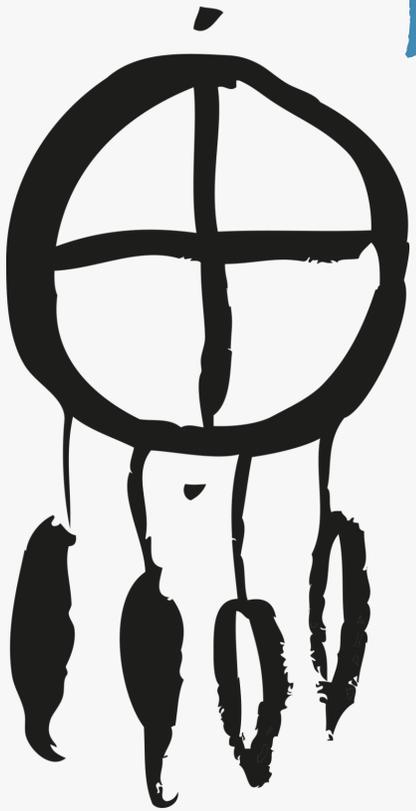


Working with Indigenous Peoples 101

Presented By Gary Pritchard



Outcomes for Today

Actions Items for workshop.

- ▶ Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory.
- ▶ Why should you care?
- ▶ Addressing the community or its members.
- ▶ Presenting to Communities.
- ▶ Do's and Don'ts when working with communities.



Please Remember...

- ▶ The material presented in this discussion is a gathering of experiences and teaching passed on to me by different people throughout the course of my travels and career.
- ▶ Experiences vary with individuals and their interpretation or meanings. I do not claim to be an expert or disrespectful to anyone or their culture. This session is meant to be a sharing of knowledge and experiences.

Please Remember...

- ▶ Every community is different and this presentation is meant as an overview, not directly linked to any one community.
- ▶ I invite you to share your knowledge and experiences throughout the teachings.

Safe Environment

- ▶ Be open to new ideas and opinions that differ from yours.
- ▶ Feel free to ask questions.
- ▶ Please be respectful with comments, actions and questions of others.
- ▶ No one is here to judge you!

Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

“At this time, I would like to acknowledge the community members and the ancestral spirits from the traditional territory of Treaty 18 signed in 1818.”

N.B.: it is customary amongst First Nations to acknowledge the host community/peoples or the territory they are on. You should incorporate this in your opening remarks.

Addressing Community Members or the Community Itself

- ▶ So what do you call the community?
- ▶ Do you call it:
 - ▶ A band?
 - ▶ A tribe?
 - ▶ A reserve?
 - ▶ A community?
- What do you call the people who live there?
- Do you call them:
 - Indians?
 - First Nations People?
 - Aboriginal?
 - Natives?
 - Indigenous Peoples?
 - First Peoples?

So What do you Think?

Answer: You call the community members what they call themselves. If you are unsure then simply ask.



What Do You
Think ?

Motivators

- ▶ Many individuals or organizations are trying to figure out how to ensure they are Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples.
- ▶ As we step back to look at the big picture, a few primary motivators emerge:
 - ▶ Avoid Costly Legal Challenges
 - ▶ Protect Shareholder Value
 - ▶ Public Image
 - ▶ People are trying to understand and do the right thing

Think and Act ~ Proactively



Strategize

- ▶ Consider the following suggestions according to your specific needs and aspirations.
 - ▶ Develop and implement *engagement programs* that focus on managing risk instead of blindly following processes or policies.
 - ▶ Provide *training* to employees to help them work effectively with Indigenous Peoples.
 - ▶ Build capacity within Indigenous communities to help them work more effectively with you

- ▶ Make *business development* with Indigenous communities a priority.
- ▶ Make *workforce development* with Indigenous communities a priority.
- ▶ Engage in *co-management work* that blends western science with traditional ecological knowledge to make decisions about land use.
- ▶ Engage in *revenue sharing* and co-management activities with Indigenous communities. ~Obligations through TREATY
- ▶ Seek to form *equity position partnerships* with Indigenous communities on *new developments*.

How do we begin to *Engage* with Communities ?



Timing is Everything

You may want to call ahead to confirm your scheduled meeting, and if you are traveling a great distance, you may be wise to confirm again while in transit

- ▶ Timing can be everything for the person who is looking to build relationships with a neighboring Aboriginal community.
- ▶ Consider tribes whose cultures revolve around fish and fishing. Those tribes have a very limited window (dictated by nature and regulated by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans) in which to catch enough fish to feed their members through the winter.
- ▶ The priority of fishing can extend to the entire community - including the Chief and Council. In this environment, it may be next to impossible to get a meeting to happen during the fishing season.

Death

- ▶ Next, consider the issue of death in an Aboriginal community.
- ▶ Life is precious in any community, but population is a critical concern to communities struggling to grow as Nations.
- ▶ In this context it is not uncommon for all Band operations, including the Band office, to shut down completely following the death in a community.
- ▶ Try not to be disappointed if this happens to you.

Your First Meeting - Expectations

What you might expect depends on many different factors.

For example:

- ▶ Are you a senior manager or a member of the rank and file?
- ▶ Do you have a large role and lots of responsibility regarding the proposed project?
- ▶ Has your organization's prior relationship with the Aboriginal community and its leaders been good, bad, or indifferent?
- ▶ Did your organization insert you at an on-going table because your predecessor was not getting along with the community and/or its leaders?

Your First Meeting

What To Do/Avoid

Another consideration may be to avoid bringing the maps and plans for the project as Aboriginal communities will want to get to know who you are as a person before any serious business is conducted.

- ✓ Be professional during your first meeting.
- ✓ Follow the lead and mood of those you are meeting with and expect to listen as much as possible.

Protocol

- ▶ It can be customary among Indigenous Peoples to acknowledge the host peoples and their territory at the outset of any meeting.
- ▶ The long struggle for respect has been tough, but through it all Indigenous Peoples have continued to follow basic protocols.
- ▶ It follows then that if you want to work effectively with Indigenous Peoples then one of the best ways to do it is to show respect to the people you are working with.
- ▶ This can be established at the beginning of any meeting by following proper protocol and acknowledging the host community, its people, and its territory.

Participate in the community...



- ▶ Continuing to participate in community cultural events.
- ▶ Visiting the community when you don't need or want something.

Words Have Impact

- ▶ The first thing to know is that words have an impact on people. Pick the right words and nothing bad happens. Pick the wrong words and hang on, it's going to be tough.
- ▶ In the Christopher Columbus story, I make the point that if you change “discovered” to “arrived” you won’t have protests in big cities.

Get the Pronunciation Right

- ▶ As a presenter, you have an opportunity to score really big points if you pronounce the community's name correctly.

- ▶ Prior coming to the community ask your contact person if there is anything you need to do prior to coming.
 - ▶ If there is a feast, is there something you could offer to bring (**AVOID high sugary foods**)
 - ▶ If you are attending ceremony, is there certain attire you should wear
 - ▶ Women, when you are attending ceremony, its recommended you be wearing a long lightweight dress
 - ▶ Ask to borrow one or purchase for a craftmaker

Seating Arrangements



Correct



Community and Engagement Protocols

- ▶ Does your company have its own policy?
- ▶ Does the community you want to work with have one?
 - Have you read it?
 - Google them or email me for them





▶ Be apart of the community. Ask to get involved in the local communities events.

▶ Attend pow wow

▶ Sweat lodge

▶ Hockey/Baseball tournament

▶ Show that there is an interest in the community outside of a project by project basis.

▶ Offer to take on youth and provide training.

Do's and don'ts when working with communities

THESE ARE MAINLY DO NOTS 😊

Don't Use Acronyms In Your Communications

- We have attended many meetings in First Nation communities and have witnessed first-hand the overuse of acronyms by other visitors, which may make great sense to the speaker, but not to those listening.
- Remember where you are and who your audience is.
- Not only will many in your First Nation audience be unfamiliar with your acronyms, they might not even want to learn them so don't lace your presentation with them.

Don't Use Too Many Technical Terms In Your Communications

- ▶ Use language that the lay person will understand.
- ▶ If in doubt, explain things in plain language that everyone can understand.
- ▶ ***First Nation language is based on the use of adjectives and not nouns as used in English.***

Are Indigenous Peoples or Communities Stakeholder?

- ▶ What is a stakeholder?
 - ▶ A person, group or organization that has interest or concern in an organization.
 - ▶ Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the organization's actions, objectives and policies. Some examples of key stakeholders are creditors, directors, employees, government (and its agencies), owners (shareholders), suppliers, unions, and the community from which the business draws its resources.

Don't Tell The Community You Are There To Speak To Them As “Stakeholders”

- “Stakeholder” is a commonly used business term that should be avoided at all costs when working with First Nations communities.
- If a First Nation community does not like what you are doing they have the ability to launch legal action putting your project in immediate jeopardy.
- In this context, First Nations people are not merely stakeholders - they have constitutionally protected rights and are used to dealing with Canada, provinces and territories on a Nation-to-Nation basis.

Don't Tell The Community That You Have A Timeline And That They Have To Meet It

- Timelines are thorny issues in First Nation communities.
- A good working rule to incorporate is “our timeline is our problem”.
- At present, most people who go to a community to do business have a timeline. Do not “tar your project with that dirty brush”; you’ll just create resistance and in the end stretch your project’s timeline.

- 
- ▶ If you push for the sake of your timeline, you may find that it compromises future business opportunities in that community.
 - ▶ Conversely, you will likely win respect and a more receptive hearing if you approach the community with an attitude marked by interest and willingness to listen, leaving your timeline back in the office.

Don't Tell The Community What Dates To Meet

- Your meeting is just one of many and may not be a priority for the community leaders who are very busy managing and addressing the needs of their communities.
- There are also traditional and cultural pursuits such as hunting and fishing that only happen at certain times of the year and will take precedence over your meeting.
- It would be a more respectful strategy to ask which dates would work best for their community.

Don't Tell The Community That You Have To Treat Them “Equally” With Others

- “Equality” is another term that should be avoided when working with First Nations people.
- When they hear the term equality or equal they hear that they have to give up their constitutionally protected rights.
- Or they hear we can be equal only if they give up their human rights to be who they are as a people.

Don't Go To Them With A Completed Draft Plan For Your Project Before Consultation Has Started

- This signals to the community that your project is a done deal and you are meeting with them only because it looks good - an item to be checked off on the list.
- Insincerity is easily detected.

Don't Confuse Reserves With Reservations

- Reserve is the Canadian term.
- Reservation is the American term or used in booking hotels and restaurants.

Don't Impose Or Expect Direct Eye Contact

- Many non-Aboriginal People believe that it is important to maintain eye contact during conversation.
- For many Aboriginal Peoples, continuous eye contact may not be expected or even accepted as a courtesy of conversation.
- For Residential School Survivors, eye contact with school or church officials often led to physical punishment.

Don't Impose Or Expect Direct Eye Contact

- ▶ When you have the opportunity to attend an Aboriginal community event, look at where the eyes go - they are usually not on the speaker.
- ▶ This is not a sign of disrespect. An Aboriginal listener is usually more interested in following the speaker's words than where s/he is gazing.

Don't Overdress

- Along with any assumptions, you should also leave behind the business suit, Gucci or high heel shoes. This attire can send two wrong messages:
 1. You have lots of money.
 2. Your attire indicates a “defender of the empire” attitude.
- Both of these messages can have serious ramifications for your meeting by setting a tone that may not accurately reflect you or your organization.



Yes



Don't Obsess About Duration Of A Meeting

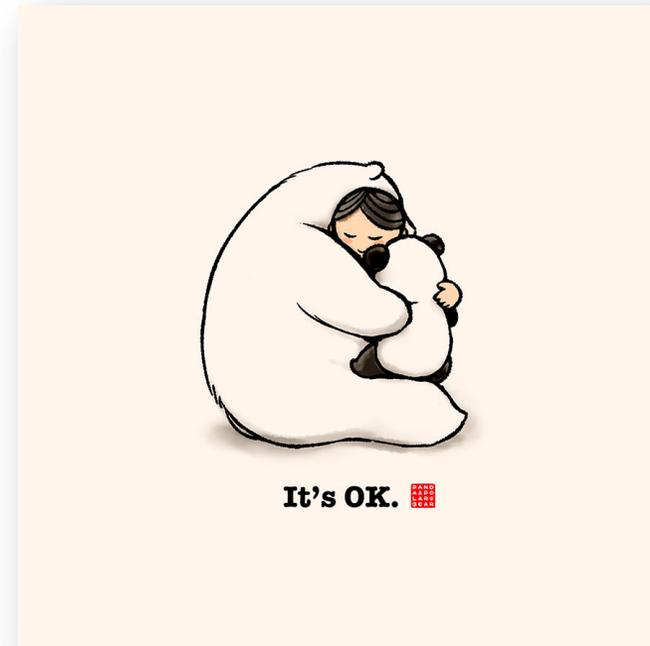
- Sometimes meeting agendas aren't adhered to if some topics take longer to discuss or new ones arise.
- Be present in the moment. When you book a meeting with a First Nation, try to keep a buffer of time between the expected ending of the meeting and your next appointment.
- Don't check your watch, and definitely turn off your phone.

Don't Feel That You Must Answer Or Fill The Silent Periods During Discussions

- These silent periods can be longer than you are accustomed to, and may be needed for thought formulation.
- Try to ensure that the speaker has finished before you contribute to the conversation.
- And remember the saying “There is a reason we have two ears and only one mouth.”

It's Ok

- ▶ Do not be intimidated by going into a community.
- ▶ If you make a mistake, simply apologize.
- ▶ It is perfectly acceptable to say, I don't have the answer but we can get that information to you. The follow up in a few days with the answer.



Any Questions? Miigwetch-Thank you for Listening

▶ Reach out to me if you any questions

▶ Email:

g.prtichard@cambiumaboriginal.com

▶ Phone: (705) 220.1952



"What I love most about staying home to self-quarantine is who I share it with."

Photo Credit: Gary Prichard

"What I love most about staying home to self-quarantine is who I share it with."