

Solutions to the Labour Shortage ...Immigrants

Should you turn to immigrants to fill your roster of employees? It's an avenue many organizations have traveled, and they have found success. As Statistics Canada predicted in 2003, "Canada will depend almost solely on immigrants for growth in the workforce in the next decade."



There are challenges and rewards to hiring immigrants. Here are some things to keep in mind if you plan to include immigrants in your organization:

- ◆ If you are recruiting out of the country, understand it can take months/years for the Government to accept your new employees into Canada.
- ◆ Your new employees come with customs, behaviours, and thought processes perhaps not typical to Canada. Be patient and thoughtful as they adapt to this new culture.
- ◆ To aid current employees and managers in creating a welcoming, inclusive workplace, provide diversity training.

To help the new immigrants in their transition to a new country and a new job, you could consider doing some of these things:

- ◆ Provide an onboarding program, including the company background, workplace culture, and an orientation to the new environment and fellow employees in various departments.
- ◆ Pair the new hires with mentors who can help them understand Canadian customs, language, and culture. Being able to freely ask questions about why this was said or done will help the new employees feel more comfortable and knowledgeable.
- ◆ Hire more than one immigrant so they don't feel isolated or alone.
- ◆ Get to know national and religious holidays of their culture, and honour those days, if appropriate, along with the ones you already celebrate.
- ◆ Help your new employees settle into the community by introducing them to resources, services and support organizations, and some acquaintances in your personal network.
- ◆ Support their efforts to learn a new language by allowing some time for them to access language classes during the day. They probably don't have a lot of time or energy after work, as they are busy settling in and helping their families adjust, too.
- ◆ Learn a few words of their languages to show your interest in them, and to help them feel valued and welcome.

Hiring immigrants to top up your employee pool is a viable solution to the labour crunch. It may take some adjustment to policy and procedure, and to some of the thinking and attitudes in your organization; it will bring rich rewards.



"Results speak. . . . At Husky we've had great success in attracting bright, energetic individuals from the immigrant pool. We've hired 36% of our engineers from this pool and will continue to do so. If we did not have the policies, practices and culture we do, that would be 36% we wouldn't have."—Recruitment Manager, Husky Injection Molding Systems Ltd.

Warren Evans —featured speaker—

A thought-provoking, fun speaker, Warren focuses on trends analysis and how to recognize opportunities and create competitive advantage from these insights. He is one of North America's leading experts in the field. Warren brings synthesis, pragmatism, and business experience to any discussion.

"One of the toughest audiences in the world to impress. You impressed [us]. Genuinely new information, great humour . . . one of the highest rated speakers we've ever had."—President, MPI, Canada Council

Call us at 800-303-2315 to bring Warren's insight to your organization.

Quotes

"Immigration is a key solution to labour shortages."—Toronto's Economic Development Division

"Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without."—W. Sloane Coffin, Jr.

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