

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Burnaby School District has been delivering programs and services to newcomers for more than 35 years. During that time, the District and its staff have become acutely aware of the challenges newcomers face during the first months and years of integration and settlement. Since 2003, the District has become increasingly involved in the development of resources to increase awareness of the benefits of multiculturalism, to reduce racism and to facilitate the integration of BC's newest residents.

It is the School District's pleasure to present "Living and Working in a Multicultural Society". This toolkit is the culmination of a tremendous amount of research and work. This project would not have come to fruition if it were not for Jody Johnson. She needs to be acknowledged for her dedication, expertise, and passion for the subjects of multiculturalism and anti-racism. I would like to express my appreciation to both the teachers of the School District as well as our many partner agencies; their participation and collaboration has been invaluable. Finally, my appreciation and thanks goes out to the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism for their sponsorship and support.

Don Jacob  
Manager  
Burnaby School District #41, Adult and Continuing Education

## ABOUT THE PROJECT LEADER

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Jody Johnson has dedicated her 17 year career to assisting new immigrants integrate into Canadian society and the workplace. Her work with newcomers has included designing, managing and teaching language and career programs, career and employment consulting, and workshop facilitation. Most recently she has devoted her work to the development of resources specifically related to career development, labour market information, multiculturalism and anti-racism. In leading and developing these projects she has provided resources, workshops and employment assistance to employers, professional associations, immigrant service providers and to more than two thousand new immigrants. Jody graduated with honours from the University of Victoria with a double Major in Pacific and Asian Studies and Applied Linguistics.

It is Jody's firm belief that multiculturalism and anti-racism awareness is critical for all of BC's residents. Awareness reduces confusion and conflict and enhances our ability to build a stronger and more productive society and economy.

## **THE PURPOSE OF LIVING AND WORKING IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

Employers, immigrant service providers and others working with new immigrant and multicultural groups have expressed a need for more information related to cultural diversity. For individuals working with diverse workforces, this knowledge is critical. Learning about the benefits of multiculturalism and the destructiveness of stereotyping and racism is critical to building success within our workplaces and maintaining harmony within our communities.

This “toolkit” includes a manual, a handbook and a CD.

The manual has been developed to provide information and tools for managers, immigrant service providers and others working with multicultural groups. It is the intent of this manual to provide ideas and information that will increase awareness, inspire discussion and encourage on-going review and development of organizational policies and practices related to multiculturalism and racism. An outline has been provided to facilitate the review and discussion of the contents of the manual. This outline can be found at the back of this manual; an electronic copy of the manual and the outline have also been provided and can be found attached to the back cover.

The handbook has been developed with the intention that it would be copied, either in part or in whole, and shared with staff and community groups. The handbook has been designed to provide information and tools that will increase awareness and understanding of multiculturalism and racism. Questions for discussion have been provided within the handbook in the sidebars. The handbook has been designed in such a way that it may simply be distributed for individual review or reviewed and discussed in a group setting. A print copy of the handbook has been included at the back of this manual. An electronic copy has also been included on the attached CD.



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## INTRODUCTION

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***"By 2016 (visible minorities) probably will represent 20 per cent of Canada's labour force and account for \$80.9 billion, or more than 10 per cent of Canada's GDP growth. That in itself proves the case for diversity."***

Senator Donald Oliver

***"In a world darkened by ethnic conflicts that tear nations apart, Canada stands as a model of how people of different cultures can live and work together in peace, prosperity, and mutual respect."***

Bill Clinton, Former US President

BC has a long history of multiculturalism and the population of the Lower Mainland is becoming increasingly diverse. In 2005, BC welcomed more than 44,000 new immigrants and Vancouver is fast becoming one of the most multicultural cities in the world. Canada is viewed worldwide as a model of successful multiculturalism - a place where all people prosper and live peacefully. For many, this view is reality. However, for others it is an illusion; more and more we hear of the struggles newcomers encounter.

Many new immigrants have arrived well educated with a wealth of work experience but can find nothing better than a "survival" job; the example of the doctor who drives a cab is common. More and more often we are seeing occupations filled by a specific ethnic group - Indian security guards and taxi drivers, Filipino nurses and nannies, Chinese retailers.

Other forms of stereotyping or prejudice also exist. For example, it is common practice for many new immigrants to abandon their "ethnic name" in favour of adopting a "western name" to put on their resume; it is their belief that they will be screened out if they use their own name.

In addition to these difficulties, many new immigrants feel confusion and isolation while attempting to adjust to their newly adopted multicultural society; their "home country" experience has not prepared them for integrated participation in the Lower Mainland's ethnically diverse environment and workplaces. Faced by too many challenges many new immigrants return to their native countries. Throughout history the development of our economy and society has depended on the drive, knowledge and talent of immigrants. With looming skill shortages and an aging population, Canada, now more than ever, cannot afford to have its newest residents fail to settle.

Successful settlement and employment requires that newcomers have an understanding of what living and working in a multicultural society means. They must be provided the information and tools necessary to increase their levels of tolerance and reduce any racially based stereotypes they may have.

But providing multicultural education to newcomers is only a part of the solution.

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Individuals and organizations working with ethnically diverse groups also require relevant and meaningful resources to understand the challenges and benefits of multiculturalism, to increase their levels of acceptance and to reduce racially based stereotypes and judgements they may have.

Furthermore, it is important to note that discrimination and racism is not simply an issue between native born Canadians and newcomers. Stereotyping, prejudice and racism exist between various cultural groups whether native born or recently immigrated. One ethnic group may have a long history of hatred toward another group; these are feelings that do not disappear upon immigration to Canada. It is also important to remember that racism and stereotyping are primarily based on colour; for example, an individual may be 4th generation Canadian but ethnically Chinese and will often be perceived as being Chinese rather than Canadian.

Canada as a nation is extremely young and the concept of multiculturalism is also new and requires continued attention. That we are still working to define and develop a truly multicultural society is not a surprise. However, it is work that we must continue to do.

This manual and the accompanying handbook provide up to date information about current immigration numbers and policies related to immigration and multiculturalism. It offers information about the history of multiculturalism and the benefits and challenges it poses to "new Canadians" and "old Canadians" alike. Information related to cultural traits, stereotyping and racism are provided. Strategies and tips for reducing stereotyping and racism and improving multicultural communication are introduced.

***"Ensuring that newcomers to Canada are integrated into the labour market and society is essential if Canada is to benefit from their full potential. Canada also needs to develop a better understanding, particularly among employers, of the diverse array of talents and skills that immigrants offer."***

Knowledge Matters, Skills and Learning for Canadians,  
Canada's Innovation Strategy  
Government of Canada

## GLOBAL COMPETITION FOR IMMIGRANT WORKERS

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Much has been said of Canada's looming skills shortages. Some occupational sectors are already experiencing difficulties filling their human resource demands; in BC the construction, tourism, transportation, energy and health sectors are struggling to fill the demand for workers. Current calculations suggest that nearly 70 percent of Canadian labour force growth comes from immigration. This percentage is expected to increase.

The demand for workers is worldwide; Canada is only one of several countries such as Britain, Japan and Germany now competing for workers, both skilled and unskilled. For the first time in history, workers from parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere will be "courted" by countries searching for labour.

Individuals will have their choice of countries and they will make their selection based on where they know they will be welcomed, where they will feel most comfortable and where they have the best chances of career development and success. To attract and retain workers, Canada and the provinces will have to promote Canada as a destination and ensure their integration into Canadian society by working with employers to provide opportunities for career success.

Canada has been a desirable destination for many fleeing strife or simply seeking a better way of life; however, **attracting immigrants is becoming a challenge and retaining our new immigrants is another**. Reports indicate an increasing number of new immigrants returning to their native countries after failing to obtain entry into their field of expertise, failing to find even survival type work or finding work within workplaces where they are undervalued.

In order to retain workers, it is essential that workplaces provide new immigrant workers and visible minorities working environments that are inclusive and supportive. The multicultural workforce is, and has been, a major economic force in British Columbia. To continue to attract and improve retention of workers, policies related to recruitment, training and staff management must be continuously reviewed - particularly those that relate to the management of diverse workers. Different cultures and concepts related to multiculturalism need to be better understood and valued in order to prepare businesses in BC to succeed at attracting and retaining workers.

*The demand for workers is worldwide; Canada is only one of several countries such as Britain, Japan and Germany now competing for workers, both skilled and unskilled. For the first time in history, workers from parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere will be "courted" by countries searching for labour.*

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A CULTURALLY DIVERSE WORKPLACE?**

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Canada's success is owed much to the hard work and skill of immigrants. Since the beginning, newcomers have provided Canada with new ideas and skills that have strengthened our workplaces and our communities. Organizations with diverse workforces have identified the following significant benefits:

### **Reduction in skill shortages**

Foreign trained staff have increased the pool of talent and experience available in BC and Canada. More and more new immigrants are filling Canada's need for skilled workers.

### **Access to overseas markets**

As globalization becomes a part of more and more businesses, companies are using the language, international expertise and cultural knowledge of staff to identify business opportunities in other countries.

### **Access to different markets and new customers**

Multicultural workforces may assist employers to expand their local markets to include different cultural groups. A multicultural society is more likely to identify with and use the services of businesses that reflect diversity.

### **Improved customer service**

Language skills and cultural understanding are valuable assets to a business. Customer service improves when staff understands and can communicate with customers from a range of backgrounds.

### **Expertise and experience**

New immigrants bring new ways of thinking, different solutions, new technologies and technical skills.

### **Responsive service delivery and enhanced staff skills**

Business is more responsive when staff are exposed to new ideas and provided with different ways of working and making decisions.

### **A more dynamic and successful workplace**

Dynamic and interesting workplaces retain workers. Cultural diversity within the workplace provides opportunities for learning and sharing. When staff are encouraged to learn from one another, the workplace is more inviting. Individual and collective knowledge, skills and abilities are enhanced and retention increases.

*Since the beginning, newcomers have provided Canada with new ideas and skills that have strengthened our workplaces and our communities.*

## WHAT IS MULTICULTURALISM?

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The need for Canada and BC to attract and retain workers has been well documented; however, it is also important to understand that ***we must value the diversity of all our residents***, new and old. Indeed, that is the spirit of our Multiculturalism Act and Policy.

The Act says that the government of Canada respects and supports cultural and racial diversity. People are encouraged to keep and share their culture and their language. This means that all Canadians are treated the same, no matter where they originated from.

Multiculturalism is commonly defined as a policy for managing cultural diversity in a multiethnic society, ***focusing on mutual respect and acceptance of cultural differences***.

What does multiculturalism within Canadian society look like? The following pages provide an overview of the growth and development of multiculturalism in Canada and BC.

***By 2006 it has been predicted that Toronto will become the most multicultural city in the world. Vancouver is also on its way to becoming one of the most multicultural cities in the world.***

***“Canada has never been a melting-pot; more like a tossed salad.”***

*Arnold Edinborough  
Canadian Writer and Editor*

## RECENT IMMIGRATION FACTS

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- 244,600 new immigrants arrived in Canada in 2005
- 44,734 new immigrants came to BC in 2005
- Immigration accounts for a high percentage of
- population growth in BC - in 1955 our population was 1,323,000. In 2005 our population was 4,219,968.
- between 1901 and 2001 Canada welcomed a total of 13.4 million immigrants
- between 1991 and 2000, 2.2 million immigrants were admitted to Canada
- per capita Canada receives more immigrants than the U.S. and Australia
- until recently, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, were the primary sources of immigrants to Canada; today, most immigrants are from Asian countries
- of the 2.2 million immigrants who arrived between 1991 and 2001:
  - 58% came from Asia, including the Middle East;
  - 20% from Europe;
  - 11% from the Caribbean, Central and South America;
  - 8% from Africa; and
  - 3% from the United States.
- 46% of the immigrants who arrived in the 1990s were aged 25 to 44, compared with 31% of the total population.
- more than 200 different ethnic origins were reported in the 2001 Census
- 39% of the total population reported Canadian as their ethnic origin, either alone or in combination with other origins
- reports indicate that immigration rates will increase.

*Source: Statistics Canada*

**"We are all immigrants to this place..."**

Margaret Atwood  
Canadian Writer

## CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY

If you think about it, Canada has always been multicultural. Before European immigrants began to arrive, Canada was made up of many different "First Nations". Scientists believe First Nations people arrived in Canada from Asia about 30,000 years ago. Presently, there are about 600 First Nations governments in Canada. These nations have their own cultures and languages.

Around 1000 A.D. Europeans began to arrive. However, until the 1880s there were more First Nations people than any other people. Below is a list of when different immigrant groups first came to Canada. This list is far from complete but gives you a good idea of how multiculturalism in Canada has grown.

**What year did the most people immigrate to Canada?**

**a) 1975**

**b) 1991**

**c) 1913**

**d) 2004**

1000	Scandinavians
1497	British Explorers
1534	French Explorers
1663	French
1783	More British
1840	Irish
1850	Serbians
1850	African - Americans
1858	Chinese
1877	Japanese
1880s	Hungarians
1899	South Asians
1897	Ukrainians
1900	Russians
1940s	Germans, Italians, Dutch
1960s	Koreans
1961	Italians
1968	Czechs
1970s	Chileans
1972	Ugandans
1979	Vietnamese
1980s	Afghanis
1982	Poles
1987	Hong Kongese
1990s	Somali's
1990s	Former Yugoslavians

In 1971 Canada became the first country in the world to adopt a Multiculturalism Policy.

In 1988 the Canadian Multiculturalism Act was passed.

The Policy and the Act can be found on pages 38 and 39.

## WHAT IS CULTURE?

As stated earlier, multiculturalism stresses mutual respect and acceptance of cultural differences. In order to respect and accept other cultures, we must have an understanding of culture.

Culture is the beliefs, values, behaviours and material objects that shape an individual's identity and his or her way of life. No one can understand all there is to know about every culture; however, an understanding of the complexity and the characteristics of culture does provide a base for further learning and for understanding and acceptance. This base will support all of the cultural information you will accumulate as you work with more and more individuals from an increasing number of cultures.

What types of things have an impact on culture and make one culture different than another?

Language	Religion	Politics
Food	Dress / fashion	Hobbies
Values	Art / Esthetic	Philosophy
History	Architecture	Dance
Geography	Industry	Parenting Styles
Gender Roles	Traditions	Sports
Superstitions	Customs	Behaviours
Manners	Work Ethic	Education
Accent	Technology	Appearance
Literature	Natural Resources	Music

Clearly, culture is a very complicated concept. How do we begin to understand another culture? And in a multicultural society, how do we begin to understand many cultures? The following two pages further define culture.

***Culture is the beliefs, values, behaviors and material objects that shape an individual's identity and his or her way of life.***

***"In only a century and a quarter since Confederation, Canadians have shaped out of the North American wilderness one of the most privileged societies on the face of the earth. Ranking among the seven most prosperous nations in the world, Canada is rich not only in the abundance of our resources and the magnificence of our land, but also in the diversity and the character of our people. We have long been known as one of the most tolerant, progressive, innovative, caring and peaceful societies in existence."***

The Will of a Nation:  
Awakening the Canadian Spirit  
George Radwanski  
and Julia Luttrell

*Understanding the characteristics of culture may also help us to understand how people adapt to new cultures and how we might adapt and adopt aspects of other cultures.*

## DEFINING CULTURE

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One way to understand different cultures is to understand key characteristics of culture. Understanding these characteristics may help us as individuals living in a multicultural society to change our attitudes and perceptions of other cultures and to more readily accept the beliefs, values and behaviours of other cultures. Understanding the characteristics of culture may also help us to understand how people adapt to new cultures and how we might adapt and adopt aspects of other cultures.

### **Culture is learned.**

The rules, values, attitudes, and behaviours of a culture are learned and passed down from generation to generation. For example, in western society we learn that it is generally expected that upon greeting a friend or business associate that we will shake hands. In societies such as Japan or Korea, to bow in greeting is the generally expected behaviour.

### **Cultures are logical.**

Some current cultural behaviours may seem illogical but all serious cultural rules exist for a reason. Why do North Americans shake hands? It may appear silly or unhygienic to some. One explanation is that the handshake originated in order to show that no weapons were being held. Later it evolved to "seal a contract" and now is used as a greeting.

### **Culture is a piece of self-identity.**

Our culture is one way we express who we are and what we believe. The simple act of shaking hands is a small expression which demonstrates belonging to a group - in this case "western society".

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### **Culture is visible and invisible.**

The way we act and the things we do in daily life are the visible parts of our culture. These actions and behaviours are outward displays of deeper values that are invisible but a part of everything we think and do. Again to use the handshake example, North Americans shake hands with both men and women. This is visible. It is also the expression of the invisible value many of us have that is related to gender equality.

### **Culture is always changing.**

Cultural changes occur due to changes in societal beliefs, advances in technology and communication and by events such as migration, natural disasters, and wars. Again using the handshake example - it is only recently in North America that the handshake has been extended to both men and women. Only a generation ago, it would have seemed strange if a man shook a woman's hand. Societal beliefs have changed; in the business world, it would now be odd to not extend a hand to women.

### **Culture is tied to society.**

It is important to note that **culture is not tied to country - it is tied to society**. Within any given country there are numerous societies. Society is defined as an extended social group having a distinctive cultural and economic organization. Often we see culture as connected only to country - "he's Canadian, so he must love hockey." But an individual's culture has been impacted not only by his country or ethnic origin, but also by the specific province or region or "society" that he grew up in. Within different North American societies, the handshake is used more or less frequently and may take different forms depending on the "culture" of the society.

*Acknowledgement: Some of the ideas for this section on Defining Culture were adapted from the text Business Communication: Process and Product, Fourth Edition, M. Guffey, K. Rhodes and P. Rogin, 2005, pp. 102 and 103*

***Understanding these characteristics may help us as individuals living in a multicultural society to change our attitudes and perceptions of other cultures and to more readily accept the beliefs, values and behaviours of other cultures.***

***A cultural trait is a belief, value, or behaviour shared by many people within a cultural group.***

## **CULTURAL TRAITS**

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We know that different cultures have different beliefs, customs, foods and ways of thinking. Beyond language, these differences can sometimes make understanding each other difficult. In some multicultural settings, many different cultures work side by side. Managers or group leaders may ask, "How can I possibly learn everything there is to know about all cultures?" The answer is we can't know everything, but the more you know, the better able you will be to relate. If you don't understand and value all members of the group, how can you hope to successfully connect with, motivate or supervise them?

To help us understand and communicate better with different cultures, we often depend on knowledge we have about a cultural group. Sometimes we call these cultural traits. A cultural trait is a belief, value, or behaviour shared by many people within a cultural group. We know it does not apply to everyone within the group. We might say --

"Generally speaking, many people from China are good at math."

We know that is true of many people from China and is a result of an education system that strongly emphasizes the learning of math. Although many individuals from China are good at math we know that not everyone from China is good at math. It is not possible.

Understanding cultural traits may also help us to understand how to better manage people in the workplace. Different people will value their roles in the organization differently, they may see how they can make a contribution differently and they may want to be recognized for their efforts differently. What motivates one worker might completely bother another; for example, rewarding someone with a pat on the back when he / she is unfamiliar with being touched. An individual treated in this manner may become uncomfortable, upset and less productive.

Understanding what beliefs, values or behaviours are shared by a cultural group may help us communicate. However, it is important to remember that cultural traits are not true for every member of a cultural group.

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## Some examples of cultural traits:

### 1. Background Information -- Less is More

In North American culture, we often give a lot of background or extra information when we communicate. In some other cultures - like Japanese, Chinese and some Middle Eastern cultures - speakers give very little extra information. As a North American, we might assume we were already given the other information and so we might be reluctant to ask questions or may get frustrated with having to ask a lot of questions to get the needed information.

### 2. Background Information - More is Better

In contrast to the above, some cultures - the Irish - are generally known for their desire and ability to tell a story often laden with more information than necessary. Individuals from cultures where "less is more" in the information department may be overwhelmed and dismayed with this amount of information. Many North Americans might say "cut to the chase". Nonetheless, if you know this cultural trait about the Irish, you may anticipate and therefore be more accepting of this level of information.

### 3. Family Before Business

People from Latin American often talk about their families before beginning to talk about the business at hand. For many North Americans, some of what is shared may feel too personal in a work or business setting. However, if you are working with someone from Latin American, this is helpful for you to know. Again, you will not be surprised if this is the way many conversations begin and, for the person from Latin America, it may seem rude if you try to talk about business before talking about family.

### 4. Personal Space

Some cultures need more "personal space" than other cultures. For example, Korean and British people like quite a bit of space between speakers -- about one metre or an arm's length. Some cultures, for example, French Canadians and people from Latin America stand closer when they speak. This difference in personal space can make people feel very uncomfortable. Knowing this, you might move forward or back to make communication more comfortable and more successful.

### 5. Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is important in every society but a gesture in one culture might have quite another meaning in another culture. For many people from India, shaking the head from side to side is a visual way to communicate to the speaker that you understand what they are saying and in many cases that you agree with them. Of course, in North America, this is how disagreement or a definite "no" is non-verbally communicated. Such a difference in meaning could cause a great deal of confusion. Knowing this trait, you might consider double checking a "yes / no" response.

***"We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colours. But they all fit nicely into the same box."***

Unknown

## RACIAL STEREOTYPES

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What is the difference between a cultural trait and a racial stereotype?

As defined on the previous pages, a cultural trait is a belief, value, or behaviour shared by many people within a cultural group. We know it does not apply to everyone within the group.

A racial stereotype is a concept or an idea held by one social or cultural group about another's culture or behaviour. Racial stereotypes imply that all individuals from a cultural group are the same and behave in the same way. Stereotypes are often used in a negative or prejudicial manner.

Here is an example of a racial stereotype:

"All people from China are good at math."

That is not true. It is not possible. But what is wrong with having a "positive" racial stereotype like the one above? Even "positive" stereotypes lead to judgment and assumptions. For example, if you are Chinese it is likely that you will be asked to solve the accounting problem at work or calculate the tip after a meal. If you can't or if these are difficult tasks for you, there will be surprise; people might even think there is something wrong with you - "You're Chinese, this shouldn't be difficult for you." Even though this stereotype is positive it has left no room for individual differences. It has, however, led to judgment or "prejudgment" - which is prejudice.

Here is an example of a negative racial stereotype.

"All people from Mars are lazy."

Probably, like everywhere, a few people from Mars are lazy but **not everyone** from Mars. However, if you are an employer and you truly believe this racial stereotype, you might hesitate to give jobs to people from Mars. This is prejudice. This is racial discrimination. This is racism.

***A racial stereotype is a concept or an idea held by one social or cultural group about another's culture or behaviour.***

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In 2005, the Burnaby School District offered a workshop called "Valuing Diversity, A Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Workshop for New Immigrants". This workshop was delivered more than 50 times to more than 1000 new immigrants throughout the Lower Mainland. Based on written feedback, the part that most participants found most interesting was the discussion of stereotypes. It became clear to both participants and workshop facilitators how prevalent some stereotypes are; that is, many stereotypes were known to everyone no matter what country they originated from.

During the workshop the groups were asked to name some stereotypes. Below are examples of stereotypes that were shared over and over.

- All Germans are strict and organized.
- All Japanese are intelligent.
- All Brazilians play soccer.
- All Chinese are bad drivers.
- All Koreans are polite.
- All Americans are aggressive.
- All French are romantic.
- All Italians are passionate.
- All Russians drink too much vodka.
- All Columbians are drug dealers.
- All Blacks are violent.
- All Arabs are terrorists.
- All Canadians are nice.

It is very disconcerting that so many racial stereotypes are so well known, so "international". It became very clear how dangerously powerful these stereotypes had become and how closely linked stereotyping was to racism. To illustrate this point groups were asked to consider several scenarios. Here are two examples and the responses elicited:

***It became very clear how dangerously powerful these stereotypes had become and how closely linked stereotyping was to racism.***

*It is commonly believed that stereotyping is an attempt at categorizing in order to simplify and understand that which is so complicated - people.*

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### **Scenario #1**

A Columbian family moves into a home in your neighbourhood. They have children the same age as your children. Because you firmly believe the stereotype that all Columbians are involved in drug dealing, you tell your children not to play with the Columbian kids and not go near their house. As a parent, your job is to protect your children; you must warn your children about the Columbians.

### **Scenario #2**

You are walking down the street and a black man is walking behind you. Because you believe all black people are violent, you feel nervous and you quicken your pace. It is beginning to get dark, you check for your cell phone.

A few minutes before an Asian man was walking behind you. You felt no fear.

As these scenarios were described, people would nod their heads, yes, these scenarios were not only possible but, for some, experienced. This clearly illustrated how easily a racial stereotype becomes racism.

For most participants, stereotyping was something they had done quite naturally and quite unconsciously. Most had not considered the prejudice or danger of stereotyping. In many groups, there would be participants who had come from Columbia or individuals who were black. For those groups, the message was even more clear.

Delivery of these workshops also confirmed that **everybody creates stereotypes**. The question then is, "Why do we stereotype?" It is commonly believed that stereotyping is an attempt at categorizing in order to simplify and understand that which is so complicated - people. And indeed, if all stereotypes were true, how simple would life be? All accountants would come from China, all planners would be German, all new ideas would come from Japan, all soccer players would be Brazilian...

## WHERE DO RACIAL STEREOTYPES ORIGINATE?

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Most stereotypes develop from a lack of knowledge. Take, for example, the stereotype that all Columbians are drug dealers. Columbia is a relatively small country and few Columbians have emigrated. Ironically, British Columbia has very few residents who originated from Columbia. So, where have people gotten their knowledge of the Columbians? Media and movies. Probably the American war on drugs of the 1980's and the movie Scarface have been the two biggest sources of information about Columbia and its people.

Stereotypes come from:

### **Media - the news, movies, TV programs, books**

1. The news media has taught us that "All Arabs are terrorists."
2. A couple of well known movies taught us the "All Columbians are drug dealers."

### **History**

Events or customs of the past often continue to be used to create stereotypes or judgments of the present.

### **Our parents, our peers, our teachers**

If someone you love, trust or respect tells you something, it is very likely that you will believe and accept what they say. The biases and judgments shared by parents, peers and teachers will very likely impact our judgments.

### **One experience**

From one experience, you might develop a stereotype. For example, you try Korean food for the first time. You find it delicious. You might say "All Korean food is delicious." All Korean food might be delicious but you had only one meal!

Another example, you had an employee from Serbia who was stubborn and difficult to manage. You might say, "All Serbians are stubborn." Really? You have only worked with and met one person from Serbia but because you now have created this stereotype, this belief, it is likely that you will be reluctant to hire another Serbian.

*"Labels are for cans, not people."*

Anthony Rapp

## ELIMINATING RACIAL STEREOTYPING

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1. Learn more about different cultures.
2. Understand where stereotypes originate.
3. Understand the difference between a cultural trait and a stereotype.
4. Be aware of how you are using racial stereotypes to pre-judge people.
5. Do not ignore the stereotyping and prejudice of others. Point it out and name it.
6. Understand how easily racial stereotyping can become racial discrimination or racism.

***"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."***

William James  
American Philosopher

## **BUT I THOUGHT RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE HAD BEEN ELIMINATED?**

Many of us are under the impression that racism has pretty much disappeared in Canada. Racist policies that limited the number of Asians that could immigrate, charged "head taxes", and relocated Canadians of Japanese descent during the war - these types of policy are history. Racist sentiments among "Canadians" that supported refusing restaurant service to Blacks or giving the most difficult and dangerous jobs to Chinese workers don't exist anymore.

However, while fewer overt displays of racism exist, subtle forms do continue to exist in Canadian society, especially in the workplace.

The 2004 Conference Board of Canada study - The Voices of Minorities: Speaking Out on Breaking Down the Barriers revealed some interesting statistics.

While visible minorities represent nearly 15 per cent of the population, fewer than three per cent have reached the executive ranks of the public sector. Within the private sector, only 19 per cent of Canadian companies have visible minorities in their executive or on their boards.

According to this Conference Board study and Statistics Canada, over the last five years, one in five minority workers reported discrimination in the workplace, a rate four times greater than for non-minorities. However, very few of these reports are made public. Some believe this lack of publicity, at least in part, explains the limited number of minorities working in corporate Canada. It may be easier in the US than in Canada for visible minorities to reach executive positions because of major racial discrimination lawsuits. It may be that discrimination cases such as the ones against Coca-Cola and Texaco have helped break the so-called "colour barrier."

***While visible minorities represent nearly 15 per cent of the population, fewer than three per cent have reached the executive ranks of the public sector. Within the private sector, only 19 per cent of Canadian companies have visible minorities in their executive or on their boards.***

***In 1994, six Texaco employees filed a race discrimination suit against Texaco. The case was settled for \$176 million.***

***In 2000, Coke settled a similar race discrimination case. Coke agreed to pay \$192.5 million.***

[www.findjustice.com](http://www.findjustice.com)

***Sometimes this type of behaviour is referred to as "reverse racism". Backwards or forwards, racist behaviour is racist behaviour.***

## **WHAT DOES RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE LOOK LIKE?**

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Racism exists in the workplace. It might be subtle, quiet or polite but it is racism. Discrimination may be unconscious and individuals, both workers and employers, may be unwilling to acknowledge that they have racist beliefs. Management may not recognize that some of their behaviours, choices or practices are discriminating. Employees may not always recognize the discriminatory reason for the treatment they receive. Where employees suspect discrimination or they experience harassment, they may not wish to complain for fear of job loss.

Racism in the workplace may take many forms. The following outlines only some examples of workplace racism.

### **I. Recruitment**

- a) A workplace has a small number of workers from minority ethnic groups which does not accurately reflect the ethnic make-up of the area. Often this is justified by hiring managers with the excuse that they will not fit in. This also occurs in companies that are staffed and managed predominantly by a minority ethnic group and individuals from any other cultural group are not hired. Sometimes this type of behaviour is referred to as "reverse racism". Backwards or forwards, racist behaviour is racist behaviour.
- b) New immigrants or individuals with "foreign" sounding names often adopt western sounding names during their job search; so that Mohammed might become Mike, Carlos will become Charles, Hong selects Henry and Baljeet might become Ben. It is commonly believed that if a resume has a western name attached, it is more likely to make it through the initial screening of applicants. Conversely, it is believed that those resumes with "immigrant" names are less likely to be selected for an interview regardless of the skills, education and experience. Individuals have tested this theory by submitting the same resume with different names and obtaining different results.
- c) Many new immigrants believe that telephone interviews are used to screen out applicant with accents. Regardless of how advanced an individual's English skills, certain accents may cause HR to screen out the candidate.

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d) Individuals who are "ethnic" in appearance may be asked to provide documentation that others are not. For example, an Asian applicant applying for a job is asked by the hiring manager to bring in his passport to prove he was Canadian. No other applicants were asked to provide this type of proof.

## 2. Working Environment

- a) Assumptions, often based on racial stereotypes, are that certain racial groups have specific skills. This type of judgment, of course, is often unconscious. For example, for a manager that believes that all Chinese are good at math, he will easily hire ethnically Chinese workers for accounting positions -- possibly hiring Chinese workers over other groups -- but he may not consider the Chinese workers for other positions. It is important to note that such racial stereotypes are very simplistic and are based purely on appearance. Many ethnically Chinese are fourth and fifth generation Canadian; these individuals are Canadian and have had a Canadian education and upbringing and likely have little or no connection to China. Therefore, these individuals are likely to have a similar aptitude and set of skills, including math skills, as any other Canadian.
- b) Some cultural groups which may typically be less demanding or less likely to complain may get treated differently by management. These groups may be asked to do more overtime, to do jobs that are unpleasant more often and may be more easily refused requests for time off.

## 3. Harassment

- a) Harassment can take many forms, some of which are unintentional. Activities that exclude workers may be considered harassment as it may make these workers feel left out or uncomfortable - further legitimizing the idea that some ethnic groups just "don't fit in". Jokes or comments that are based on racial or cultural stereotypes will, of course, make workers of the targeted race or culture uncomfortable. Likely it will make workers of other, yet untargeted, groups also uncomfortable. Jokes or comments directed at clothing or attire - turbans or head scarfs, for example, or at someone's accent are common forms of harassment.

***"What we need is to recognize talent, even if that talent happens to look or speak a little different."***

Canadian Senator Donald Oliver

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#### 4. Promotions and other opportunities

- a) Promotions, cross training or skills upgrading opportunities are often given to those who are aware of the opportunities. Often awareness comes from being connected to those making these types of opportunities available. This type of connectedness is often a result of chats over the water cooler, company softball or golf games or beers after work. These types of activities often exclude, usually unintentionally, individuals from different cultural groups that are not accustomed to this type of work related socializing or who do not have the skills or experience to confidently participate.
- b) Some individuals from a visible minority group feel pressure to work harder than other groups in order to prove their value and to prove to co-workers that they were not promoted only because they are a member of a visible minority. Everyone should be entitled to advancement and everyone wants to advance due to their skills not their culture or their colour.

#### 5. Lay offs

- a) Sometimes when the need to lay off workers arises, new immigrants or those of different cultural groups are the first to go. Again, this might be explained by a lack of connectedness to management or to the company culture or by the likelihood that these individuals will accept the lay off without question making a difficult management task easier.

#### 6. Dismissal

- a) Similar to the above example, misconduct by ethnic minority workers may lead to dismissal; in a similar circumstance workers representing the dominant ethnic group of the company are given warnings or second chances.

***"15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability."***

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

## WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE?

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The previous pages provided some examples of racism experienced by different minority groups in the workplace. Again, it is important to note that when we speak of "minority" groups, we mean **any** minority in a workforce or community. "Whites" or native born Canadians may easily be the minority; there are many companies in BC that are owned, operated and mostly staffed by Chinese, Iranians, Indians or Koreans.

In workplaces and other organizations where racism exists, there are a multitude of negative impacts. There are naturally higher levels of stress and conflict. It may affect individuals' confidence and their ability to learn and develop skills. Racism affects individual and group morale and can cause anxiety, sickness, poor work performance, reduced productivity and reduced profits. Racism may be the cause of staff turnover, higher rates of absenteeism and work related injuries. Racism causes some new immigrant workers to return to their native country.

In organizations where racist behaviour is ignored, the organization, its management or its workers may face legal charges.

Clearly eliminating racism in the workplace is the right thing to do. It's right ethically, socially, politically and economically.

***Racism affects individual and group morale and can cause anxiety, sickness, poor work performance, reduced productivity and reduced profits. Racism may be the cause of staff turnover, higher rates of absenteeism and work related injuries. Racism causes some new immigrant workers to return to their native country.***

## STRATEGIES AND TIPS

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The previous pages have explored culture, multiculturalism, stereotyping and racism. As stated earlier, valuing diversity is not only the right thing to do, it is critical to ensure the continued development of our economy and society.

The following pages provide strategies and tips for creating more inclusive and supportive workplaces and communities.

You may already employ many of these strategies and tips but on-going review and discussion of issues related to multiculturalism and racism are necessary as the cultural landscape of our society and our workplaces continues to change.

***...valuing diversity is not only the right thing to do, it is critical to ensure the continued development of our economy and society.***

## **MANAGING A MULTICULTURAL WORKFORCE**

### **1. Develop strategies to recruit multicultural applicants and those who can demonstrate multicultural sensitivity**

Consider expanding your recruitment efforts to include ethnic newspapers. Even individuals who speak excellent English still read papers in their native languages.

If your organization uses some form of assessment as part of the hiring process, have it reviewed to ensure that there are no culturally-specific questions which might screen out excellent candidates from different cultural backgrounds.

Consider revising job descriptions and job postings to include the need for intercultural communication skills and diversity training.

### **2. Hire managers with excellent multicultural management expertise**

Multicultural management experience is invaluable. If your management team is lacking knowledge of workplace issues related to multiculturalism, an attempt should be made to properly train managers to understand differences in culture, traditions, religions, behaviours and communication.

### **3. Develop anti-racism and diversity policies**

Ensure your policies clearly state a “zero tolerance” level for racism. Policies must clearly state no tolerance for comments, jokes and stories that are based on racial stereotypes. Share these policies openly.

### **4. Identify the diversity**

Collect data about your workforce. You'd be surprised at the number of identifiable culture groups within your company, all of which gather and process information in different ways. If you do not understand these differences, effective communication between you and your employees cannot take place.

A database of language and cultural skills can also be valuable for companies working on projects or delivering services that require specialized skills.

*Conference Board of Canada research indicates that governments and companies place a lot of emphasis on attracting visible minorities, but struggle to retain them.*

***"Canada has been built by immigrants. All of us have a root somewhere else in the world but we have chosen to be a Canadian. Immigrants are this country's foundation. Racism and discrimination can ruin Canada's integrity and should not be tolerated.***

***One day a joke was made between me and a friend. Both of us received a written notice from our company. Even a joke between friends could turn to some misunderstanding and conflict. The company manager had a reason for this harsh reaction - we cannot put our culture and integrity in risk. In other words, we should take multiculturalism very seriously."***

Ahmad  
Canadian Immigrant, 2002

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## **5. Share information on different cultures**

Having a bulletin board where information about different cultures may be posted, can make people and their origins feel valued and respected. For example, post information about significant events in workers' native countries, key phrases in other languages, cultural festival information, a map marking workers' birthplaces, etc.

## **6. Be inclusive**

Relationships are key to productivity and achievement; being a valued member of the team is important. Managers and co-workers should make a conscious effort to include people in work-related and social events. Managing a diverse workforce requires deliberate team building, networking, and mentoring.

Consider recognizing and celebrating the holidays of other cultures. Staff Christmas lunch is nice for many members of your staff but it can feel meaningless and exclusive to those who celebrate other holidays.

## **7. Clearly provide company "culture" to all employees**

Each organization has its own culture, and that culture reflects attitudes about what is important, how the organization does its work, how employees are to behave, and how they are to be rewarded. In most companies, the values of the company reflect the values of the people who run the company. It is important for all employees to know what those values are because they define the rules for success.

Consider having company values, vision and mission statements, procedures and policies translated into the languages of your workers. Even if your workers speak very good English, allowing them the opportunity to have the information in their native language will build their confidence around company culture and their place within that culture.

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## 8. Provide access to training and development opportunities

Make anti-racism, cross cultural communication and cultural sensitivity training available for employees and management and encourage them to participate.

## 9. Establish mentoring programs

Many new immigrants need many months and sometimes years to really feel integrated into Canadian society. Many are very isolated and because of limited English often spend all of their time with those of the same language and cultural group. A greater connection to society and to work may be facilitated with participation in mentoring or host programs. These programs can provide opportunities to practice English, to learn new job skills and more about company and Canadian culture. For mentors, it is a good opportunity to learn more about a different culture and to gain some experience in providing training.

## 10. Establish programs to help improve English skills

A number of BC companies have established on-site English language programs for staff. School District Continuing Education Departments or private English language schools can be hired to come on site and design programs specific to the language demands of the job.

***"Canada has become a post-national, multicultural society. It contains the globe within its borders, and Canadians have learned that their two international languages and their diversity are a comparative advantage and a source of continuing creativity and innovation. Canadians are, by virtue of history and necessity, open to the world."***

Jean Chretien  
Former Canadian Prime Minister

## WORKING IN A MULTICULTURAL WORKPLACE

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**1. Learn about other cultures and value the cultures of the people you work with. Become a multicultural expert.**

Increased cultural understanding will increase managers' abilities to manage their staff. Increased cultural awareness will limit stereotyping and increase staff morale. Increased cultural awareness within a company will increase its ability to offer services to meet the needs of customers. Learn about different cultures from the people you work with, from books and from the Internet.

**2. Understand the difference between a cultural trait and a stereotype.**

Use this understanding to reduce judgement, improve communication skills and build better workplace relationships.

**3. Learn a few phrases in the languages of your workmates and customers**

Being able to say "good morning" or "thank you" in someone else's language demonstrates interest and respect.

*Current calculations suggest that nearly 70 percent of Canadian labour force growth comes from immigration.*

[www.canadianheritage.gc.ca](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca)

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#### **4. Avoid judging**

Consider accepting other behaviours or ways of doing things as different, rather than as right or wrong. Another way may also work or even be more effective.

#### **5. Find common ground or similarities between cultural groups**

People are usually more similar than they first appear. Focusing on similarities rather than differences will increase cultural understanding and reduce judgement.

#### **6. Seek further training**

The intent of this manual is to provide information and tips towards creating a more effective and respectful work and living environment. However, it is only the beginning. Look for further training to better serve culturally diverse clients and to work more effectively with a culturally diverse workforce.

Cultural diversity can make the workplace more effective, interesting and dynamic but it can also be difficult. Applying some of the suggestions provided in this toolkit will improve workplace communication and may also result in improved staff morale, productivity and an increased ability to attract and retain valuable employees.

***Cultural diversity can make the workplace more effective, interesting and dynamic but it can also be difficult.***

## COMMUNICATING WITH DIVERSE LANGUAGE GROUPS

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As diversity in an organization grows, so does the complexity of communication and the necessity to spend greater effort developing effective communication skills. The following is a list of tips that will improve communication within your culturally and linguistically diverse workforce.

### 1. Use plain English

Speak and write in short sentences using simple words. Avoid fillers such as "like", "ums and ahs", "you know". Enunciate clearly and speak a little more slowly, if necessary.

### 2. Use the written word as often as possible

Many people who are speaking English as a second language from have a wider reading vocabulary than listening vocabulary. Whenever possible, support instructions and oral presentations with handouts.

### 3. Avoid using idioms and abbreviations

Idioms are forms of expression often only understood by native speakers of a language. Some examples in English are:

- It's raining cats and dogs.
- You've got to bite the bullet.
- A good rule of thumb is....
- Sweet!
- ASAP

### 4. Check for understanding

Asking your listener questions like, "Does that make sense?" or "Is that clear?" or "Do you have any questions?" throughout the delivery of instructions or a presentation may provide opportunities for needed clarification. In some situations, it may be good idea to minimize miscommunications by having your listener retell what they have heard.

### 5. Encourage questions

Many non-native English speakers will hesitate to ask questions or to ask for clarification. Establishing a culture of communication in the workplace will permit more questions to be asked and more information to be shared. As it is often said, the only bad question is one that goes unasked.

*Establishing that questions are good will improve communication and increase staff sense of confidence and value.*

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## 6. Ask when you don't understand

As a listener, ask for clarification if you are not sure you have understood. Often we make the mistake of assuming we are understood. Asking for clarification is a good habit that may save time and money, ensure safety and strengthen morale.

## 7. Choose your humour carefully

Humour does not always translate well across language and culture. If you are not sure that your humour will be appreciated, resist the temptation. If you do share a joke or humorous anecdote, be sure to check that it has been understood as intended. If it hasn't been understood be ready to explain.

## 8. Allow for silence

Pauses are often needed in order to allow listeners operating in a second language to digest what has been said and to prepare to respond. Many people, especially many North Americans, are uncomfortable with silence of any length. Learn to become a little more comfortable with a second or two of processing time.

## 9. Permit different language groups to communicate in their own language

Although this is sometimes not appropriate as it excludes those who do not speak the language, sometimes this is the most effective way of communicating. Do not encourage this type of communication if it does exclude other listeners. If another language must be used in the presence of non-speakers, explain the situation to the group to avoid unnecessary uneasiness or feelings of exclusion.

## 10. Take the time to learn to correctly pronounce names

The most important word in any language is an individual's name. Taking the time to learn to say an unfamiliar name correctly makes people feel valued and respected.

*Taking the time to learn to say an unfamiliar name correctly makes people feel valued and respected.*

**"Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about."**

Benjamin Lee Whorf

**The 2001 Canadian Census reported that more than 130 languages are spoken in Canada.**

## BC POPULATION BY MOTHER TONGUE 2001

English	2,825,780	Hebrew	810
Chinese	130,330	Amharic	750
Cantonese	127,160	Sinhalese	725
Punjabi	121,740	Sino-Tibetan langs	640
German	84,605	Shuswap	630
French	54,400	Kurdish	620
Mandarin	48,880	Indo-Iranian langs	615
Tagalog	35,940	Latvian (Lettish)	595
Spanish	28,235	Yiddish	565
Italian	28,165	Nishga	505
Korean	28,105	Malayalam	495
Dutch	26,745	Bantu languages	440
Vietnamese	23,220	Frisian	430
Persian (Farsi)	21,290	Flemish	420
Hindi	20,295	Gaelic languages	420
Japanese	17,900	Niger-Congo langs	410
Polish	17,320	Nootka	405
Russian	14,920	Athapaskan langs	395
Portuguese	14,155	Thompson	390
Ukrainian	13,605	Icelandic	380
Hungarian	10,775	Lithuanian	345
Croatian	8,520	Welsh	345
Greek	6,685	Tsimshian	340
Danish	6,565	Telugu	330
Arabic	6,235	Twi	320
Gujarati	6,200	Turkic langs	300
Malayo-Polynesian	5,885	Creoles	295
Czech	5,835	Ojibway	285
Romanian	5,170	African langs	275
Finnish	5,120	Aboriginal langs	250
Serbian	4,670	Maltese	235
Urdu	4,410	Pashto	235
Norwegian	3,850	Semitic langs	235
Serbo-Croatian	3,305	Swahili	235
Swedish	3,265	Tigringa	230
Slovak	2,820	Marathi	210
Malay-Bahasa	2,265	Konkani	155
Tamil	2,250	Haida	145
Slavic languages	1,810	Romance langs	145
Sindhi	1,775	Kutenai	125
Other langs	1,630	Macedonian	110
Germanic langs	1,625	South Slave	100
Hakka	1,625	Austro-Asiatic langs	90
Salish languages	1,555	Dene	70
Turkish	1,505	Asiatic langs	55
Khmer (Cambodian)	1,360	Byelorussian	55
Slovenian	1,335	Inuktitut (Eskimo)	50
Somali	1,315	Kannada	50
Carrier	1,235	Algonquian langs	35
Thai	1,235	Blackfoot	35
Estonian	1,190	Dakota/Sioux	25
Cree	1,180	Chipewyan	20
Bengali	1,165	Dogrib	20
Lao	1,125	Iroquoian langs	15
Bulgarian	910	Kutchin-Gwich'in	10
Gitksan	905	Malecite	10
Armenian	900	Micmac	10
Wakashan langs	865	Mohawk	10
Chilcotin	810	Tlingit	10

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001

## **BASIC EXPRESSIONS IN OTHER LANGUAGES**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Hello</b>	<b>Thank you</b>	<b>Good Bye</b>
<b>Arabic</b>	Marhaba	Shukran	Salaam
<b>Farsi</b>	Salaam	Tashakkur	Khoda hafaz
<b>Cantonese</b>	Neih how	M goi	Joi gin
<b>Japanese</b>	Konnichi wa	Arigato gozaimasu	Jaa nay
<b>Korean</b>	Annyong kashipshio	Komapsumnida	Annyong-hi
<b>Mandarin</b>	Ni hao	Xie xie	Zai jian
<b>French</b>	Salut / Bonjour	Merci	Au revoir
<b>Punjabi</b>	Sat siri akal	Dhannvaad	Rabb raakhaa
<b>Spanish</b>	Ola	Gracias	Adios
<b>Serbian</b>	Dobar dan	Hvala	Do videnya
<b>German</b>	Guten Tag	Danke	Auf Wiedersehen
<b>Tagalog</b>	Halo	Salamat	Paalom

***"A different language is a different vision of life."***

Federico Fellini, Italian movie director

# CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM ACT

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The Act was developed for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada.

WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada provides that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination and that everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association and guarantees those rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada recognizes rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada and the Official Languages Act provide that English and French are the official languages of Canada and neither abrogates nor derogates from any rights or privileges acquired or enjoyed with respect to any other language;

AND WHEREAS the Citizenship Act provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities;

AND WHEREAS the Canadian Human Rights Act provides that every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make the life that the individual is able and wishes to have, consistent with the duties and obligations of that individual as a member of society, and, in order to secure that opportunity, establishes the Canadian Human Rights Commission to redress any proscribed discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin or colour;

AND WHEREAS Canada is a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which Convention recognizes that all human beings are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law against any discrimination and against any incitement to discrimination, and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Covenant provides that persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion or to use their own language;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada;

[http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act_e.cfm)

## THE MULTICULTURALISM POLICY OF CANADA

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3. (1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to

- (a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage;
- (b) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future;
- (c) promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation;
- (d) recognize the existence of communities whose members share a common origin and their historic contribution to Canadian society, and enhance their development;
- (e) ensure that all individuals receive equal treatment and equal protection under the law, while respecting and valuing their diversity;
- (f) encourage and assist the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada's multicultural character;
- (g) promote the understanding and creativity that arise from the interaction between individuals and communities of different origins;
- (h) foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures;
- (i) preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada; and
- (j) advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

[http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act_e.cfm)

### **Culture and Country Related Websites**

Listing of links to culture specific websites

[http://dir.yahoo.com/Society\\_and\\_Culture/Cultures\\_and\\_Groups/Cultures/](http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Cultures_and_Groups/Cultures/)

Country Profiles: Links to information about several countries

<http://www.newint.org/concept3/profile.htm>

<http://www.nationmaster.com/countries>

Country Statistics

[http://www.unicef.org/statistics/index\\_countrystats.html](http://www.unicef.org/statistics/index_countrystats.html)

The World Fact Book

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

### **Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Websites**

Multiculturalism and Immigration Branch of BC

<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/mib/>

Canadian Heritage - Multiculturalism

[http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect\\_e.cfm](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect_e.cfm)

Multiculturalism in Canada

[http://www.mta.ca/faculty/arts/canadian\\_studies/english/about/multi/index.htm](http://www.mta.ca/faculty/arts/canadian_studies/english/about/multi/index.htm)

Advantage Diversity, BC Communities Against Racism

[http://www.amssa.org/advantage\\_diversity/res.html](http://www.amssa.org/advantage_diversity/res.html)

Cultures Canada, From Diversity Strength - Celebrating Canada's Multicultural Diversity

<http://www.culturescanada.ca/>