

# BEST PRACTICE JOB AD TIPS: ATTRACTING INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS TO YOUR WORKPLACE

## Why aim for diversity in the workplace?

Building a diverse workforce makes both financial and social sense. As McKinsey & Company's January 2018 report "Delivering through Diversity" concludes, "Many successful companies regard I&D [Inclusivity and Diversity] as a source of competitive advantage. It makes sense that a diverse and inclusive employee base – with a range of approaches and perspectives – would be more competitive in a globalised economy."

A 2019 report commissioned by the SBS and authored by John O'Mahony from Deloitte Access Economics found that improving social inclusion could amount to a \$12.7 billion annual boost to the Australian economy, lifting the GDP growth, improving health and employment outcomes, increasing workplace productivity and reducing the cost of social services. The report estimates that increasing the share of women in senior leadership will boost Australia's GDP by \$5 billion through more creative and innovative workplaces.

## Keen to embrace diversity and help your business thrive? A basic starting point is to make your job advertisement more appealing for diverse audiences.

How a position is advertised is crucial to attracting the right people for the job. A good advertisement will focus exclusively on the essential skills and abilities needed to do the job. Only refer to personal characteristics, such as age, sex, marital status or race, if they are part of the genuine requirements of the job.



**Here are a few tips to help you better speak to Indigenous Australians in your job advertisements:**

- Include a statement in your advertisement that encourages people from different backgrounds to apply, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- When talking about both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, it's best to say either "Indigenous Australians" or "Indigenous people".
- Remember that "Aborigines" is a word that is generally perceived as insensitive, and has racist connotations due to Australia's colonial past.
- Use clear, straightforward, friendly language.
- Avoid jargon, idiomatic expressions and slang.
- Avoid acronyms and "insider" language: to entry-level candidates, acronyms such as KPI, FWC, HR, WHS, KPS might seem like a foreign language, acting as a barrier to entry.
- Focus on what makes your business a good place to work, and its reputation in the local community.
- Keep the desired and essential skills simple and achievable to encourage job applicants to apply. Talk in terms of the ability you require, rather than qualifications.
- Be flexible and embrace potential: emphasise that a willingness to succeed or learn is more important than formal experience.
- Be open to appointing an employee that might not fit all the formal requirements, but has the potential to develop, and brings a new perspective to the workplace.
- Emphasise opportunities for taking part in and helping shape workplace culture and expectations.
- Focus on clearly describing transport options in the area of your business, and potential support when it comes to transport that might make it easier for Indigenous employees to reach work.
- Make it clear that becoming part of your business

will provide structured, supported opportunities for mentorship, skills training, learning and career growth.

- Emphasise the family friendly benefits and policies your business offers and supports.
- Emphasise pay equity, and the wages/ salary package you offer.
- Emphasise that your workplace embraces a culturally diverse workforce.
- Encourage a visit to your business by potential applicants, and be open to informal communication before the interviewing process begins.
- Make sure to advertise your available position in media focused on Indigenous Australians, and through word-of-mouth in the local community.
- Add testimonials (written or visual) from employees similar to your target applicant to your job descriptions, showing the reality of what it's like working for your business.
- Add links to or information about any internal business policies that support or may be of interest to the target applicant.
- Make it clear that your business embraces diversity, and supports their team in ways that meet their needs and help them grow.
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