

ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

Program Area:	2.0	Workforce Development
Sub Program:	2.3	Supporting Recruitment, Retention and Advancement
Template:	2.3.7	Royal Eagles
Sponsor(s)	<i>RBC Financial Group</i>	

1. Objective

To create a more receptive work environment for Aboriginal employees by facilitating support networks and recognizing the added value that Aboriginal employees can bring to a company.

2. Description

The Aboriginal sector of the economy is expanding and represents an increasing market for financial services. Aboriginal individuals and communities are striving to become economically self-reliant and are addressing the deleterious effects of chronic poverty among their people. Serving this market and assisting Aboriginal people to achieve their goals is a good business investment and will, in the long-term, enhance shareholder value for investors in financial institutions generally. Therefore, increasing the number of Aboriginal employees in the bank to reflect the demographics of the general population is important and increasing Aboriginal awareness and understanding among RBC employees is essential.

The Royal Eagles were established in 1993 as recognition of the added value that Aboriginal employees offer to the bank (specialists) and the need to provide moral support for lone Aboriginal employees working in isolation (support network). The Royal Eagles have evolved into an informal advisory group in RBC providing input and guidance on:

- Aboriginal recruitment and retention issues;
- ideas for new policies, projects and initiatives for the Aboriginal market; and
- new ways of bringing in new business and retaining existing clients.

The Royal Eagles also provide Aboriginal awareness presentations to other RBC employees to help promote a favorable work environment for Aboriginal people in a diverse workforce. Informal mentorship of other Royal Eagles and of Aboriginal summer students helps with retention of Aboriginal employees.

It is important to note that an RBC employee does not have to be Aboriginal to join or participate in the Royal Eagle's activities or meetings.

3. Implementation

The Royal Eagles are organized on a locally, regionally and nationally. They have regular meetings or conference calls monthly or quarterly. In some cases, like the Ontario region, approximately 60y Royal Eagles will also meet annually face-to-face for two days.

Aboriginal employees in a company are valuable informal liaisons to the Aboriginal community. RBC Royal Eagles groups across Canada have organized and/or volunteered for National Aboriginal Day events. They have promoted awareness of Aboriginal culture in RBC branches during Diversity Month. Sometimes, the Royal Eagles have become aware of a community need and organize themselves to respond, thereby providing assistance to their community. For example, they have raised funds for Christmas gifts for remote Aboriginal communities, provided backpacks filled with school supplies for urban and on-reserve Aboriginal students, and have conducted book drives for Aboriginal schools.

4. Timeframe for Results

This program was established in 1993 as an ongoing internal support service and will remain in place as long as it provides value to RBC employees.

5. Measurable Criteria

The Royal Eagles program is generally assessed by the demonstrated interest, activities and participation by RBC Aboriginal employees and other RBC employees. Membership continues to grow.

6. Budget

Minimal direct costs - basically staff time, which is internalized.

7. Partners and Sponsors

Royal Eagles have an Executive Champion associated with each of the Royal Eagle groups within RBC.

8. Experience with the Program

RBC internal publications and the bank's internal web site provide information on the program throughout the bank. Effective internal communications and presentations at RBC employee, managers and executive meetings have successfully generated a positive and proactive "word-of-mouth" promotion for the program, particularly to new employees and managers. Other success indicators include the way that Aboriginal employees have taken ownership of the program, and the interest and involvement shown by non-Aboriginal RBC employees.

As well, the Royal Eagles' activities vary across the bank depending on value and need. It depends on the interest and need of the Aboriginal employees, the executive champions and other RBC employee interests.

9. General Applicability

This program may be of interest to companies with significant and growing Aboriginal employee participation in their workforce and looking for ways to create a more accommodating work environment for people of Aboriginal background.

10. Additional Information or Support

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