

Indigenous Employment Index

Draft discussion guide for Executive Management

- 11 August 2021 v7

Murawin will undertake interviews using the method of **Yarning**, which supports an Indigenous worldview of oral storytelling, and encourages open dialogue, informal conversation and the sharing of participant's thoughts and experiences. *This method is appropriate for interviews with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people as its aim is to create a safe space for discussion.*

The guide will support a semi-structured interview that explores key topic areas, rather than a sequential question and answer approach. The questions included in this guide and their sequence are indicative only.

Priority Questions are indicated in **red** to ensure the interview adheres to the agreed 45 minute time. All other questions will be asked as appropriate for the interview.

Key topic areas include:

- Commitment, Governance and Reporting
- Workplace culture and leadership
- Attraction and Recruitment
- Engagement, Retention & Development
- Indigenous Community Engagement

Interviewer guidance

- Introduce researcher (Murawin) and the research scope.
- Explain what the discussion is about - "We've been asked to conduct research by Minderoo Foundation with 50 of Australia's large employers to produce a dataset that will provide an evidence base on closing the Indigenous employment gap and will also educate employers on strategies to improve Indigenous employment. We'd like to hear your views on your experience as an employee, your views on any initial outcomes and impact, and any thoughts you have about how this could be improved"
- Advise the participant of the ethics approval through Curtin University, and in alignment with the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research
- Explain audio-recording and transcription
- Explain how data will be used and stored – especially that it will be stored/used in line with Australian privacy and Indigenous data governance principles and, that it will not be passed to anyone else or any other organisation and will be used solely for evaluation of the program
- Interview will take about 45 minutes
- Explain that participants can ask to stop at any time, particularly if they feel distressed
- Explain the importance of honest opinions, no right or wrong answers.
- Explain recording and confidentiality of participant information and informed consent process
- Any questions before starting?

Discussion guide

1 Introductions and context

- For Indigenous employees:
 - Can you tell me a bit about yourself - your mob, where you're from?
 - And what about your role and the company you work for?
 - How did you get started with these mob?
 - How long have you been working for here?
 - Where do you think you have had the greatest impact?
- For non-Indigenous employees:
 - Can you tell me a bit about yourself, your role and the company you work for?
 - How do you interact with Indigenous employees?
 - Where do you think you have had the greatest impact?
 - When you consider your experience and impact within this organisation, how does this compare to previous organisations?

2 Commitment, Governance and Reporting

This section should be framed as strategic discussion, looking across the organisation. Operational questions will follow.

- Can you describe the organisation's diversity and inclusion commitment and approach, what it aims to achieve?
- Why does your organisation take this approach?
- Does this approach include reconciliation and/or Indigenous employment? 1
- If so, can you describe the current strategy or plan? *E.g. a Reconciliation Action Plan or Indigenous Employment Strategy / Plan*
- Why does your organisation take this approach?
- Who has oversight of this approach? e.g., does the board of executive leadership team have oversight?
- Who is accountable for the outcomes of this approach (e.g., Strategy / Plan)
- How are Indigenous people or employees engaged in the design and implementation of this work?
- What do you monitor and report on, and how do you act on these insights? e.g., Indigenous employment, recruitment, progression of employee's etc?
- How would you evaluate your progress to date e.g., what you think the have been the outcomes for the organisation, Indigenous employees, customers and the communities you are operating in?

3 Attraction and Recruitment

- Can you outline your approach to attracting and recruiting Indigenous employees?
- Is there a proactive, and targeted process? E.g., EVP, community connections etc.
- What are your reporting requirements around Indigenous employment?
- What has been working, and what have been some of the challenges?
- How inclusive, culturally safe and responsive do you feel this process is?

- How do you determine which roles are identified versus roles where Indigenous candidates are encouraged to apply?
- How do you secure funding for identified roles?
- How do you engage with potential Indigenous employees and build a pipeline?
- How do you ensure Indigenous people are being employed, not because of their Aboriginality but because they match the majority of the role requirements?

4 Engagement, Retention and Development

- How responsive do you feel your organisation is to the experiences of Indigenous employees members, including wellbeing, inclusion and cultural safety and experiences of racism in the workplace?
- How would an Indigenous employee provide feedback on negative or exclusionary behaviours? Can you provide an example of this?
- How inclusive are your people policies?
- How are Indigenous cultural responsibilities and requirements identified and supported? E.g., time for sorry business, allowances to work 'on Country', recognition of kinship/guardianship requirements, flexibility around pay periods?
- Who has this responsibility?
- What does Indigenous representation at a leadership level currently look like?
- Why do you think your leadership representation looks like this?
- How do you identify Indigenous talent?
- How do you feel about the organisations current approach to developing Indigenous employees and leaders? E.g., what's working well and what's not working well?
- What are the opportunities for Indigenous employees to participate in focussed in development opportunities? E.g., formal education, mentoring, a buddy or sponsorship?
- Do you have, minimum Indigenous participation targets in leadership development programs?
- If yes, how would you evaluate the progress of this approach?
- Does your organisation recognise non-Western, including Indigenous perspectives, on leadership? If so, how?
- How does your organisation provide opportunities for Indigenous employees to network with each other?
- If yes, is this well utilised?
- What is leadership's involvement in these networking activities?
- How do you capture the perspectives of Indigenous employees in your people process?
- If yes, how is this data reported, communicated and acted on?

5 Workplace culture and leadership

- How well do you think your organisation understands the impacts of colonisation on Indigenous people, their job-readiness and experiences in the work place? E.g., Indigenous people experience the impact of generational trauma, or may have different levels of education or experience than their non-Indigenous counterparts?

- How does this understanding (or lack of) impact employment practices?
- Thinking about the culture of your company, how culturally safe do you think it is, and does this vary across different areas of the business?
- How do you build the cultural capability of non-Indigenous employees in relation to cultural safety?
- What are leadership's expectations around cultural safety and building an inclusive work environment, and how does this work in practice?
- How would you evaluate this approach and impact in workplaces both within your organisation and comparison to other organisations?
- How does your organisation celebrate Indigenous culture and protocols? E.g., events, art, Country, place, language
- What is your organisation's protocol regarding Acknowledgement of Country?
- How authentic and consistent is this approach? E.g., How personalised and well thought out do you think they are?
- Overall, how well do you think Indigenous practices and protocols are embedded within the organisation?
- How do you evaluate the impact of this approach?
- How does your organisation engage with Indigenous employees, and recognise and represent the Indigenous perspective?
- What is leadership's role in this?
- How is this information used in business decision making, marketing, communications and/or activities and events?
- What is your organisation's approach to cultural immersion? E.g., On Country secondments (Jawun or Clontarf) or direct community partnerships
- What have been the outcomes of this approach?
- Overall, how would you evaluate the organisation's approach to Indigenous engagement?

6 Indigenous Community Engagement

- How does your organisation consult, engage and co-design with Indigenous communities on Indigenous related work? E.g., is there an Indigenous Engagement Strategy?
- How do you utilise Indigenous employees in the design and implementation of these plans and processes?
- How is your organisation's approach to Indigenous engagement viewed by your Indigenous people and communities where you operate?
- What impact do you think this approach has on existing and potential Indigenous employees?
- Overall, how would you evaluate the approach to Indigenous engagement?
- Can you describe the organisations formal and informal partnerships that support Indigenous employment? E.g., with Indigenous communities, organisations, representatives, and or university or education providers.
- Why do you invest in these partnerships?

- Overall, what are the outcomes of this approach?

7 Closing notes and recommendations

- Are there any leading practices that you have seen working in yours or other organisations that could/should be replicated?
- Overall, how do you feel about your organisation's approach to Indigenous employment in regards its aims, implementation, and effectiveness?
- What are the strengths, challenges and opportunities?
- Does this mirror your previous experiences at other workplaces?
- What are systemic and structural barriers that may prevent employment parity?
- What commitments do you want to see employers (of all sizes and across all industries) make in regard to Indigenous employment?
- What is the benefit of Indigenous employment parity for all Australians moving forward? Why should a business be fluent in Indigenous Australia?