



CHANGING WORKFORCE

LEADING BY EXAMPLE



Diversity in Practice: Bison Transport

Bison Transport has had good success with meeting its labour needs – and even growing its workforce. It attributes this to a conscious focus on diversity and inclusion in its recruitment and retention efforts..

Overview

Bison Transport offers full truckload service, less than truckload, full service logistics, dedicated fleet operations, yard management and Warehousing & Distribution.

Head office

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Terminals

Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and British Columbia.

Employees

Since its foundation in 1969, Bison has grown from 32 employees to approximately 2,600 employees. This includes - e.g. persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, women, visible minorities, newcomers to Canada.

Recruitment

Bison is well aware of the importance of inclusive recruitment methods – it has recently reviewed its job postings with the support of Work Inc. to ensure that qualified candidates with disabilities would not be excluded.

To maximize its success in reaching out to potential candidates, it utilizes a variety of channels:

- Partnering with organizations that work with candidates from diverse backgrounds that advertise Bison's opportunities and pre-screen candidates – these include Ability Axis, Winnipeg Transition Centre, immigrant career fairs, International student career fairs, and the Manitoba Start and Success Skills Center.
- Conducting presentations for new immigrants at employment centres, and hosting and participating in career fairs to meet candidates and spread awareness of job opportunities
- Employee referral programs

Plans are in the works to expand metrics to track most successful outreach methods in terms of retention after one year. In addition, Bison's Transport's Driver Finishing Program (DFP) assists developing drivers who have successfully obtained their Class 1/AZ License but lack the minimum experience required, to complete it through the company.

“What I can say about our success is that we work hard to get our name out there – using a variety of resources and not doing the same thing every year has helped a lot. The diversity of our workforce is growing.”

- HR Advisor

Engagement

Diversity and inclusion activities are guided by a mandate and policy that highlights Bison's focus on equity based on merit, which includes a discrimination policy.

Communication is a key tool used to promote inclusion in the workplace – and has led to unanticipated benefits:

- Management encourages employees to talk about diversity and its value, especially in terms of recruitment, as part of daily conversation
- In efforts to promote and build awareness about self-identification, it has recently updated – and communicated – its definition of persons with disabilities, to include diabetes and other invisible disabilities
- Its open workspace has fostered an environment where people share: some talk about their experiences in other jobs, many of which they did not include in their application; this has enabled the organization to discover a wealth of transferrable skills within its current employee base

The company keeps a pulse on its approach and its impact on the engagement of its employees through several means:

- It has established an Employment Equity Committee to monitor progress in meeting its diversity goals. This Committee meets quarterly to discuss and evaluate ways to attract employees from diverse backgrounds, and identify new possible partnerships to leverage
- It tracks turnover by tenure which helps to uncover critical periods for attrition
- Revamped a Respectful Workplace e-learning module that focuses on Bison's efforts to maintain a respectful work environment where diversity is valued and all employees are treated with respect and dignity.
- The company carried out an employee survey in 2015.

Retention

Accommodation and return to work measures are integral to the company's approach to engaging and retaining workers. So too is a focus on giving access to career development opportunities - if an employee is interested in changing jobs, the manager will work with him or her to try to facilitate this.

Based on findings that 50% of its turnover is in the first year, Bison has implemented measures to connect with employees to assess how the employee is doing and provide any support needed to facilitate integration:

- Managers and new hires meet for a one-on-one check in within the first 30 days, then at four months (end of probation period), then again at nine months (before the annual review).
- The connection is made using various means depending on the type of work, e.g. phone or face-to-face.

Diversity in Practice: Canada Cartage

Canada Cartage recognizes that its people drive its success. Its openness to diversity, its inclusive and family-oriented work culture, and a focus on communication have contributed to high retention levels and many long-service employees.

Overview

Canada's largest specialized provider of fully-outsourced dedicated trucking fleets and complementary last-mile logistics solutions.

Head Office

Mississauga, ON

Terminals

British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec.

Employees

3,000 employees total, coming from a diversity of backgrounds

Recruitment

The company focuses on seeking out the skills and aptitude needed, and considers candidates from all backgrounds.

Its positive workplace is reflected in the success of its referral bonus program, a program that provides employees with a financial incentive when a friend or family member they encourage to apply is hired on. The program is used mainly for difficult to fill positions such as commercial drivers or licensed mechanics. In 2015, the program was formally branded and introduced to a group of long service employees and retirees in Ontario. The program, now known as the Ambassador program, offers a financial incentive to current and former Canada Cartage employees, and those who have a working relationship with the company as a Broker or Agency worker.

The company currently has a working relationship with people from multiple cultures and through the Ambassador program Canada Cartage hopes to extend its reach and encourage people to apply because they have a friend or relative already working for the company.

“When you keep things simple, have the basics of valuing employees, hire based on skill, and listen to your people – it all falls into place. As an employer we need people – and we need the right people, regardless of age, gender, nationality, etc. When there are problems, we sort through them. If someone has a disability, we will accommodate the best we can – because we value people and treat them with dignity and respect.”

**- Senior Director,
Human Resources
- Eastern Canada**

Canada Cartage has also recruited many drivers through a relationship built with a visible-minority owned owner-operator company. Nationally, it has also had success with advertising job postings on websites and other media oriented to specific talent pools, such as the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society, and Bassi radio in Toronto. The company includes an explicit statement in all job postings that welcomes applications from “Aboriginal people, members of visible minority groups and women.”

Engagement

Open, ongoing communication is encouraged at all levels - managers explicitly articulate that they are approachable, and have an open door policy. This has contributed to employees feeling comfortable enough to talk about openly about disabilities, come forward with accommodation requests, and raise any concerns about self-identification in the company’s Employment Equity survey - which has helped efforts to communicate the benefits of self-identification. This culture has been promoted from the top – drivers have in the past been known to phone the company’s CEO directly. Issues are resolved promptly, through dialogue, and listening. Canada Cartage also conducts an annual employee survey, which provides employee an opportunity to provide input anonymously.

Retention

As possible, efforts are made to accommodate workers - such as when they make a request a move to another less strenuous job, or for changes to promote physical mobility in the work space.

A range of initiatives and events – both employee and employer-led – are supported to demonstrate appreciation for employees, bring all employees together for cultural celebrations and encourage relationship-building amongst its increasingly diverse workforce:

- Driver Appreciation Week BBQ
- Truck rodeo
- Regular potluck lunches and breakfasts
- Cultural celebrations, ranging from Diwali to Christmas
- Service anniversary recognition
- 25 Year Club

Diversity in Practice: Kriska Transportation

Despite the competitive employee market, Kriska Transportation has been successful in increasing its number of professional drivers. A focus on diversity has been critical to this achievement. Realizing the benefits to be gained, diversity is now a feature across the organization - not only at the front line, but also in office roles, the corporate team, and in leadership.

Recruitment

Kriska attributes its success in attracting candidates for hard-to-fill driver positions by:

- treating drivers with respect and dignity - e.g. recognizing drivers as skilled workers (while some companies consider them unskilled)
- competitive salary
- new and reliable equipment - e.g. trucks include fridges and APUs
- allowing drivers to choose where they drive (choice dispatch)

Recruitment is carried out by a team of recruiting managers who attend job fairs and industry events, place ads in industry publications, and use social media, amongst others. It has also had good results with recruiting through:

- Ontario apprentice programs for truck drivers
- Agencies, in increasing the representation of women, Aboriginal peoples and Canadian Forces Veterans. For example, through partnering with Canada Company, which supports employers in recruiting veterans, Kriska has hired approximately 50 veterans over two years, most of whom work as drivers
- Its referral program, which has been successful in particular with its owner-operator partners who come from a range of culturally diverse backgrounds
- Targeted advertising – including in Canadian military and veteran publications

Once the company identifies a qualified candidate, it is prepared to invest in the individual to enable them to meet all requirements for the job. For example, for drivers referred who are newcomers to Canada, Kriska provides guidance on resources relating to:

- obtaining the necessary licensing
- facilitating access to English as Second Language (ESL) training. This has made a big difference in removing the language barrier that newcomers might encounter

Development

To build leadership capacity to support the creation of an inclusive workplace, Kriska provides diversity training to supervisors and managers, including topics such as generational and cultural diversity.

To build its pipeline of talented women, the company started KNOW (Kriska's Network of Women) – a group to encourage women to join the industry. KNOW hosts various events to give Kriska employees insights into the barriers, challenges and experiences of women in the industry, and communicates the message that the organization is serious about developing a more inclusive workplace.

Company leadership has also demonstrated its commitment to diversity, through its involvement in THRC's Women With Drive initiative, and the MicroSkills' Women in Transportation Program that prepares women for employment as AZ-licensed truck drivers for jobs in transportation, public transport and other sectors involved in distributing goods.

Retention

Kriska's approach to diversity and inclusion is guided by a corporate diversity policy, and statements on equity, discrimination and harassment which are posted at all terminals. This helps reinforce its commitment to an inclusive workplace, and make employees aware of their responsibility in this regard.

As part of employee retention, the company also:

- strives to accommodate employee needs on individual basis – a common accommodation is to give time off outside regular days off.
- recognizes and celebrates the diversity of staff - e.g. messages in multiple languages are distributed to mark key cultural or religious events, such as Diwali, and others.
- created the SafeHaven Program In 2015 in collaboration with Unilever - it serves to keeps drivers safe by giving them a safe and productive place to sleep on site. According to a study of over 4,000 drivers, nearly 40% said it takes them, on average, an hour or more to find parking for the night – 28% sometimes stay on freeway ramps, 52% behind shopping centres and 45% use abandoned gas stations or vacant strip malls. This program helps improve physical safety for both drivers and cargo.

Diversity in Practice: Northern Resource Trucking

Northern Resource Trucking is committed to providing as many of its available opportunities to local First Nations and Métis people. Supporting young talent with potential in meeting their career goals, flexibility in scheduling and a focus on giving back to the community have been key to the company's low turnover rates and steady supply of talent.

Overview

Northern Resource Trucking (NRT) is a 71% Aboriginal-owned limited partnership that was formed in 1986. It is comprised of twelve First Nations & Métis partners from northern Saskatchewan, along with Trimac Transportation.

Its fleet hauls consumables, mining materials, liquid bulk & dry bulk commodities, and mining machinery for the companies that mine the rich resources of their region.

Location

Headquartered in Saskatoon, the company has key operations in La Ronge and is licensed to operate across Canada.

Employees

Roughly 180 employees including northern owner-operators. Twenty-five percent of the workforce is Aboriginal and 10% are women. The company operates 110 trucks with 140 drivers.

Recruitment

The NRT Partnership was formed by northern people for northern people and continues to help build the northern economy. As part of its commitment to the local communities, the company aims to employ as many local people as possible in all available positions –truck drivers, mechanics and dispatchers, etc.

Operations include the NRT Driver Training School in La Ronge, a SGI-accredited facility, which has been in existence for 20 years; most candidates are from Northern Saskatchewan. In the last six years, approximately 160 students have been trained – the wide majority of whom are from local Aboriginal communities – with a 90% successful employment rate. Many graduates have been able to take advantage of training funding through bands, communities and the regional government.

As possible, graduates are employed at NRT Others have secured employment at mining and other companies in the region and beyond. NRT offers advice to all graduates on how to get into their area of focus.

“NRT proved that a company could be built and prosper in [a] of partnership that combines the wisdom and knowledge of two cultures.”

- Branch Manager

When recruiting, NRT hiring managers look primarily for aptitude, attitude and desire to work. People who demonstrate the potential required are given a chance to get in at the ground level - for example, as a forklift driver. Each manager monitors his or her staff, and works with him or her to help them build up the experience required to advance to the next level.

Engagement

The company actively works at engaging its staff:

- adaptable dispatch and operations team that tries to be flexible with employee requests for time off
- offering assistance to new hires with relocation to the region and transitioning into the workforce. This includes providing letters of reference.
- open door policy for managers
- huge health and safety focus; issues are dealt with in a timely fashion
- ongoing support for community sporting and cultural initiatives, such as hockey teams, community artists, and school trips

A key part of its success in attracting and retaining local staff is its focus on being a Good Samaritan and corporate citizen for the local communities. NRT trucks are a regular feature in the area, and as possible within legal and safety requirements, drivers are permitted to stop to assist local people that have broken down.

Retention

Annual industry turnover for drivers can range from 35-60%; at NRT, this is only around 20%. Seven of the original drivers are still working for the company. Although the company sometimes uses social media – such as Facebook and Twitter - for recruiting, personal recommendations and referrals from current employees means that the company rarely has to advertise.

Management attributes its successful retention rates to:

- Opportunities to do a variety of work – regarding commodities hauled and vehicles used
- Schedule – drivers can do a full day's legal logbook drive, while at the same time being able to get their required eight hours sleep and be home every second night
- Being able to work close to home – scheduling often allows drivers to go through the area where they live; as possible within legal and customer requirements, drivers can sometimes stop for breaks at home
- New challenges to experience – as well as driving in large centres, NRT drivers operate on northern gravel roads, haul on ice roads or haul over dimensional loads
- Driving in familiar territory and conditions
- Competitive compensation package

Diversity in Practice: Trimac Transportation

Trimac Transportation's business is all about diversity – in terms of “customer, geography, commodity and end markets”. Extending this focus on diversity to its employee base has enabled the company to better reflect its increasingly diverse customer base.

Overview

Trimac Transportation, in operation since 1945, provides bulk transport and related distribution and industrial services including fleet maintenance, tank washing, transloading and logistics.

Head office

Calgary, AB

Terminals

Located throughout Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Ontario, Quebec, and across the US.

Employees

1,400 employees. In a male-dominated industry, the company strives to continually improve the diversity of their workforce - 21% of the current workforce is Women, 4% is Aboriginal Peoples, 3% is Persons with Disabilities, and 16% are Members of Visible Minorities.

Recruitment

Trimac's focus is on finding qualified candidates, no matter what their background is. It has been able to find good talent using both traditional and non-traditional recruitment methods, such as:

- Head-hunting
- Company website
- Social media, such as LinkedIn
- Kijiji (most effective means)
- Working with agencies, such as Aboriginal Link, to advertise positions among Aboriginal communities

To further support diverse recruitment efforts, the company leverages the skills of its multilingual recruiters in reaching out to candidates from visible minority or immigrant backgrounds. The company has both English and French speaking recruiters.

“We aspire to provide opportunities to qualified individuals looking for a successful career, who are reflective of our diverse community.”

- HR Advisor

Retention

Trimac's diversity and inclusion initiatives are guided by a three-year plan to increase its diverse workforce – as part of its focus on transparency and to demonstrate its commitment, it is available on the company intranet for all employees and recent recruits.

Trimac acknowledges the link between fostering an environment where people feel accepted, and their success in the workplace. Measures in place to support this include:

- A solid onboarding program to set new hires up for success – especially talent with more limited work experience who may need a little more guidance up front. E-training is utilized to develop new hires on Trimac's safety driven processes and procedures.
- Mandatory training on respect in the workplace, backed up by a zero tolerance policy for harassment and a comprehensive policy available to employees. These steps are taken to promote an inclusive environment where all employees are treated with respect.
- Accommodating, as best as possible, any employee requests for accommodation.
- Trimac works with all employees' varied schedules and abilities to promote a flexible work environment where people of different backgrounds can feel welcome.

Accountability

To sustain efforts and promote a commitment to diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization, all employees and managers are made aware that they have a responsibility to contribute to the organizational goals:

- accountability – to create a diverse culture and comfortable working environment for all employees, including members of minority groups
- awareness - of plans and goals and its aspiration to thrive as an equitable company

Ongoing monitoring

Progress towards building a diverse workforce is monitored annually through Trimac's confidential, voluntary employment equity survey. Results are reviewed by the company's Employment Equity committee, which revisits approaches based on survey results.

To further gauge progress to inform decision-making, Trimac carried out another survey in 2014 with a random selection of 20% of employees on inclusion - questions related to employee experiences and perceptions of how they felt the company is doing in terms of embracing diversity and accommodating needs, and recommendations on what they can do better to create a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Diversity in Practice: Westcan Bulk Transport

Westcan Bulk Transport places an emphasis on people, and encourages a corporate culture built on teamwork, honesty, openness, and respect. The diversity of its workforce, and large proportion of employees who have been with the company for 10 years or more, is a testament to the success of its inclusion efforts.

Overview

2014 marked Westcan's 50th anniversary in the transportation industry. The company has grown to become a leading bulk commodity hauler in Western Canada and the Western Arctic.

Head office

Edmonton, Alberta

Terminals

Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario and the Northwest Territories

Employees

The company has close to 1000 employees, of which about 1 in 8 is a woman; 1 in 7 is a member of a visible minority; the workforce also includes employees who are Aboriginal and individuals with a disability.

Recruitment

As well as the company website, Kijiji and social media, Westcan has had good results recruiting through its referral program where Westcan offers a financial reward to employees who refer qualified applicants that are successful in being hired. All job postings highlight the company's commitment to being an "equal opportunity employer that embraces diversity in the workplace and equivalently considers applications from qualified women, men, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities."

To reach out to untapped talent pools, jobs are posted through organizations such as Aboriginal Link. Also specific to Aboriginal talent, Westcan partnered with the North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) last winter on a program to develop Aboriginal Class 1 truck drivers, funded by the Government of Canada through the Mine Training Society. The funding is approved on the basis that Westcan/NSMA shared the training costs through in-kind contributions with the Mine Training Society. Currently, the Program has had a successful graduate that transitioned into Westcan's Novice Driver Training Program (see below).

To widen the door for driver applicants with good potential, but who lack the required two years of practical experience, the Novice Driver Training Program was established. It gives drivers an opportunity to get behind the wheel and build their driving experience with the use of stationary and mobile simulators, and mentorship by professional driver trainers.

"A focus on diversity and inclusion benefits not only members of specific talent pools, but the entire organization. We find that having a diverse workplace brings a multitude of new views and values, which enriches the experience of working at Westcan for all employees."

- HR Representative

Retention

Westcan encourages and supports work-life balance for all employees – all efforts are made to accommodate requests such as flexible hours to enable employees to meet their family and personal responsibilities, or to facilitate carpooling with coworkers.

Health and wellness is also a focus for Westcan – it offers:

- an Employee Assistance Program for all employees and their immediate family
- a fatigue management program for full time company drivers
- comprehensive company paid health and dental benefits

Westcan believes in open, continuous and two-way communication with its employees both as key to engagement and retention, and to enable everyone to contribute to shaping a positive corporate culture. Information is shared, feedback is gathered and cohesion is encouraged at all levels of the organization:

- A comprehensive Employee Survey is rolled out bi-annually to allow employees to provide feedback on their experience and their work environment
- On an annual basis, a member of the Executive Team hosts a “Town Hall” meeting at each of its locations – Employee Survey results and how they will be fed back into the organization are discussed in this open forum, along with other topics of interest
- Formal 30, 60 and 80 day check-ins are conducted with new hires to build the relationship and provide any supports needed
- The company’s intranet offers employees easy access to all policies and programs, including workplace diversity and equity plans

Education and Training

In 2014, Westcan developed and delivered Cultural Awareness training to encourage inclusion and team-cohesion, and build cultural competence across the organization.

It also tapped into the services of a community organization working with persons with disabilities to educate staff on the definition and scope of disabilities, and to gather intelligence and best practices to help understand and address barriers for this talent pool.

Westcan’s initiatives are working: engagement and enablement results from its 2014 Employee Survey increased since the 2012 survey. Westcan attributes this gain to its responsiveness to addressing findings from the earlier survey – this is further echoed in its improving retention levels and a steady decrease in turnover in recent years.

Westcan has been most recently recognized for its efforts through receiving the Diversity Leadership Award of Distinction at the Alberta Business Awards Gala in Edmonton in 2015.

About Trucking HR Canada

Trucking HR Canada is an industry leader, spearheading collaboration among the stakeholders in the Canadian trucking industry to:

- Identify Human Resources issues, trends, opportunities and challenges
- Support the industry in recruiting and retaining the Human Resources needed to meet the industry demand
- Partner on initiatives impacting Human Resources for the industry
- Provide a national forum for gathering and exchanging knowledge on HR issues, and sharing best practices
- Promote the trucking industry's careers

As a national partnership-based organization, we promote the provision of safe, secure, efficient, and professional trucking services in Canada.

The organization is a neutral forum for gathering ideas, information and knowledge on Human Resources and best practices in training.

Our focus is on trucking and logistics needs within the freight transportation network.

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- Trimac Transportation
- Westcan Bulk Transport

Canada

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Trucking HR Canada resources

HR Guides

Your Guide to Human Resources is a series of three volumes which provide content, templates and tools related to human resources in the trucking industry from recruitment and retention strategies to understanding the new generations at work and a business case for the implementation of sound HR practices.

HR Circle Check

This free interactive online tool can give you an overview of your HR practices and identify areas of concern. It can be completed in as little as 15 minutes and provides you with both a high-level overview of your HR practices and a more detailed HR diagnostic for each area.

Top Fleet Employers program

Launched in 2014, the Top Fleet Employers program recognizes the importance of having sound HR policies and practices in the trucking industry. It recognizes fleets that offer the best workplaces in Canada's trucking industry, as reflected in the broad range of human resources policies and programs that they have in place. Top Fleet Employers is not a competition – it's a recognition of meeting HR standards of excellence.

Women with Drive

Women with Drive is Trucking HR Canada's National project to promote women in freight transportation. Its objectives include raising awareness among women of the various career opportunities; raising awareness among employers of recruitment and retention practices that can better support the integration of women into the workforce; and the development of practical tools to support connecting women with careers in trucking.

Human Factors series

A seminar and webinar will also be developed to support employers in implementing workplace diversity programs.



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