

We acknowledge that we live, work and place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation, and we are grateful to be here.

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT:

Attracting and Integrating Internationally Trained Employees (ITEs) in South Okanagan-Similkameen



**SOUTH OKANAGAN
IMMIGRANT AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES**



INTRODUCTION

A lot has been said about labour market shortages in Canada and British Columbia. According to a Conference Board of Canada report (2016), the shortage of workers could cost BC close to \$7.9 billion in GDP annually. Over the coming years, 70% of job openings will be due to retirement. BC will have 903,000 job openings by 2027 and 77% of these jobs will require post secondary education (<https://www.welcomebc.ca/Choose-B-C/Why-Choose-British-Columbia-Canada/B-C-Labour-Market-Outlook>). The aging population coupled with low birth rate means that employers need to look for immigrants to fill vacancies at all levels.



Currently Canada welcomes around 300, 000 immigrants a year with about 40, 000 coming to British Columbia. The majority of the newcomers are skilled immigrants that will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their workplaces, and will contribute to the development of local communities. They can help you access new customers and international markets, enrich organizational culture and spark innovation. It's not a secret that most of these newcomers settle in the three large cities – Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. So what can we do to attract these newcomers to come to the South Okanagan-Similkameen? The answer is not straightforward.

Not everything depends on employers. Being away from their homelands, newcomers are not just looking for economic opportunities, they are looking for emotional comfort, a sense of belonging. Don't we all? The large cities have enough immigrant population to create the temporary comfort zones for newcomers – opportunity to speak their native languages, communicate with people that share their culture, buy familiar food. Why temporary? Because, at one point or another, to truly integrate immigrants need to come out of these comfort zones to learn from and share with the rest of the community. Employers can play an essential role in this process by creating welcoming, inclusive and diverse workplaces where everyone feels not just tolerated, but appreciated and valued.

In this Toolkit we gathered a number of resources that will help you navigate the complex system of accessing various streams of immigrants, attracting them to your unique workplace, and helping them and your businesses succeed together by creating welcoming environments.

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HOW TO FIND AND HIRE ITEs?

There are number of sources you can access to hire immigrant workers. The first step is to connect with a settlement agency in your area. We have one organization that focuses on settlement and integrations of newcomers – South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS): www.soics.ca This organization has offices in Penticton and Oliver but serves the whole South Okanagan-Similkameen region. SOICS serves over 1000 immigrants a year and many of these people are looking for a job.



Below are other sources of accessing immigrant talent for both long-term and short-term employees.

Long Term Employees

Skilled Professionals on the Pathway to Permanent Residency

Express Entry

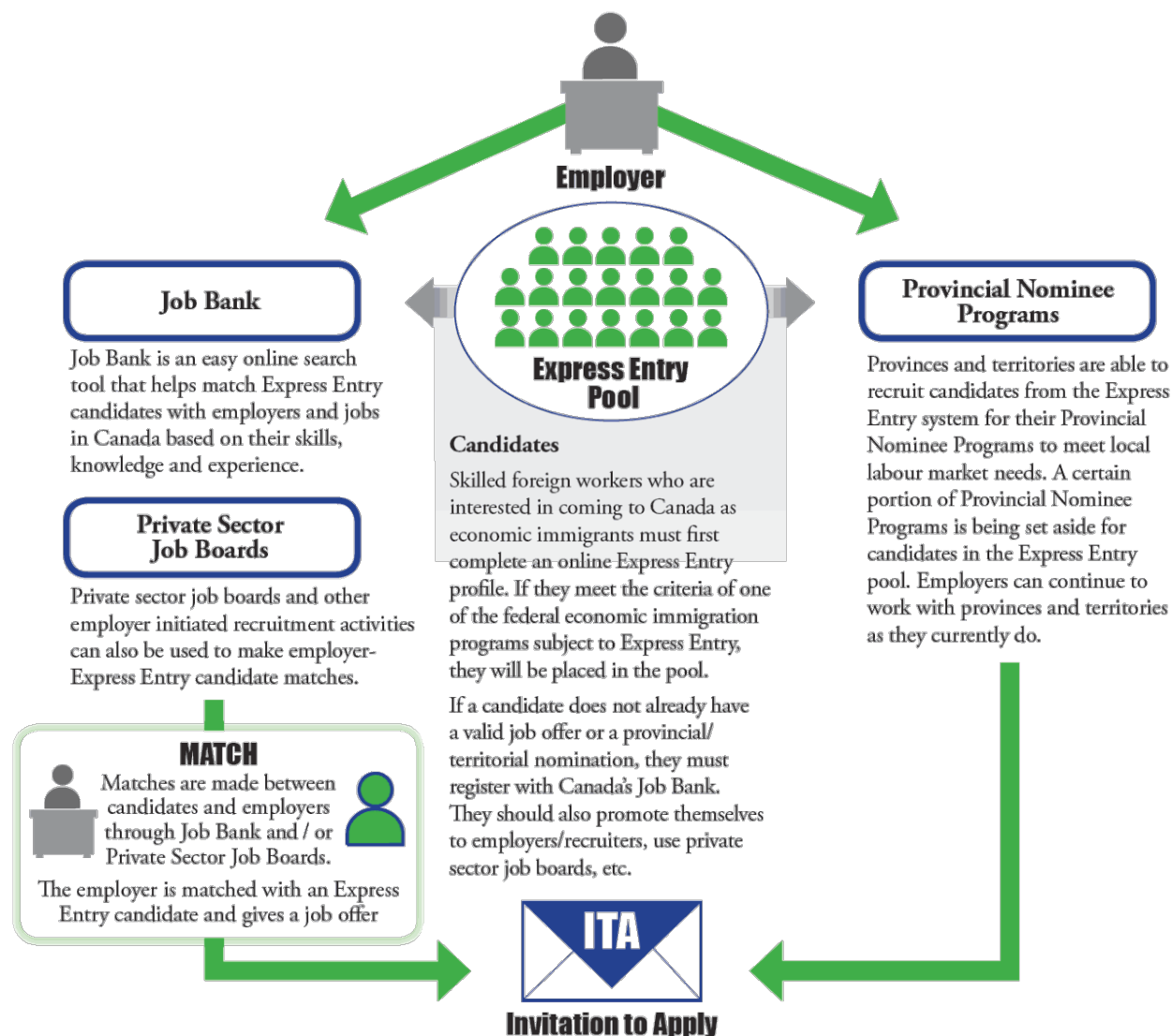
Express Entry is a system that manages applications for the Federal Skilled Worker and Trades Program, Canadian Experience Class and a part of the BC Provincial Nominee Program.

Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) & Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

The employer must be offering a job for:

- a higher-skilled position such as: management, professional, scientific, technical or trade occupations (National Occupational Classification (NOC), skill type 0, and skill levels A and B: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/find-national-occupation-code.html>),
- full-time hours (a minimum of 30 hours of work per week),
- at least one year, and
- a non-seasonal position.

Note: A foreign worker must have at least 12 months of full-time (or an equivalent amount in part-time) skilled work experience in Canada within the 36 months prior to applying for permanent residence.



Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP)

The employer must be offering a job for:

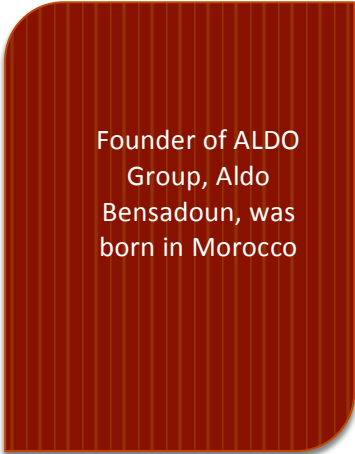
- an eligible skilled trade or technical occupation (NOC skill level B),
- full-time hours (a minimum of 30 hours of work per week), and
- at least one year.

Note: Under the FSTP, the employment offer can be made by up to two employers.

Employers who wish to hire skilled foreign workers through one of these immigration programs may want to hire these workers temporarily while their application for permanent residence is being processed by applying for a dual intent Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) - permanent resident visa and temporary work permit. Please see the section on Temporary Foreign Workers Program for more details about LMIA.

Processing fee

- \$1,000 for LMIA application for each position paid by a credit card; no refund if application is not approved
- You cannot recover the fee from foreign workers that you are hiring (Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) policy).



Founder of ALDO
Group, Aldo
Bensadoun, was
born in Morocco

Exemptions:

- No fee when applying for a caregiver for medical assistance
- No fee if a family/individual gross income is \$150,000 or less when hiring a caregiver for children
- No fee if you support your employee's application for a permanent resident visa
- No fee for higher-skilled positions related to on-farm primary agriculture such as farm managers/supervisors and specialized livestock workers (specifically National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes 0821, 0822, 8252 and 8255)

Language restriction

English and French are the only languages that can be identified as a job requirement both in LMIA applications and in job advertisements by employers, unless they can demonstrate that another language is essential for the job.

Education, training and experience

Employers are responsible for verifying that the foreign worker has all the necessary training, qualifications and experience to perform the work in Canada.

Regulated occupations

Employers hiring a foreign worker in regulated occupations in Canada must ensure that arrangements are made with the appropriate regulatory body for the certification, registration or licensing of the foreign worker.

Wages, working conditions and occupations

Employers applying for a labour market impact assessment (LMIA) must pay the temporary foreign worker (TFW):

- at a minimum, the posted prevailing wage for the occupation and work location where the foreign worker will be employed, or
- a wage that is within the same wage range that they are paying their current employees working in the same occupation and same work location, if this rate is higher than the prevailing wage

Employers must refer to the median wage published on Job Bank to determine the prevailing wage:

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home>

To determine the prevailing wage of the position:

For unionized positions: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/permanent/working-conditions.html#h2.1-3.2>

For non-unionized positions:

Use the job title of the available position to conduct a search on Job Bank (enter the job title and NOC: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/find-national-occupation-code.html>: in the job search field): <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home>

- 1) If the median wage is listed as “N/A” for the local area (economic region) where the work is located, employers should consult the provincial/territorial level wage, and if that is not available, the national wage
- 2) Determine if there are any workers currently employed in the same occupation and work location, and determine the wage range. If the wage range is higher than the prevailing wage (median hourly wage) on Job Bank, you would need to pay a wage that is above the prevailing wage and within the local wage range. If it is lower than the median hourly wage on Job Bank, use the median hourly wage on Job Bank.

The author of The English Patient, Michael Ondaatje, was born in Sri Lanka and immigrated to Canada from England.

Global Talent Stream

Global Talent Stream is a referral program- an innovative employer should be referred by one of the program partners to access the pool of unique global talent in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Accelerate Okanagan is one of the regional partners: <https://www.accelerateokanagan.com/>

International Students

International full-time students that hold study permits can work for up to 20 hours a week while class is in session and full-time during school breaks. Other criteria include:

- Enrolment at a designated learning institution: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/designated-learning-institutions-list.html>
- Studying in a program that is academic/vocational/professional and leads to a degree/diploma/certificate
- At least six months long

Students that have completed a program of at least eight months at an eligible Canadian school may apply for a Post-Graduation Work Permit that can last up to three years: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation/eligibility.html>

Caregivers

The Live-in Caregiver Program is closed to new applicants. You may still hire someone in the program who has a work permit and is looking for a new employer. In this case you would need a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) that shows that the caregiver agrees to live in your home.

Other options:

- [Home Child Care Provider or Home Support Workers pilots](#) (no LMIA required)
- [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#) (please see more info below or follow the link)

Permanent Residents:

Pre-arrival services:

Immigrants in the Region:

There are a number of newcomers in the region looking for employment opportunities. Please connect with the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services: www.soics.ca

Construction Field:

BCCA Integrating Newcomers program provides direct access to highly skilled, approved permanent residents, who are committed to careers in the construction industry – at no cost.

<https://www.bccassn.com/jobs-&-careers/bcca-integrating-newcomers/employers>

Healthcare:

Pre-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS): <https://pass4nurses.org/>

Information Technology:

Go Talent: <https://www.etalentcanada.ca/ictc-programs/go-talent/>

MIT study shows that
racially diverse teams
outperform
homogenous by 35%

Short Term Workers

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Apply for a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) at Service Canada and pay the \$1000 processing fee. You do not need to log in to download the form. Here is the link to the application:

<https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/content/EForms/en/Detail.html?Form=EMP5593>

- You will need to provide the name of the person you are hiring.
- The processing fee does not apply to employers choosing ONLY to support a foreign national's application for a permanent resident visa
- If you are hiring for a skilled trades job you will need to fill out one more form – Schedule D:
<https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/content/EForms/en/Detail.html?Form=EMP5595>

- 1) Job offer (signed by the employer and the foreign worker).
- 2) Proof of business legitimacy: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/business-legitimacy.html>
- 3) Proof of advertisement (for example a copy of advertisement and information to support where, when and for how long the position was advertised)
- 4) Submit all these documents to your local Service Canada branch or online (pilot launched in 2020): <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/labour-market-impact-assessment-apply-online.html>

International Mobility Program

The International Mobility Program lets you (the employer) hire a temporary foreign worker without a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). To check if you qualify for an exemption: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/hire-foreign-worker/temporary/international-mobility-program.html>

Not sure if you meet the criteria? Please contact: CIC-IMWU-UMIT-Toronto@cic.gc.ca

For more information and to submit an offer: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/partners-service-providers/employer-portal.html>

Need More Help?

Hire a licensed immigration consultant: <https://icrc-crcic.ca/find-a-professional/>

ATTRACTING

Here are a few tips on how to attract immigrants to your workplace:

- Develop and implement diversity and inclusion policies and practices (please see the relevant section in this Toolkit).
- Create a process for hiring, orientation and retention of immigrant talent (please see the relevant sections and Attachments for tips).
- State in your job ads that you are looking for someone with international experience and/or ability to speak certain languages.
- Demonstrate your commitment to diversity & inclusiveness on your company website and social media.
- Connect with the immigrant service organizations (e.g. SOICS: www.soics.ca) to develop a partnership relationship and/or post on their job boards.
- Connect with the international student departments at the local colleges to post the jobs.
- Attend job fairs in large cities, including virtual ones (Canada Infonet: <https://www.canadainfonet.org/>)

“Instant Pot” was created by Robert Wang, who immigrated to Canada from China

ASSESSING EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Applications

You may receive non-standard cover letters and resumes from immigrant applicants, some with photos and very personal information. This is not because of lack of effort on behalf of the applicants. Non-standard does not mean bad. Have another look at the applicants' credentials.

Credential Assessment

Government of British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education: [List of regulated professions and certification bodies](#).

Tip: the Human Resources & Skills Development Canada: Essential Skills Profiles Guide has profiles of hundreds of roles, from Bookkeepers to Carpenters to Dentists, and the essential skills required to perform the roles. Use this tool to support you in creating a Culturally Competent Screening Tool for the role. Here is the link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/essential-skills/profiles/guide.html>

Third party assessment

TOWES: Test of Workplace Essential Skills

- [General Series – 3 levels available](#)
- [Sector Series – for manufacturing, office and administration, aerospace, healthcare, and entrance to apprenticeships](#)
- [Custom Assessments](#)

Education assessment

Most skilled immigrants have their international education assessed by the recognized organizations, such as the World Education Service (WES) and International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES). Ask your job applicants if they have a certificate of assessment.

RECRUITMENT

Job postings

Below are some tips on how to make your job postings appealing to immigrant job seekers.

- Indicate that you are looking for someone with international experience and ability to speak foreign languages (e.g. “international experience and knowledge of Punjabi and/or Mandarin are a plus”).
- List only the “must have” qualifications. Use simple language – avoid idioms, slang, abbreviations and acronyms.
- Go to where immigrants are – use such recruitment sources as a settlement agency (e.g. South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services), international student departments at

According to the Boston Consulting Group, diverse management teams report 19% higher revenues due to innovation

the colleges, pre-arrival services (please see the Permanent Residents subsection in this Toolkit for details).

Resume Screening

Here are a few tips adapted from the resource by the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and other sources to help you screen resumes in an inclusive way.

- Create a list of minimum requirements for the job vs. wish list – “must have” vs. “nice to have”: most important skills, traits, relevant experience, required education, necessary English communication skills.
- Using your “must have” list, create a “maybe” pile of resumes. Be aware of your biases when you screen the applications - a study by UBC showed that applicants with English names received 40% more interview call backs than those with foreign names.
- You will notice that some resumes and cover letters do not fit the standard you are used to – they may have photos and personal information. Do not disregard these just because they are “non-standard”.
- Spelling and grammatical errors – unless you are hiring for a position for which excellent written communication skills are a must, do not toss a resume just because of a couple of typos. English might be the second, third or fourth language of this candidate and they may have excellent oral communication skills that you need for the job.
- Can’t find anyone who has been doing the exact same job in the past? Consider someone with the right set of knowledge and skills, and “transferrable” experience – working with similar tools in a different setting. Consider how different experiences could enhance the role you are hiring for (e.g. access to new market segments). “Canadian experience” is not always an answer. In fact, the Ontario Human Rights Commission has a number of recommendations for employers with regards to removing such barriers: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-removing-%E2%80%9CCanadian-experience%E2%80%9D-barrier>
- Gaps in employment history could be for various reasons, including war and re-settlement.
- Education degrees and levels could be confusing, so, unless a specific license is required, ask the candidate to clarify their education for you (e.g. what courses did you study, how many years, etc.) during the interview. You may also ask if the candidate had their credentials assessed. Most skilled immigrants will have a report from one of the assessment organizations, such as the World Education Services: <https://www.wes.org/>

Interviewing

It is a known fact that hiring managers make hiring decisions in the first five minutes of an interview. Some would argue that they do it in the first 30 seconds. And this doesn't apply only to hiring managers. We all do it in various situations, and, once we make a decision we are looking for confirmation that the decision was right.

It is quite common to hire someone who would fit in – you want the new hire to become a part of the team right away. We tend to gravitate to the people who look like us, talk like us, and behave like us. The problem with this is that if our workplaces are not diverse they will never be until we acknowledge our blind spots and take a different approach. We all have biases and, once we accept this fact, we need to be aware when we do it, reflect and re-consider our initial conclusions. Try something unconventional, like hiring someone who is not like you at all. Diversity inspires innovation. Also, consider holding a virtual interview with your candidates who might still be in their home countries or in other locations in Canada using such tools as Zoom, Skype or WhatsApp. Your job offer could be crucial for a newcomer's decision to move to our region.

Here are a few things to help you prepare:

- Eye contact, handshake and small talk are not a part of every culture. Please check the “Common cultural differences that cause misunderstandings in the workplace” in this Toolkit for some tips.
- When you notice an awkward behavior, imagine yourself in the similar situation – how would your interview go if you had to speak a foreign language in a foreign land? Use empathy and cultural humility.
- Not sure how the international credentials and experience correspond with what you are looking for? Try competency-based questions (e.g. “Tell me about a time when you took responsibility..., took leadership...worked in a team...”).
- If communication is difficult because of an accent – try a written task.

Reference Checking

If your job seeker is a newcomer, chances are they would not have references in Canada. Be prepared to send written reference requests as it may be challenging to schedule calls due to time differences and long-distance charges.

Successful teams have three things in common: give each other roughly equal time to talk, sensitive towards each other, and include more women

34% of people working in scientific research and development in Canada are foreign-born

Giving Feedback

If the interview was unsuccessful, please take the time to provide feedback to the newcomer applicant. It will help them better prepare to continue their job search journey.

WORKPLACE ORIENTATION

In the Diversity and Inclusion Policies & Practices of this Toolkit you will find some suggestions on how to make your work environment more inclusive and welcoming. It is important to demonstrate to your newcomer employees and the community overall that you have policies and practices in place that promote diversity and inclusion.

In the Attachments section of this Toolkit you will find a number of checklists to guide you through an orientation process. We suggest that you include the “Welcome Guide” developed by the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP): www.soics.ca

HOUSING SOLUTIONS

The housing situation could be an opportunity or an obstacle in attracting potential employees to the region. If they are re-allocating from the large cities, such as Vancouver, and are planning to purchase a home, they might see our housing market as an opportunity. However, if they are looking to rent, there are a number of obstacles to consider – lack of affordable rental housing, restrictions related to age (55+ buildings) and pets.

Below are a few promising practices used by employers to create housing for their employees to keep them happy and committed.

Master Lease

Establishing relationships with property owners, leasing and sub-leasing homes to their employees. “By taking on fiscal responsibility and guaranteeing that the homes will be well maintained, employers can secure housing that may not have otherwise been part of the long-term rental market.” *Source:* <https://mountainhousingcouncil.org/>

Assistance with Rent Deposits

You may offer loans to your employees to help cover the first and last month rent. Alternatively, you may consider paying security deposits with a monthly payback contract via paycheques. *Source:* <https://mountainhousingcouncil.org/>

On-site Housing for Hospitality Workers

Some employers in our region offer their resort/hotel suits to their employees. By offering the onsite accommodation they are solving another issue- need for commute and accompanying costs.

1 out of 4 healthcare workers in Canada is an immigrant

Buy or Build

A more obvious solution for those who can afford it is to buy or build housing for employees. Subsidized, safe and secure housing that comes with a job may help address the retention challenge.

Online Services

Room rental services (Kelowna): <https://www.happipad.com/>

Apartment and house rental: <https://classifieds.castanet.net/cat/rentals/>; <https://www.kijiji.ca/>

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION SUPPORTS

“Blackberry” was created by Mike Lazaridis of Greek descent, who immigrated to Canada from Turkey

Although your immigrant employee has a job now it does not always mean that they are settled and integrated in the community. Studies show that it can take up to 15 years for an immigrant to fully integrate. There are a number of things that contribute to the integration process – finding appropriate housing, accessing healthcare, education, childcare and recreation services. Making sure that all the household members that accompanied your employee on this immigration journey find what they need. The South Okanagan Labour Market Research carried out by the City of Penticton in 2016 showed that 75% of employers in the region see employment opportunities for their employees’ spouses as an issue. Thus, it is a good idea to connect your new employee’s family to the services that would help them find what they are looking for – employment, education, self-employment, etc.

There is a designated settlement service provider in the region – the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS): www.soics.ca. The organization offers free services to all newcomers in the region. The supports include: English language classes with childcare, mentorship, and settlement services – help with applications, finding housing, employment supports, etc. The SOICS also organizes a number of community-building events, such as the annual OneWorld festival that attracts hundreds of people.

It is important to note that although access to services, housing and meaningful employment may bring people to the region, it is social connections that make them stay. Of course, as an employer, you can’t take responsibility for newcomer’s social integration but you can play an important role in it by creating opportunities for them to socialize (team activities, celebrations, “buddy” system) and make friends.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICIES & PRACTICES

Not sure where to start? How about creating a diversity and inclusion committee? The committee could be tasked with:

- Reviewing policies, vision statement and employee handbook to incorporate diversity and inclusion principles and practices.
- Implementing these practices at the workplace (e.g. targeted immigrant recruitment and orientation, paid internship for newcomers and international students, religious accommodation, diversity on the Board of Directors, etc.)
- Participating in the Best Diversity Employers and other relevant contests to raise your profile:
<https://canadastop100.com/diversity/>

Donovan Bailey, who came to Canada from Jamaica, won two Olympic gold medals in sprinting

Examples of diversity and inclusion principles and practices

From Shaw Communications Inc.

- “Our philosophy is to respect the individual and the dignity of others by appreciating their differences and similarities”
- “We recognize, celebrate and benefit from the uniqueness of each employee and customer”
- The company is using a Diversity Index to measure progress
- The company partnered with the Canadian Immigrant Women’s Association and YMCA to provide work placements for their members and clients
- Has an active Diversity Committee and National Diversity Task Force

From Scotiabank

“A culture of inclusion is the heart of our global community of Scotiabankers... An inclusive workplace allows us to reap the benefits that diversity brings: new perspectives, fresh ideas and ability to compete at our best in a global market.” For more information:

<https://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/about/our-company/diversity-and-inclusion.html>

Understanding Common Cultural Differences

You can’t learn everything about other cultures but the more you learn the more you can relate. It is important to understand, however, that cultural traits are not true for everyone in a cultural group. Furthermore, one country does not mean one culture – there are number of sub-cultures in many countries. Inter-cultural communication could be improved through travelling and exploring deep (invisible) culture. To interact effectively and appropriately with people from other cultures try using the following skills:

- *Openness.* We don’t know what we don’t know; do not assume – ask questions.
- *Flexibility & Adaptability.* Acknowledge differences and honor other people’s values and beliefs.
- *Withholding Judgment.* We all have biases. Try to keep yours in check when you learn something that goes against your beliefs.
- *Listening & observing.* You will learn a lot through observations and stories.

- *Empathy.* Try to imagine yourself growing up in another country very different from Canada. Imagine that you have a different religion, skin colour, wealth, sense of security and safety. How would it feel?



Common Cultural Differences that Cause Misunderstandings in the Workplace

Cultural Trait	Potential Challenge <i>In some cultures...</i>	Possible Solution
Leadership / Authority	...hierarchical leaders make decisions without explanation and expect all to follow, lean towards micromanagement, often will not admit problems	Explain how leadership in Canada looks less hierarchical and the input of individuals from an organization or team has greater value and is considered beneficial – here success is achieved by a whole and capable team
Teamwork	...staff is expected to be assigned tasks and are not expecting to take responsibility / ownership for the completion and success of the project	Tell employees their knowledge, experience and participation is valuable and you will ask them for it and need them to share their ideas and work as a team
Time	...five to ten minutes does not matter; to others one hour either way does not matter; to others being exactly on time is extremely important	Clarify expectations related to timeliness / punctuality; be clear about the consequences of a meeting delay or of the deadlines in your schedule / work plan; note that lateness is not necessarily a sign of laziness
Personal Space	...individuals have less need for or awareness of personal space	Explain the importance of personal space; “arm’s length” is comfortable for most North Americans
Collectivism and Individualism	...success and failure of an individual are measured ... the individual and their accomplishments are deemed more important than those of the team or group	Recognize/ discuss the importance of the accomplishments of the team but emphasize that individual effort is important and will be recognized
Gender Equality	...males hold most or all of the dominant / leadership roles	Explain to your staff that Canada’s human rights laws demand genders be treated equally and that poor or inappropriate treatment of women will not be tolerated
Demonstrating Emotions	...body language, facial expressions, voice volume / pitch, silence, or very demonstrative physical behaviour mean different things	Be cautious in interpreting emotion / expression; smiles and laughter may indicate embarrassment or discomfort, not agreement and delight
Saving Face / Reputation	...“face” or ego and dignity can be negatively impacted by a lack of attention or by criticism	Balance your criticism with public and private praise; attend to all of your staff equally
Fact vs. Opinion Giving	...opinion is seen as important as fact and opinion may be communicated as fact to persuade people to accept an idea; employees may interpret opinion as fact	Communicate the facts as facts and opinion as opinion; clarify to ensure the distinction
Superstitions	...superstition guides behaviour	Note superstitions and try to work with people that are resistant due to superstitions; ask for more information
Asking For Help / Giving Help	...asking for help indicates failing or looking bad, and offering to help can be seen as being critical of someone’s abilities	Encourage people to ask for help and watch to see if new workers are overwhelmed with work; be sure to validate a person’s work before offering help while affirming your confidence in them
Problem Solving	...individuals are unfamiliar with making decisions and getting involved with problem solving; dealing with a problem may be interpreted as blame	Communicate with your employees that you plan to make them think so they can resolve problems themselves
Dress / Grooming	...workplace attire is different	Share and discuss the norms within your organization regarding dress and grooming; be accepting of difference and accommodate if possible (i.e. health and safety are not at risk)
Food	...food and eating habits are very different; different cultural groups find some foods offensive for religious or other reasons	Communicate the dietary needs of all members of your staff to avoid offense. Be aware of dietary needs if providing a meal
Familial Relationships	...family responsibility and loyalty may be extremely important	Be respectful of the need for your staff to consult family before making big decisions or when negotiating time off
Adherence to Religion	...religion and adherence to holy days and times is critical	Obtain an understanding of “special days” and work to accommodate; explain clearly when accommodation is not possible

Adapted from: Recruiting, Retaining, and Promoting Culturally Different Employees, Lionel Laroche

Using Inclusive Language

- Speak and write in short sentences
- Use tables and lists to simplify complex information
- Avoid idioms, slang, abbreviations and acronyms
- Review your communication materials to ensure the above
- Use the written word as often as possible
- Learn to correctly pronounce names

Professor Lakshmi P. Kotra that discovered a new anti-malaria agent immigrated to Canada from India

Below are some tips on using inclusive language adopted from “Words Matter: Guidelines on using inclusive language in the workplace” by BC Public Service.

Culture & Ancestry

- Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples and cultures
- Avoid identity references when they are not necessary (e.g. visible minority, woman of colour, Asian man)
- Allow people to introduce the aspects of their identity that they choose to share

Indigenous Peoples

- “Indigenous Peoples” refers to the Aboriginal population collectively
- There is a shift towards the use of “Indigenous” as a collective term
- Capitalize formal titles, such as “Chief”, “Elder”, etc.

Political Belief and Religion

People from different backgrounds may be influenced by different upbringing, culture, religion and politics. Be respectful of these differences – be considerate. Avoid expressing your political or religious views, and avoid the language related to such affiliation, when possible.

With regards to religious accommodation, consider the following practices:

- Changing schedules to accommodate days of religious observance;
- Making changes in dress codes or uniforms to accommodate employees’ religions;
- Provide menu options to accommodate religious dietary restrictions when serving food at the workplace (e.g. halal, kosher, non-beef, non-pork dishes, etc.).

Marital and Family Status

- The question about marital or family status could be avoided by using names without prefixes.
- When dealing with a member of the public – ask how they prefer to be addressed
- Consider using gender neutral terms, such as “spouse” or “partner”

Disability

- Frame a disability or any other medical condition as something a person has, rather than is. E.g. “person with a disability”, “person who has blindness”.
- If you make a mistake, acknowledge it, sincerely apologize and move on.

Age

- Consider using “seniors”, “older people” instead of “aged” “old people”

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

- Be cautious about making assumptions
- Gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation are different things. Gender identity is about how a person experiences gender internally and externally. Gender expression is how a person expresses their gender. Sexual orientation is about sexual and/or romantic attraction.
- Respect privacy – not everyone wants to disclose their status
- Be considerate of names
- Try to avoid gendered expressions, such as “the best man for the job” or “manpower”
- Choose the gender-neutral pronoun “they” when possible
- Use “spouse” and “partner” instead of “husband” and “wife”
- Use “police officer”, “firefighter” and “chairperson” instead of policeman, fireman, chairman, etc.

Tobias Lutke, who came to Canada from Germany, developed Shopify

Need more help? Consult with your local support organization- ask for the “Radar” team at the Youth Foundry in Penticton (<https://foundrybc.ca/>) or connect with the South Okanagan Similkameen Pride Society (<https://www.sospride.ca/>).

Create a Culture that Values Diversity & Inclusion

- Diversity and inclusion training for the team, board and volunteers
- Create accommodations for various groups of employees. For example, English language lessons at the workplace, gender-neutral washrooms, quiet room for religious expressions, etc.
- Celebrate your team’s multiculturalism – hang flags of the represented countries, celebrate cultural holidays, organize multicultural luncheons, etc.
- Review all the policies and practices to ensure diversity and inclusion principles are incorporated
- Diversify your team/board/volunteers: create paid internships, hire summer students, develop targeted job postings and outreach strategies to attract diverse employees

There are more than 600,000 immigrant entrepreneurs in Canada

ATTACHMENTS

Orientation Checklists for Employers

Adapted from “Get in the Know: Orientation, Retention and Promotion” by DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society and PEERs Employment and Education Resources

Before the Start Date of Your New Employee



1. Prepare a “Welcome Packet”

- ☐ Create a welcome letter with information on what to expect on the first date, including hours, breaks, dress code
- ☐ Provide links to your company website and directions to/map of your office location

2. Assign and prepare a mentor/buddy for the new employee

- ☐ Ask the “buddy” to prepare a plan to support the new hire (e.g. have lunch together, offer job shadowing, and review the Employee Handbook together, daily check-ins, etc.)

3. Make arrangements for the office space set up (work station, personal item storage, e-mail account, passwords for equipment, payroll, etc.)

4. Orient the team about the arrival of a new staff member (explain the role, ask to provide support)

The First Day

1. Company Introduction

- ☐ Description of different departments, strategic plan, annual report, org. chart, etc.
- ☐ Employee handbook/org. policies
- ☐ Orientation checklists for new employees (available in this guide)
- ☐ Networking and socializing opportunities

2. Employee Introduction

- ☐ Send a message to all staff, Board members and partners (as applicable) introducing the new team member (including information about their past experience and achievement and current role). Make sure the new team member is included in the distribution list.
- ☐ If possible, introduce the new team member to all the employees in the same work space in person
- ☐ Introduce the new employee to their “buddy”

3. Work Environment

- ☐ Review hours of work, breaks and expectations around punctuality and absences from work
- ☐ Explain how IT and administrative supports function
- ☐ Tour the facilities (kitchen, washrooms, common spaces) and explain expectations for their use
- ☐ Explain access to and use of supplies
- ☐ Explain key policies that could have an immediate impact (e.g. safety and security, scent-free environment, zero tolerance to discrimination, etc.)

4. Job Expectations

- ☐ Review the job description and any unwritten duties and/or expectations
- ☐ Explain the interactions expected with staff, management, suppliers
- ☐ Explain performance evaluation and probation period
- ☐ Explain the wage structure, commissions, incentive pay, expenses, benefits, payroll deductions, etc.

5. Training and Development

- ☐ Provide an overview of any training plans/professional development opportunities

6. Checking In

- ☐ Opportunity to ask questions about work and life outside work
- ☐ Ask about religious, cultural and accessibility requirements related to work

The First Week

1. Throughout the week

- ☐ Let the new employee know that you are expecting their questions about their duties and/or company policies
- ☐ Observe the new employee's behavior during breaks and renew introductions to staff, if necessary
- ☐ Check-in from time to time to ensure that the new employee is connecting with their "buddy" and is comfortable with the work tasks and the environment. These could be informal lunch break conversations, and opportunities to learn more about your new employee.

2. Arrange a meeting for the end of the first week

- ☐ Ask and provide feedback on work tasks, relationships, communication, and overall integration. Make sure to explain that this is a common practice for ALL new employees
- ☐ If needed, create a written plan for further development together
- ☐ Don't forget to complement the new employee on their achievement, as applicable

The First Three Months

- ☐ Hold regular feedback meetings. Use these meetings to discuss any workplace cultural differences, ask for their ideas/input, ask about their relationship with their "buddy", etc.
- ☐ At the end of the first month consider evaluating the relationship between the mentor/buddy and new employee
- ☐ Identify areas for further development and together with the new employee create a professional development plan
- ☐ Offer an opportunity for the new employee to introduce their culture to the team (e.g. multi-cultural potluck, a written story, presentation at a team meeting, etc.)
- ☐ Follow up on religious/cultural/accessibility accommodations

At the End of the First Three Months

- ☐ Depending on the established probation period this might be a good time for the official Performance Review
- ☐ If the new hire has not worked out, consider taking the time to conduct an "exit interview" to give and receive feedback on how to improve for future success

Tips and Strategies for New Employees

Before Your First Day at Work

- ☐ Review the job requirements that were listed on the job posting and your employment offer
- ☐ Check your new employer's website to refresh your memory
- ☐ Prepare to make a great first impression; consider what you will start with, what you will wear, etc.
- ☐ Ensure that you will be early for work, not just on time; familiarize yourself with your commute – transit schedules, parking.
- ☐ Get organized for your first day. Prepare your work materials, be ready to take notes, write down your questions for your supervisor and team members
- ☐ Be prepared to demonstrate your “soft” skills: communication, analytical abilities, computer proficiency, interpersonal skills, leadership, cultural awareness, organization, problem solving, teamwork and multi-tasking. Practice “small talk” – brief conversations about topics such as the weather and sports.

Your First Day at Work

1. Before you arrive

- ☐ Give yourself some extra time to prepare for your first day; pack your lunch; plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before start time
- ☐ Call ahead of time if anything unexpected happens on your way.
- ☐ Bring your personal identification (e.g. driver's license), your Social Insurance Number (SIN) and your health card (BC Care Card)
- ☐ Do not bring your personal items to decorate your workplace, such as photo frames. You need to pass your probation first
- ☐ It's good to know in advance what to avoid at the workplace: workplace gossip/politics, absenteeism/lateness, dishonesty, blaming others, bragging, not giving input when necessary, doing personal business, personal e-mails/phone calls/social media, inappropriate internet sites and games, keeping to yourself, unsafe work

2. At the workplace

- ☐ Greet everyone with a smile and introduce yourself; exercise good conversation skills by asking “How are you today?” or “How was your weekend?”, etc.
- ☐ Write down the names of your team members and ask how to pronounce them, if you are not sure
- ☐ Take notes and write down questions during the tour and orientation
- ☐ Observe how people take their lunch break; if most of them gather in a lunch room/kitchen, make sure to join them

Your First Week

- ☐ Continue to arrive early and remain professional (dress code, communication)
- ☐ Build a relationship with your buddy/mentor, supervisor and the rest of the team
- ☐ Observe and be aware of the culture of your new workplace – dress code, communication style, attitudes, relationships, etc.
- ☐ Note that your colleagues may have different cultures, beliefs and religions; work to develop an understanding and appreciation for these differences
- ☐ Review your job description to ensure you are on track; do more than the minimum required
- ☐ Keep a positive attitude and come up with solutions to challenges before you ask your supervisor to get involved.
- ☐ Keep current in your field of occupation – observe trends and link your knowledge to your work
- ☐ Join networking and social activities of your team, continue to participate in lunchroom conversations
- ☐ Identify your communication strengths and weaknesses in context of your new job, i.e. industry and technical language barriers and cultural differences. Find resources to address the weaknesses. Consider connecting with the local settlement agency to find a mentor and/or resources: www.soics.ca
- ☐ Do not hesitate to clarify your work tasks; if you don't understand something, ask. Questions demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm.



Your First Three Months

- ☐ Continue doing what you've been doing during the first week.
- ☐ Be prepared to receive and give feedback – this is important for your and your organization's development; discuss areas of improvement with your supervisor.
- ☐ Identify your professional development areas and find resources; ask your buddy and supervisor for recommendations.
- ☐ According to the survey of Canadian employers, conducted by the Express Employment Professionals, these are the most important soft skills. Review your performance and look for ways to demonstrate the following:
 - ✓ *Dependability/Reliability* - 70%
 - ✓ *Communication (verbal)* - 55%
 - ✓ *Motivation* - 45%
 - ✓ *Enthusiasm* - 40%
 - ✓ *Flexibility/Adaptability* – 35%
 - ✓ *Commitment* – 35%
 - ✓ *Listening* – 35%
 - ✓ *Interpersonal abilities* – 30%
 - ✓ *Initiative* – 25%
 - ✓ *Team work* – 25%
- ☐ Prepare for your formal performance review: keep as record of your activities and achievements, identify relationships that could be strengthened and work on this strategy, make a list of your personal goals, propose strategies for business challenges and offer to take initiative on addressing some of them.
- ☐ Keep a positive attitude and come up with solutions to challenges before you ask your supervisor to get involved.
- ☐ Keep current in your field of occupation – observe trends and link your knowledge to your work.
- ☐ Join networking and social activities of your team, continue to participate in lunchroom
- ☐ conversations.
- ☐ Identify your communication strengths and weaknesses in context of your new job, i.e. industry and technical language barriers and cultural differences. Find resources to address the weaknesses. Consider connecting with the local settlement agency to find a mentor and/or resources: www.soics.ca
- ☐ Look for opportunities to solve complex issues that would help your organization to further develop.
- ☐ Demonstrate time management.
- ☐ Volunteer in your community – it will help you meet new people and establish community connections.

RESOURCES

- Words Matter: Guidelines on using inclusive language in the workplace (BC Public Service)
- Arrival Advisor
- Google Translate
- SOICS
- Job Bank
- Employer Roadmap:
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/employer-roadmap-en.pdf>
- Get in the Know: www.getintheknow.ca
- BC JobConnect is another on-line tool to help newcomers connect with employers seeking talent:
<https://www.bcjobconnect.ca>
- Immigrant Employment Council of BC: <https://iecbc.ca/>

Training for your Team:

Online learning platform for employers: <https://triclearning.ca>

Video on immigrant hiring:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=finding+talent&&view=detail&mid=FB5EA61028787CC6C13EFB5EA61028787CC6C13E&&FORM=VRDGAR>

Microsoft free online e-lesson on biases:

<https://www.mslearning.microsoft.com/course/72169/launch>

Examples of Diversity & Inclusion Policies:

Canadian Chamber of Commerce: http://www.chamber.ca/resources/diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-workplace/Policy_Diversity_and_Inclusion_March2018.pdf

RBC Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint 2020: https://www.rbc.com/diversity-inclusion/_assets-custom/includes/pdf/rbc-diversity-blueprint.pdf

ABOUT LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIPS

A Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is a mechanism through which the federal government (IRCC) supports the development of community-based partnerships and planning around the needs of newcomers. LIPs seek to engage various stakeholders in a locally driven strategic planning process including employers, school boards, health centres, government, ethno-cultural and faith-based organizations, and the community and social services sectors. There are 19 LIPs in BC and 76 across the country.

LIP Objectives:

- Support better coordination in the planning and delivery of integration services across multiple sectors;
- Provide a framework to facilitate collaboration and develop & implement community-based strategic plans;
- Strengthen local integration capacity to foster labour market access, social inclusion, and sustainable welcoming communities;
- Achieve improved outcomes as indicated by increased economic, social political and civic participation by newcomers.

South Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP)

Members: around 50 representatives of municipalities, chambers of commerce, community agencies, school boards, businesses, health service providers and newcomers

Strategic Directions:

- Increase the availability of, accessibility to, and relevance of, language training;
- Support newcomers to develop ad/or apply their knowledge, skills and abilities to match the region's work opportunities;
- Ensure employers have the knowledge, skills and ability to find, hire and retain newcomers.

Key Milestones:

- 5 year anniversary (established in 2014)
- Research: situation analysis and community needs assessment
- Established a Council (guiding principles, meetings) and workgroups
- Created a Strategic Plan
- Organized a number of projects (e.g. Welcoming Communities, Connect 2017, Connect 2018, Community Champions, Fast Track, Toastmaster's Speech Craft, Familiarization Tours)
- Organized several employer capacity development initiatives focusing on diversity and inclusion – workshops, presentations, resource sharing, HR workgroup
- Developed a Welcome Guide for newcomers in the region

For more information, please visit: <http://www.soics.ca/programs/local-immigration-partnership-lip/>

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