

Book Review/Recension d'ouvrage

Indigenous Business in Canada: Principles and Practices

Edited by Keith G. Brown, Mary Beth Doucette, and Janice E. Tulk
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Indigenous Business in Canada: Principles and Practices provides business education students and business professionals a four-part textbook that bridge together historic and modern day policies and practices, struggles and success stories, and potential Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business partnerships in Canada. The textbook begins by introducing general characteristics of traditional Indigenous economic systems and subsequent shifts from subsistence to capitalist economies that occurred as a result of colonization (Chapter 1: Pre-contact Economics and the Fur Trade). Early interactions between European settlers and Indigenous populations, with respect to traditional economic and social organization systems are discussed and foreshadow the eventual reliance of Indigenous peoples on non-Aboriginal systems of economy and governance.

Part 1 provides a thorough description of considerations for conducting business on federally controlled reserve lands vis-à-vis the Indian Act (Chapter 2: Land and

Indigenous Business Development in Canada), the types of informal and formal leadership in Aboriginal communities (Chapter 3: Leadership and Management), the advantages and potential barriers to Aboriginal business ventures (Chapter 4: Entrepreneurship), and the importance of strategic alliances and considerations for successful Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partnerships (Chapter 5: Strategic Alliances, Partnerships, and Joint Ventures),

The first part of the textbook emphasizes the importance of sustained traditional, cultural knowledge and skills needed for successful informal leadership (e.g., Elder guidance), formal leadership (council system with elected chiefs), and wise practices that allow for adaptation to local Indigenous knowledge. Potential complications regarding Aboriginal business development are discussed including: (1) the lack of funding for infrastructure, (2) inability to use reserve land as collateral, (3) confusion over regulations and bureaucracy, (4) access to capital, training, and business networks, (5) reliance on government involvement in contractual agreements, and (6) land zoning approval. Obstacles notwithstanding, several examples of training programs available to Aboriginal entrepreneurs and benefits of mentorship for new business owners are discussed as potential opportunities to overcome such challenges.

Part 2 focuses on the historical and current political climate governing Aboriginal businesses and rights as people (Chapter 6: Governance, Law and Policy), misconceptions of Aboriginal tax exemption, purpose that exemptions serve, and review of federal and provincial/territorial authority to make direct tax laws (e.g., income tax) and indirect tax laws (e.g., sales tax) (Chapter 7: Taxation), the diversity and importance of banking institutions towards growing Aboriginal communities and businesses (Chapter 8: Finance and Banking), and the intersection of demographics (e.g., gender, age, region), Aboriginal businesses, an aging and slow-growing Canadian population, and a generally younger and increasing Aboriginal population that is estimated to comprise of at least one-fifth of Western provinces by 2020 (Chapter Nine: Demographics).

The second part of the textbook gives a timeline of policies that governed early European settlement (British Crown's Royal Proclamation of 1763), limited rights of Indigenous peoples to self-govern (British North America Act of 1867), and sought to control, curtail, and delegitimize Indigenous peoples and define those who qualify as "Indian" (Indian Act of 1876). Ambiguity in legislation and overlap among provincial/

territorial and federal governments are described along with the regulatory gaps that First Nations communities have utilized to increase rights to governance and titles to land, all of which are important to understand when working with Indigenous peoples and businesses.

Part 3 involves ethical marketing practices, issues of authenticity (e.g., Aboriginal-produced product and experiences sold to consumers), and the 4-Ps (product, promotion, place, and pricing) (Chapter 10: Marketing in Indigenous Contexts). A discussion of Aboriginal fishing practices and barriers to entering the commercial fishery is given, examples of the process required to produce and distribute a product (i.e., value chains) are illustrated, and the success of the Business Development Team within the Ulnooweg Development Group Inc. in supporting sustainable commercial fishery ventures within First Nation communities (Chapter 11: Overcoming Barriers to Entry in the Commercial Fishery) is featured. The third section highlights resource extraction projects (e.g., mining) that pose risk and opportunities in Aboriginal communities, the social license Aboriginal communities provide for businesses to operate in their communities, and duty to consult with Aboriginal leaders concerning project plans and resource development prior to and during operation (Chapter 12: Aboriginal Communities and Mining).

Part 4 begins by describing the provincial treaty process, historic treaties established prior to the Canadian Confederation, numbered treaties created to expand settlement into Western Canada and increase development of resources and the importance of historic informing and settling current land claims (Chapter 13: Treaties and Land Claims in Canada). The fourth and final part of this textbook discusses key developments from Indian Residential Schools to the recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission established to uncover the truth behind residential schools and explore how the residential school experience continues to impact Aboriginal communities (Chapter 14: Indian Residential Schools, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and Truth and Reconciliation).

Indigenous Business in Canada: Principles and Practices could have, at times, been strengthened from a more thorough discussion of the long-term benefits realized by Aboriginal groups that have signed treaties which could possibly enrich the audience's sense of the treaty process. A clearer articulation of the link between Indian Residential Schools, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Aboriginal business today could have been made. Moreover, the

significance of the switch from exchange to capitalist economies described in the first chapter of the textbook could have been made more explicit by contextualizing such shifts as part of the worldview of Indigenous peoples as it pertains to spirituality and the connection with the land.

Nevertheless, *Indigenous Business in Canada: Principles and Practices* should serve as a conscious raiser for business education students and professionals working in housing, business, banking and other economic-development industries and support their ability to adapt to the growing importance of Aboriginal communities and business to the global economy.