



INCLUSIVE READINESS WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

Introduction: Why This Matters

Canada's skilled, technical, and operational industries are operating under sustained labour pressure, with demand for qualified workers consistently outpacing supply. Across these sectors, equity deserving groups remain significantly underrepresented in a number of critical roles. This is no longer a demographic observation, it is a structural workforce constraint that is directly limiting growth, productivity, and delivery capacity.

For employers, this is not a future concern. It is a present-day business risk. And it is also a measurable opportunity.

Organizations that continue to rely on legacy hiring practices, informal evaluation processes, and inconsistent employee experiences are increasingly uncompetitive in a constrained labour market. In contrast, organizations that intentionally design for inclusive access to roles, development, and advancement are gaining a clear advantage in recruitment, retention, and operational stability.

This is not solely a gender issue; it is a leadership accountability issue and a workforce performance issue. It sits squarely within the responsibility of HR and executive leadership. Every stage of the employee experience - from job design and recruitment through onboarding, development, promotion, and recognition either expands or restricts access to opportunity for equity deserving groups, including but not limited to women, racialized people, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities. These are not neutral processes; they are active drivers of workforce composition and performance outcomes.

Employees are highly attuned to this distinction. They can tell when inclusion is embedded in systems and decision making versus when it exists only in policy or messaging. That gap between intent and lived experience has direct consequences for engagement, retention, and operational effectiveness.

Canadian research consistently demonstrates that more diverse organizations outperform their peers across key financial and operational metrics, including productivity, innovation capacity, and return on assets. In practical terms, inclusion is not a values statement, it is a performance lever in industries where talent scarcity is now a defining constraint.

Start with Conversations, Not Checklists

Before using any assessment or launching new initiatives, leadership teams need to have candid conversations about the culture they want to create.

Key discussion questions:

- What does inclusion mean to you?
- What does inclusion look like in practice?
- What does inclusion feel like?
- When have you felt included?
- When have you felt excluded?

These discussions help leaders build a shared understanding of the employee experience they want to create.

If there is no genuine commitment to inclusion, it is just gender washing - like putting a maple leaf on a product at the grocery store. The label may look right, but what is inside is not what's being advertised.

Recruitment starts with these conversations. When leaders understand what inclusion looks and feels like, they make better decisions at every stage of the employee life cycle.

The Inclusive Workplace Readiness Assessment

Developed by Nu Era Talent Development Group

A practical framework for assessing your organization's ability to attract, support, and advance diverse talent.

The Inclusive Workplace Readiness Assessment was developed by Nu Era Talent Development Group to help organizations move beyond intention and into execution.

It provides a structured, evidence-based framework to:

- Assess organizational readiness
- Identify gaps and barriers
- Prioritize high-impact actions
- Assign accountability
- Measure progress over time

Best Practice for Using the Assessment

- Complete the assessment as a leadership team
- Encourage open discussion and honest scoring
- Compare perspectives across departments
- Focus on a few priority actions rather than trying to fix everything at once
- Revisit the assessment annually to track progress

What the Assessment Evaluates


- Leadership commitment and accountability
- Recruitment and hiring practices
- Onboarding and belonging
- Workplace culture
- Mentorship and career development
- Facilities and suitable equipment
- Benefits and flexibility
- Retention and advancement

The Opportunity

In a market where talent is the primary constraint on growth, the organizations that act decisively now will be the ones that lead the next phase of their industry.

Companies that create inclusive systems will:

- Attract stronger and more diverse candidate pools
- Improve retention and engagement
- Reduce turnover costs
- Strengthen productivity and morale
- Build more resilient and innovative teams



Inclusion is not about checking a box, it is about designing a workplace where more people can succeed and where the business performs better as a result.



Scoring Scale

1–Not In Place | 2–Limited | 3–Developing | 4–Established | 5–Leading Practice

1. LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Senior leaders have publicly committed to increasing representation of equity deserving groups in all roles.	
Equity deserving groups are represented in senior leadership and decision-making roles.	
Leadership is held accountable for diversity and inclusion outcomes.	
Workforce metrics (including application and retention rates) are tracked and analyzed across equity deserving groups to identify barriers, measure progress, and inform improvement actions.	
Dedicated budget is allocated for training, outreach, and programs supporting recruitment, retention, and advancement of equity deserving groups.	

2. INCLUSIVE JOB DESIGN AND JOB POSTINGS (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Job titles and descriptions use gender-neutral language (e.g., crew member, supervisor).	
Job postings distinguish clearly between required and preferred qualifications.	
Job postings emphasize transferable skills such as curiosity, reliability, and trainability.	
Job requirements are realistic and do not unnecessarily exclude candidates.	
Job postings are designed to attract a diverse applicant pool rather than reflect legacy role assumptions and are reviewed and adjusted when outcomes show imbalance.	



3. RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH (35)

Assessment Item	Score
Recruitment strategies actively target equity deserving groups in all roles.	
Application rates are tracked across equity deserving groups, reviewed on a regular basis, and used to adjust recruitment strategies where needed.	
Candidate pools are monitored to ensure equity deserving groups are represented before competitions close, with corrective action taken when gaps are identified.	
Recruitment timelines are extended when equity deserving groups are underrepresented in applicant pools, and outreach efforts are adjusted accordingly.	
Partnerships exist with post-secondary institutions and other organizations, with outcomes reviewed for effectiveness.	
Employees from equity serving groups serve as ambassadors (career fairs, site tours, storytelling, social media), and participation outcomes are monitored and improved over time.	
Scholarships, internships, and bursaries are intentionally targeted toward equity deserving groups through structured outreach, and participation outcomes are tracked and improved.	

4. FAIR HIRING PRACTICES (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Interview panels include diverse interviewers, and composition is reviewed to ensure balance over time.	
Structured interviews and standardized scoring tools are used consistently, with outcomes reviewed for bias patterns.	
Hiring decisions are based on skills, potential, and transferable experience, with decision patterns reviewed for fairness.	
Hiring managers are trained in equitable hiring and bias reduction, with refresher training based on audit findings.	
Selection outcomes are reviewed regularly to identify, correct, and prevent systemic bias.	

5. WORKPLACE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Properly fitting PPE is available for all body types and genders, with gaps identified and corrected.	
Job sites provide clean, secure, and private washrooms, with compliance monitored and addressed.	
Shower and change facilities are available where appropriate, and adequacy is regularly reviewed.	
Lockers and personal storage are secure, accessible, and reviewed for usability.	
Site facilities are regularly reviewed for safety, accessibility, and inclusivity, with corrective actions taken.	

6. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Regular pay equity reviews are conducted, and identified gaps are corrected.	
Compensation differences, including bonus distribution, are analyzed, corrected where necessary, and monitored over time.	
Benefits include support for fertility, pregnancy, postpartum, and menopause needs, and utilization is reviewed for adequacy.	
Mental health and wellness supports are available, with usage and gaps reviewed and improved.	
Benefits are clearly communicated, and employee understanding is assessed and improved where needed.	

7. RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Risk factors for harassment and discrimination are proactively assessed, with mitigation actions implemented.	
Respectful workplace and anti-harassment policies are current, accessible, and reviewed for effectiveness.	
Employees and supervisors receive regular training on respectful workplace expectations, with effectiveness evaluated.	
Complaint processes are confidential, fair, trusted, and reviewed for resolution effectiveness.	
Climate surveys are conducted to assess psychological safety and inclusion, and learnings are incorporated into workplace practices and policies with follow-up actions tracked.	

8. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND PROMOTION (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Standardized performance evaluations are used across the organization, shifting decisions from subjective judgment to structured, evidence-based criteria, with outcomes reviewed for consistency.	
Evaluations measure reliability, safety, technical ability, teamwork, productivity, and communication, with calibration across assessors.	
Performance ratings are supported with concrete examples, and audit checks are conducted for consistency.	
Multiple assessors are used to reduce individual bias, and discrepancies are reviewed and resolved.	
Promotion outcomes are tracked by gender, reviewed regularly, and used to adjust development and advancement practices.	

9. RETENTION, ONBOARDING, AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE (40)

Assessment Item	Score
Structured onboarding programs support successful integration into job site culture, with feedback used to improve onboarding continuously.	
New employees are paired with mentors or peer supports where appropriate, and effectiveness is reviewed.	
Stay interviews are conducted to understand retention drivers, and actions are implemented based on findings.	
Exit interviews are conducted, analyzed, and used to improve retention strategies.	
Flexible policies support caregiving and work-life balance, with usage and outcomes reviewed.	
Employee feedback is acted on, with visible follow-up improvements communicated internally.	
Retention and turnover rates are analyzed across equity deserving groups, with corrective actions implemented where disparities exist.	
Workplace practices actively support belonging and reduce isolation, including ensuring equity deserving groups are not routinely isolated in male-dominated crews where operationally feasible, with monitoring and adjustments made.	

10. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Leadership development opportunities are accessible to equity deserving groups at all levels, with participation tracked and gaps addressed.	
Programs emphasize transformational leadership skills, with effectiveness evaluated and refined.	
High-potential employees from equity deserving groups are identified and sponsored for advancement, with progression outcomes tracked.	
Succession planning includes equity deserving group candidates, with representation reviewed and improved over time.	
Participation in leadership programs is monitored across equity deserving groups, with corrective actions taken when gaps exist.	

11. RECOGNITION AND CULTURE REINFORCEMENT (25)

Assessment Item	Score
Employee recognition programs regularly acknowledge contributions and achievements, with participation reviewed for equity.	
Recognition practices reinforce inclusive behaviour and positive workplace culture, with outcomes monitored and improved.	
Recognition is consistent, visible, and embedded into organizational routines, with effectiveness reviewed.	
Recognition outcomes are reviewed to ensure equitable participation across equity deserving groups, and adjustments are made where needed.	
Leadership actively reinforces inclusion through recognition behaviours and storytelling, with impact assessed over time.	

TOTAL SCORE _____

Total Possible Score: 300

Readiness Levels

Score Range	Level
55–109	Early Stage
110–164	Developing
165–219	Established
220–262	Advanced
263–300	Leading Practice

Nu Era Talent Development Group works with companies and organizations across the non-profit, corporate, and government sectors to turn your assessment results into practical action.

We help you prioritize where to start, identify areas of highest value, and support implementation strategies that strengthen recruitment, retention, and the overall employee experience.

[Reach out for a free 30-minute consultation.](#)

Priority Action Planning

Top Three Strengths

1	
2	
3	

Top Three Improvement Priorities

1	
2	
3	

Action Plan

Priority	Owner	Completion Date