



Leader Tool

NAIDOC Week and Improving Connection

Many of us are celebrating NAIDOC Week. As Australians, it is important for us to continue efforts to celebrate together the rich cultural history with First Nations Peoples. At AccessEAP, our business is supporting the wellbeing and mental health of Employees, Leaders and organisations. In order to achieve this, it is critical to work with a holistic approach focusing on the wellbeing of the nation and the rich cultural heritage with First Nations Peoples as the foundational stone of wellbeing.

As non First Nations leaders across a range of different organisations, sectors and industries, there are strong positive organisational benefits and outcomes that can be achieved by working together and collaborating on how to strengthen pathways of support and cultural respect.

More non First Nations organisations, include and practice Acknowledgement of Country, respectfully acknowledging Country on which we work and pay respects to the Elders past, present and future. More of the events we attend or watch will ensure to include a culturally sensitive acknowledgement. How does your organisation respectfully support and engage with First Nations Employees? Do you work and consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or communities? How can you improve the ways with cultural respect and relationships with First Nation Peoples? Here are some things to consider:

Clear purpose – organisations that focus on strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategies have a very clear understanding, purpose and mindset about why they are doing this and the positive outcomes overall. At AccessEAP, we always challenge ourselves to be able to make a clear statement about ‘Why’ we are doing what we do. Are you looking to gain organisational advantage through a diverse workforce? Are you aiming to improve customer or client service with First Nation Peoples? Is this an important part of your organisation’s social and cultural purpose? Develop a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#). Clarity of purpose and commitment supports positive outcomes.

Diversity creates opportunity – in the same way that we consciously create a workforce that draws upon the multitude of experiences, backgrounds and ways of working for all people, it is important to think about the value that respectful cultural relationships in collaboration with First Nations Peoples can share with teams and organisations.

Acknowledge challenges – it is important to reflect on the challenges, history, key issues and obstacles that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees and employers face. These issues can include basic elements of HR, such as recruiting and retaining people. AccessEAP recently implemented Cultural Competency Training for all non First Nations Employees. This could also be included as part of an induction or orientation program.



It's just what we do – a successful engagement strategy must be something that is clearly understood and consistently applied across your whole organisation. It's important to ensure everyone understands the 'Why' as much as the 'How'. Make it a part of your day to day language, experience and cultural workspace. Keep the commitment alive with regular Cultural Awareness training and Cultural Competency training.

Continue the conversation – celebrating NAIDOC week is an important way to build your organisation's strengths to engage with recruiting, retaining and building a compelling Employee Value Proposition which reflects the importance of our First Nations Peoples and heritage. Think of how you would continue the conversation and actions built out of other important milestone days such as R U OK? Day. The celebration and date is important ([see tips here](#)) <https://www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/plan-your-event> – but continuing the conversation is more important.

Cultural competence – as a non First Nations People leader, we often find ourselves reflecting on and challenging our approach with people and teams. Self-reflection and learning with an open mindset are important skills that support our growth as non First Nations leaders. There are many resources available to help build cultural competencies in consultation with First Nations Peoples which can help you understand more deeply culturally sensitive and appropriate communication and leadership approaches.

At AccessEAP, we are proud to celebrate NAIDOC Week and promote our **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line** see here for details:
[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line](#)

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss a specific concern contact our Manager Support Hotline or your Relationship Manager. As always, as your EAP we are here to support your people whatever the nature of their concerns, please contact AccessEAP on 1800 818 728 or contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line on 1800 861 085.

AccessEAP acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we work on and their continuing connection to land, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

