

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

**A Roadmap for
Canada's Trucking and
Logistics Industry**



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Background

Canada's trucking and logistics industry is growing. It is hard to overstate the critical importance of the industry to Canada's economy. Yet, shortages in key occupations such as drivers and mechanics put this industry at risk.

Recent research based on forecasts from the Conference Board of Canada estimate a driver supply and demand gap of 34,000 by 2024. In addition, many employers expect shortages for other key occupations – including dispatchers, senior managers, technicians, mechanics and more. The implementation of successful recruitment and retention strategies is more important than ever.

And this is happening amidst an ever-changing and diverse workforce.

The trucking sector overall is aging faster than the general workforce – and the average truck driver age is already 7 ½ years older than the average Canadian worker. Retiring workers are not being replaced by new entrants at the same rate. The high average age of the current workforce brings its own issues – many employees will retire and many of those who are still working are more likely to have disabilities such as mobility restrictions, diabetes, sleep apnea and others.

High rates of turnover – particularly among truck drivers – lead to vacancies, more shortages and business risks.

Canada's labour force comprises increasing numbers of women, visible minorities, newcomers to Canada, youth, Indigenous peoples and people with disabilities. People come to today's workplace with different backgrounds and different needs and expectations. These groups are currently under-represented in trucking, which means there are untapped labour pools for which the industry needs an attraction and retention strategy.

The transportation industry ranks below most other federally regulated sectors when it comes to workforce diversity. Women account for 48% of Canada's workforce, but only 3% of the country's truck drivers, mechanics, technicians and cargo workers. While less than 15% of drivers are under the age of 35, 46% of Indigenous peoples are under 24; and, the trucking industry's immigrant population is 3 points below the national average of 22%.

There are opportunities to reach out to these under-utilized sources of talent.

The following pages summarize Trucking HR Canada's diversity and inclusion framework for the Canadian trucking and logistics industry. They also highlight the benefits of an increasingly diverse workforce. Some trucking employers have already introduced related best practices – and are reaping the benefits. Their experiences are captured in Trucking HR Canada's *Leading by Example* report, to inspire and enable others, so everyone can reap the benefits of workplace diversity.

Key Definitions

Diversity – Diversity refers to all the ways in which we differ. It includes the unique personal characteristics that distinguish us as individuals and groups. These include but are not limited to: age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, class, creed, religion, sexual orientation, educational background and expertise.

Inclusion - Inclusion is about creating an environment that accepts, utilizes, accommodates and appreciates the talents, skills, abilities, perspectives and leadership styles of all employees and clients, including all aspects of their diversity, so that we all have a place at the organizational table. While Diversity is the mix, Inclusion is getting the mix to work well together.

Equity - Fairness, impartiality, even-headedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life. Employment equity encourages the establishment of working conditions that are free of barriers, corrects the conditions of disadvantage in employment and promotes the principle that employment equity requires special measures and the accommodation of differences for the four designated groups in Canada (women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities).

Equality – The right to equal treatment, without discrimination.

Respectful workplace – A respectful workplace is one that values diversity and inclusion, dignity of the person, courteous conduct, mutual respect, fairness and equality, positive communication between people and collaborative working relationships.

The Business Case

Seeing as a key element in the implementation of a successful diversity and inclusion framework is getting buy-in from senior management, HR practitioners are encouraged, as a first step, to learn more about the business case for diversity and inclusion.

Published in 2016 by Trucking HR Canada, the *Changing Workforce: The Case for Diversity in Canada's Trucking Industry* provides HR practitioners in the industry with the necessary information to make the case for increased focus on diversity and inclusion. A first of its kind in Canada's trucking and logistics industry, the business case highlights the numerous benefits of diversity within the industry's workforce. The document can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2qUZHtG>.

The Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion

Among the key benefits explained in the business case, the following are at the foundation of Trucking HR Canada's Diversity and Inclusion Framework for the trucking and logistics industry:

- A more diverse workforce can help with reducing shortages;
- A more diverse workforce can help with better retention and lower turnover;
- A more diverse workforce can help with health and wellness;
- A more diverse workforce can help with productivity and innovation;
- A more diverse workforce can help with customer and market benefits;
- A more diverse workforce can help with wage subsidies and lower training costs;
- A more diverse workforce can help with employer branding.

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples comprise three groups of people: Inuit, Métis and First Nations. Of Canada's 1.5 million Indigenous peoples, 46% are under the age of 24, and more than half live in cities. They are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, and employers who have implemented best practices in their recruitment practices are reaping the benefits. Some of the best practices include partnering with Indigenous communities, implementing pre-employment programs and advertising their job posting on Indigenous job boards – among others.

People with Disabilities

According to Statistics Canada (2012), 2.1 million people aged 25-64 reported a mental or physical disability that limits their daily activities. As the population ages, the number of people with disabilities is expected to grow. In fact, the percentage of people with disabilities increases with age, ranging from 4.4% for people 15-24 years to 42.5% for those 75 years and over. Many disabilities are invisible – such as diabetes, arthritis, Tmental illness, sleep apnea, ADHD or dyslexia. Some of the best practices implemented by trucking and logistics employers include reviewing their hiring practices to allow for more accommodations, flexible work opportunities and partnering with organizations serving people with disabilities.

Women

While women represent 48% of Canada's workforce, they represent 3% of truck drivers, mechanics, transport trailer technicians and cargo workers. In 2017, Trucking HR Canada published a series of resources titled *My Toolbox to Mentoring Women in Canada's Trucking Industry*. The resources highlight the benefits of mentoring women in the industry, including:

- Lower turnover and increased productivity;
- Improved individual performance;
- Increased skill-building;
- Enhanced recruitment efforts;
- Improved company performance; and more.

The resources can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2HoPCk2>.

Visible Minorities

More than 6 million people identify as visible minorities in Canada: 30.9% were born in Canada and 65.1% came to live in Canada as immigrants. The average age of visible minorities is 33.4 years old, compared to an average age of 49 years old for Canadian truck drivers. Some best practices implemented by employers include refining and updating recruitment strategies to reach out to multiple communities, supporting community events and providing on-the-job training.

Youth

While traditionally under-represented groups have been comprised of women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities, the trucking and logistics industry is facing a significant shortage of young workers. In fact, less than 15% of Canadian truck drivers are under the age of 35. With a large number of truck drivers expected to retire in the coming years, employers have to implement best practices in order to attract, recruit and retain young workers. To this effect, Trucking HR Canada published the *Millennials Have Drive Roadmap*, which includes a series of recommendations on how to recruit and retain millennial employees in the trucking and logistics industry. The report can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2i2gxIV>.

Next Steps

Once HR practitioners have secured buy-in from senior management with the company, a diversity and inclusion framework can be developed and implemented. In developing the company's formal commitment towards diversity and inclusion, HR practitioners are encouraged to seek input from employees at all levels within the organization, to ensure additional buy-in from both middle-managers and front-line workers.

Building a Diversity & Inclusion Framework

Building a diversity and inclusion framework from the ground up can seem overwhelming at first glance. To ensure that your diversity and inclusion plan aligns with your business objectives, make sure to start the process by looking into your current company's purpose, vision and values. These principles, which are at the foundation of your company's operations, should inform the development of the diversity and inclusion framework, as well as its implementation.

Purpose, Vision and Values

Purpose – The first step in building your diversity and inclusion framework should be to identify its purpose. It is the principle that will guide the actions laid out in your plan. The purpose can be a broad statement derived from your company's overall purpose. Examples of statements can include:

- Strive to integrate diversity and inclusion principles in our current operational processes.
- Work towards a more inclusive workforce that recognizes everyone's diversity.
- Work together, at all levels of the company, towards a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

Your framework's purpose should be broad a reflection of your commitment towards diversity and inclusion, all the while remaining realistic and measurable.

Vision - Your diversity and inclusion framework vision should be a reflection of where you would like to see your company be in the future with regards to successes and lessons learned from diversity and inclusion. As such, your vision should be more comprehensive than your purpose. It can include statements such as:

- Having a respectful and supportive workplace that attracts and retains employees from a diversity of backgrounds;
- Having a company culture that reflects the diversity of our employees and the community we operate in;
- Having a workplace culture that encourages innovation and productivity through collaborative work.

Your vision should also include tangible goals that can be measured against performance indicators in the short, medium and long terms. Examples of goals include:

- Having a workforce reflective of the community our company operates in.
- Identifying and addressing challenges and opportunities that exist for employees of diverse backgrounds within our company.
- Recruiting and retaining a talented workforce skilled at working in an inclusive and respectful work environment.
- Create and adapt practices to meet the needs of our employees.

Each goal should be accompanied by a series of indicators that can be used to measure success. These can include action items such as conducting employee surveys, diversifying your recruitment outreach methods, training staff on diversity and inclusion, actively engaging employees from diverse backgrounds, implementing a mentorship program, etc.

Values – Finally, your values are a statement of your company’s formal commitment to diversity and inclusion in more detail. In identifying your values, make sure they align with your company’s culture and business objectives. Values can range from providing a workplace free of harassment and discrimination to valuing individual differences, capitalizing on the diverse backgrounds and experiences of employees to foster innovation, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities

No diversity and inclusion framework would be successful without a staff person dedicated and accountable for its implementation. It can be one person managing the overall framework or multiple individuals accountable for key components of it. As a best practice, the person in charge of HR and, where possible, your HR business partner should be in charge of the overall framework, ensuring that the plan is not a standalone document; that it aligns with your business priorities and objectives moving forward. All employees should also have a part of responsibility in the overall development of the framework and be engaged in its implementation process. For example, senior management could be asked to demonstrate leadership (i.e. lead by example), middle-management can put together diversity and inclusion training and ensure that policies and practices are consistent with the framework, and front-line employees could be asked to demonstrate behaviours that are in line with the goals of the framework.

Implementing a Diversity & Inclusion Framework

Once you have identified the direction and commitment your company will make towards diversity, developed your fleet’s diversity and inclusion framework, and engaged key staff in the process, you can start planning for its implementation. A key element to remember in the development and implementation of the framework is that it can take time. For a diversity and inclusion framework to be successful, you need to make sure that all relevant parties are onboard, that you have secured senior management support and that the resources you need will be available.

Planning

Prior to implementing your newly developed diversity and inclusion plan, take a step back and make sure to have a look at your workforce demographics. To ensure that you can measure your plan’s success, you can measure the number of women, people with disabilities, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples and young workers. You can make note of these numbers company wide, but also broken down by occupational categories. For example, how many female truck drivers does your company employ? Are they full-time or part-time employees? How long have they been with the company and how often do they get promoted? How many young workers are currently in middle-management positions? Do you have Indigenous employees within your company? If so, what occupations are they in?

These are all questions that will help you identify both the gaps within your current demographics, but also where certain areas of your diversity and inclusion framework may need to be prioritized in the implementation phase. For example, if your framework includes an increased focus on partnering with organizations serving under-represented groups to increase your talent pipeline within a specific demographic, and you realize in planning that you don’t have any employee from this group, this might become a priority area.

You will also want to identify the resources (people, time and financial) needed in order to carry out the priority items identified in your diversity and inclusion framework. For example, if a key item of your plan includes providing diversity and inclusion training to all staff, you will need to allow for employee time to take the training, a training provider or in-house developer to deliver the training and the financial resources necessary to conduct the training. If your activities are mainly focused on recruitment and posting job advertisements on diverse job boards, you will need to allow time to work with your recruiters and secure the financial resources necessary to post on these job boards.

Implementing

As with any comprehensive framework, the implementation of the diversity and inclusion plan will also take time. You will need to establish clear timelines and allow for flexibility in meeting the plan's targets. You will also need to manage expectations with senior management and set clear targets. Changing your workplace culture and demographics will not happen overnight.

Make sure to keep track of the activities carried out under this plan, where you succeed and where more work needs to be done. This will allow you to adjust your plan accordingly as you move forward.

Evaluating and Monitoring

Finally, to make sure that your purpose, vision and values remain relevant, and as a best practice, you should develop an evaluation and monitoring plan with clear performance indicators. For example, set clear targets for increase in the recruitment of certain groups or timelines that are realistic. You should also review your plan frequently to ensure that it remains on track and that your efforts are spent in the right place. And remember, progress takes time!

Trucking HR Canada's 3C's

- **Clear**
When developing your diversity and inclusion framework, as well as the policies and practices derived from it, make sure to use clear language that resonates with your employees.
- **Consistent**
Make sure that your policies and practices regarding diversity and inclusion are consistently applied.
- **Communication**
Finally, make sure that your policies and practices are communicated to all employees and as frequently as possible and necessary.