Retaining an Inuit Workforce

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**Analysis**

High turnover rates within Inuit communities are due to a lack of social capital and access to networks, as well as an unclear understanding of the job market, because many people do not have formal educations. Therefore, lack of work experience or lack of social skills can be a factor that leads to lower job satisfaction among Inuit employees if they are not provided with ample opportunities for advancement or training. These factors create barriers for job seekers since networks are often key for finding work in Canada's North and many positions require both experience and education. On top of these issues, there are also problems with racism; first generation Inuits find it difficult to get jobs because employers view them as unfamiliar with Canadian society and therefore unable to perform well at work. On the other hand, Inuit employees believe they have more opportunity to find more satisfying employment in other industries. Similarly, high rates of stress and burnout among Inuit employees. Most companies have a high level of stress and low points in their employment cycle that can be attributed to decreased production, which then leads to increased loss of business. Another factor is sporadic payment schedules, in some cases employees are paid only once a month and sometimes with a delay of more than two weeks. Finally, lack of basic training and development opportunities leads to Low morale within the organization, which in turn leads to low productivity and high turnover rate among employees.

A workforce that is culturally sensitive and diverse provides businesses with a competitive advantage in the marketplace. A competitive advantage includes increased revenue, improved client service, more profitability, growing customer base etc. The biggest reasons why a low culturally sensitive and diverse workforce is problematic for businesses is because it could lead to customers not being satisfied with the service they provide. Not having enough employees of different ethnicities can also make doing business difficult as then how would you know how to handle diversity issues? An example of how this can be problematic within a business is in the case of a restaurant. If they had enough staff in the restaurant, they then could engage in better training on cultural sensitivity and diversity issues. However, if they do not have enough staff and do not engage in such training, it would be difficult for them to anticipate how their customers will not be satisfied with their service.

**Alternative Solutions**

One of the solutions based on high turnover rates within Inuit communities is providing more training programs specific to Inuit in order to teach skills that are required for the Canadian job market. These programs would also help with the issue of the lack of social capital by creating a space for Inuit to develop networks and learn about Canada's society. Another way is by increasing job opportunities in Inuit communities, which would also increase Inuit's access to non-Inuit networks which will improve their chances of getting work. Another suggestion includes finding work for young people within Inuit communities so that they do not have as many opportunities to leave and go elsewhere looking for jobs. This way, the issue of a lack of social networks outside Inuit communities would also be helped since young people would be working and getting paid while they are in their home community. Strategies like this would benefit Inuit not just financially, but socially as well.

Solution to the problem of low culturally sensitive and diverse workforce can be achieved through diversifying the current team in an organization, by hiring more people who have different experiences than the ones present. They will bring a new perspective and most likely a new technology that is easily approachable by the team or the company's clients which could lead to a great business opportunity.

**Recommendation**

The best recommendation provided for helping Inuit people achieve better social capital is through increasing job opportunities in Inuit communities. This would also raise employment levels which would mean that less people would be unemployed when they are outside their home community seeking jobs. This would give Inuit more opportunities to make connections outside their communities with non-Inuit people which would help improve social capital. Through increasing job opportunities there would be better access to funds which could be spent on development in the community. The money that was made from the various jobs would enable more Inuit people to return home and work for them.

Another recommendation to curb high turnover rate by Inuit people in public sector jobs is to provide skill development programs which would help Inuit acquire the required skills to secure and maintain employment. Through these skill development programs, Inuit people would be better prepared for job interviews which would help them get their first in public sector jobs. It would also motivate them to work harder at their current jobs by giving them a chance to learn new skills that could help them get promoted into higher paying positions where they could earn more money.

**Implementation**

Every Inuit person needs to seek employment at least once a month to increase social capital and reduce the effects of unemployment. This will ensure that Inuit people have more opportunities to make connections outside their communities with non-Inuit people. The following should be implemented in order to help Inuit achieve a better social capital. The Government of Nunavut should create more job opportunities so that all Inuit can have better resources and opportunities to build more social capital. The government should also accept and facilitate the creation of employee owned co-operatives which would help improve social capital for Inuit by enabling them to form their own businesses and therefore gain greater access to employment and consumer goods. This is because Inuit can obtain the necessary resources for referrals and capitalization from business communities and elsewhere.

In addition, sales tax exemptions on new homes should be allowed for a minimum period of five years, in order to boost construction opportunities for Inuit contractors. This would help to create more jobs for Inuit and reduce the effects of unemployment among Inuit people from communities. It also helps to improve social capital by allowing people to build quality homes which increase social belonging in a community and reduce family breakups. This is due to the fact that when families are displaced they are not able to make connections with non-Inuit citizens.

Finally, job training programs should be implemented to help Inuit people improve their social capital. Programs could include Co-op programs aimed at increasing skill sets and formalizing the incorporation of co-operative businesses in Nunavut. In addition, skills building courses aimed at improving the means of producing goods and services from Inuit corporations and giving them access to markets that are beyond their communities. Finally, internalization programs aimed at giving Inuit corporations greater control over customer relations, employees, competitive advantages and regulatory processes. These programs would help Inuit people to better their social capital by developing a new way of doing business which will give them more access to employment outside their community and greater opportunities for networking with non-Inuit citizens.