

# ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

<b>Program Area:</b>	2.0	Workforce Development
<b>Sub Program:</b>	2.2	Supporting Employment-Related Training
<b>Template:</b>	2.2.5	Drilling Rig Training Program
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	<i>Western Lakota Energy Services Inc</i>	

## 1. Objective

To introduce more Aboriginal individuals to the energy services industry, Western Lakota has developed the Drilling Rig Training Program for Aboriginal individuals who are often highly capable, but may be inexperienced and lack the necessary tools to take employment positions in the industry.

## 2. Description

Based on our experience and efforts in seeking input from government, industry and Aboriginal communities, Western Lakota has developed an innovative, comprehensive Drilling Rig Training program. It incorporates screening and evaluation of potential Aboriginal trainees, pre-employment training and on-the-job training with employee counseling and performance monitoring. It is aimed at encouraging and developing a pool of skilled Aboriginal workers who are interested in and capable of establishing careers in the oil and gas drilling industry and related sectors.

The project was launched in the fall of 2004. Western Lakota hired a full-time Project Coordinator to help administer the program and provide liaison among its participants. In addition to the Project Coordinator, the drilling rig platform instructor, personal empowerment instructor and the classroom safety instructor are also Aboriginal individuals, which allows the trainees to feel comfortable and contributes to the retention of the material covered.

The drilling rig platform is fully portable, providing significant advantages to communities receiving training as the students do not need to deal with other distractions while receiving the training because they receive the training right in their community. Western Lakota has the ability, depending on interest and need, to train a significant number of Aboriginal individuals (approximately 90 to 120) in this training program in any given year.

## 3. Implementation

This Drilling Rig Training Program has two basic components: Pre-Employment Training and On-the-Job Training.

The Pre-Employment Training component begins with a week (7 days) of focused personal empowerment counseling. This is a very innovative concept that goes beyond the traditional training approach of focusing only on the required hands-on skills needed for efficient drilling rig work. The second component of the pre-employment session is a five-day concentrated

orientation intended to provide a meaningful framework for subsequent on-the-job training. The orientation covers basic knowledge and skills, safety education and job expectations, along with practical hands-on training on a portable drilling platform constructed by Western Lakota. Counseling in job readiness management may be especially important for some participants, whose social and cultural backgrounds may not have been oriented to career planning or even permanent employment. Each of the five hands-on days also includes two to three hours of focused job readiness counseling. The next two days involve emergency first aid training and hydrogen sulfide safety training. The location of all of the training is on-site in Aboriginal communities, a significant factor that is contributing to the program's success. After completion of the program, trainees meeting all the program requirements, including personal empowerment management and job readiness training, are assisted in securing employment in a position featuring on-the-job training. Western Lakota has the ability to train more Aboriginal individuals than they require, as a result, other drilling contractors have been invited to hire these graduates in an effort to secure employment positions for those individuals as soon as possible.

Participating Aboriginal communities provide locations for the Pre-Employment Training component and cover some of the basic costs for trainees, such as living expenses, drug/alcohol testing for participants and steel-toed work boots.

#### **4. Timeframe for Results**

Western Lakota's Project Coordinator keeps in touch with the graduates for up to 120 days after the end of the program to help with any issues, concerns, etc. during their first days on the job. This support tries to ensure that the graduates maintain their employment.

#### **5. Measurable Criteria**

The program has achieved a 90% completion rate to-date, and the graduates from this program have achieved an approximately 80% job retention rate.

#### **6. Budget**

Each training session is funded by: Western Lakota, Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Aboriginal community in which the training takes place.

#### **7. Partners and Sponsors**

Western Lakota Energy Services Inc., Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the various Aboriginal communities that have or will participate in the program are the sponsors.

#### **8. Experience with the Program**

The following key benefits are also considered important risk reduction factors to help ensure the success of the Drilling Rig Training Program for all stakeholders:

- detailed pre-screening of applicants helps them form realistic job expectations
- mobility of training allows concentrated programs to be conducted in remote communities; this encourages community support of participants, enables participants to focus on training, and costs less than conventional training programs conducted in large urban centres

- personal empowerment and job readiness counseling is especially important for many young Aboriginals who have not had full-time employment before or who have not lived anywhere other than their own community
- graduates of the training program are linked directly to employment opportunities and ongoing contact and support is provided by the Program Coordinator.

## **9. General Applicability**

Similar programs could be developed for other industries. This program essentially teaches the students how to work, regardless of the positions they obtain after the initial pre-employment phase of the training.

## **10. Additional Information or Support**

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