

When **Westbank First Nation** first turned on SafetyNow, it didn't feel like a big dramatic launch. It felt more like a quiet turning of a wheel that had been stuck for a long time.

Case Story

WFN is busy in every direction. There is the early education support, the school, early years programs, the public works yard, the government building, finance, land and compliance, community and elder care – amongst so much more.

Case Story

More than 250 people, most of them band members, spread across West Kelowna and working in very different environments.

What they shared was a common problem. There was never enough time to train people properly.

New hires would arrive and everyone knew there were things they needed to learn, from safety basics and policies to how the Nation expects people to communicate and treat each other. Managers were dealing with difficult situations and performance issues and were often relying on instinct or past experience instead of a structured approach. HR leadership kept turning over, which made it almost impossible to build and sustain a consistent training program.

That is the reality SafetyNow walked into.

TURNING SCATTERED TRAINING INTO A SYSTEM

Rhiannon, WFN's Learning and Development Coordinator, became the person with her hands on the wheel.

Instead of hunting for individual courses or trying to build everything from scratch, she started using the SafetyNow library to create clear learning paths. A new manager with a challenging employee could now be given a specific sequence of short courses on communication, respect and difficult conversations. A supervisor in a high-risk area could get a focused path on safety responsibilities and how to recognize warning signs.

The impact on speed showed up right away.

Onboarding no longer meant waiting for schedules to align or for someone to find time to pull together a slide deck. New employees could be assigned concise, easy to understand courses that matched WFN policies. They would sit down at a computer or their phone, complete their modules in one clean run, and know they were done for the next cycle rather than repeating the same thing every few months.

For WFN, that meant less chasing and fewer reminders. For new hires, it meant a clearer, faster introduction to expectations and safety.

Carly, who supports safety and OHS, used the same platform to tie safety training directly to WFN's own policies. When the Nation wrote a substance abuse and possession policy that did not exist in any government template (but did on SafetyNow), SafetyNow provided a compliant supervisor course that showed managers how to recognize symptoms and behaviours of impairment. The policy and the training now sit side by side. Assigning both takes seconds rather than weeks of back and forth.

That is what faster looks like at WFN. Less scrambling. More structure. And a record in the LMS that shows exactly who was trained and when, which matters when you answer to council, members and regulators.

GIVING MANAGERS TOOLS, NOT JUST INSTRUCTIONS

One of the most important shifts at WFN has been the change in how managers respond to problems.

Before SafetyNow, an advisor might say to a manager, "You need to talk to your employee about respect" and then hope that the manager had the skills and confidence to do it well. Now, those same advisors can say, "Let's build some content around this topic for you" and know that there will be something concrete to assign and discuss.

THE NEXT CHAPTER, BUILDING INDIGENOUS LEADERS

WFN is clear about one thing. They are still at the beginning of this journey. The next chapter is about leadership.

Managers are using leadership, communication and presentation skills courses from SafetyNow as part of their coaching conversations. After a difficult interaction or a disciplinary meeting, they can point to a specific module, share it with the employee and then follow up. The conversation becomes less personal and more developmental. It is not "you are the problem," it is "here is a skill we are both going to work on."

Courses are short enough and clear enough that people get through them with ease. They learn something new and they do not feel buried in jargon or long lectures. That shift builds trust. It also gives managers a practical way to correct behaviour that fits WFN's values and culture.

Behind the scenes, the relationship with SafetyNow has been part of that empowerment. When WFN needs a slide changed or a course title softened so it feels less harsh in a disciplinary context, they send an email and get a resolution within minutes. That kind of support lets Rhiannon and Carly stay focused on people, not on fighting with a system.



Rhiannon is already working on a leadership development program that is Indigenous focused, designed for new and emerging leaders within the Nation. The question is not only "how do we manage today's issues" but "who will lead this community five and ten years from now."

Investing in leadership paths matters for a self-governed nation for several reasons.

It helps keep talent in the community by giving strong performers a way to grow into supervisory and management roles instead of leaving for outside opportunities. It strengthens decision making because leaders understand both modern HR and safety expectations and the cultural and constitutional responsibilities they hold to their members. It reduces the disruption that comes with leadership turnover, which WFN knows all too well.

The existing library already includes HR and soft skills content on topics like coaching, feedback, communication, respect, conflict resolution and leading teams. SafetyNow is working with WFN to map those courses into structured leadership paths that match the Nation's plans. Where there are gaps or where an Indigenous context is essential, the plan is to work together on custom content.

On top of that, WFN and SafetyNow are collaborating on a custom onboarding course that will feature a respected WFN leader as the on screen "host" and includes Okanagan language. SafetyNow can build her avatar in less than an hour, and her voice can be used across multiple courses so that employees hear expectations from someone they know, and hear language that belongs to this land.

Over time, that combination of culturally grounded custom pieces and practical HR and soft skills training will give WFN a clear staircase for new leaders to climb, from frontline worker to supervisor to manager.

SafetyNow is becoming a key part of that plan.

For other self-governed nations, WFN's story is not a tale of overnight transformation. It is the story of a Nation that chose to put structure behind its training, speed up onboarding, give managers real tools to correct behaviour and start investing deliberately in its next generation of leaders.

SafetyNow is proud to be walking that path with them and is ready to help other nations do the same in a way that respects their own culture, language and community.

For more information about SafetyNow's partnership with first nations people, please reach out directly, at rickt@SafetyNow.com.

Richard Tobin

President & CEO

Bongarde/SafetyNow

1.800.667.9300 ext 100

rickt@SafetyNow.com

**Get all the tools & training you
need to comply at SafetyNow**

REQUEST A DEMO TODAY

 **SafetyNow**

105 WEST PARK DRIVE, SUITE 400
BRENTWOOD, TN 37027

1.800.667.9300
INFO@SAFETYNOW.COM