing abilities when interviewing candidates. For example, the recruitment and interview process tend to be inconsistent with some cultural practices. It forces candidates to self-promote, which is seen as boasting and frowned upon in some cultures;
4. The Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Employment Equity Act (Sec. 5) allows this type of initiative as a Positive Measures Program. This means that the organization can solicit information equity group affiliation (e.g., Aboriginal).

4. Timeframe for Results

The enhanced CCAP was created with as part of a three-year plan to close all employment equity representation gaps at CIBC. This plan included progressive hiring targets for each year.

5. Measurable Criteria

These include:

The number of hires made through the program, and;

An increased representation of target groups in overall staff complement.

6. Budget

The annual budget of approximately \$500,000 was allocated for CCAP operations and salaries of the staff charged to implement the program.

7. Partners and Sponsors

The C.E.O. is the champion for the program with a Senior Executive Vice-President as the office "corporate sponsor". There are no external partners or sponsors.

8. Experience with the Program

Since 2003, CIBC has received 282 requests for supports through program from Aboriginal job seekers. Of this applicant pool, the résumés from 119 (42.1%) applicants showed that the foundational skills for employment in the financial sector in one or more of the following career streams:

- Personal Banking and Sales
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Business Advising
- Administrative Support.

These candidates received supports through the program that includes feedback of resumes, interview preparation, and career advising. Two candidates entered and successful completed a six week pre-employment training program.

Of the pool of eligible candidates, 28 (23.5%) secured full-time employment with CIBC with 20 (71.4%) entering through the Direct Hire Pathway, 6 (21.4%) as contract employees through the Career Development Pathway, and 2 (0.7%) were hired into a full-time role after undergoing a pre-employment training program through the Skills Development Pathway.

Of the remaining, 71 (40.3%) candidates continue to receive supports through the CCAP and 20 (16.8%) candidates withdrew from the program because they had secured employment with another employer.

9. General Applicability

The program may be applicable to any large organization. The number of interns is limited only by the organization's capacity to manage developmental opportunities.

10. Additional Information or Support

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