

Employer Best Practices for Hiring Skilled Newcomers

Inclusive Recruitment Process

Encourage Human Resources representatives and hiring managers to incorporate more inclusive hiring processes such as posting job advertisements on sites that are frequented by newcomers and using credential equivalency tools to inform your understanding of newcomer applicants' skills and background. When developing job descriptions, determine whether Canadian work experience is an absolute requirement for the job and clearly specify which skills (hard and soft) are mandatory and which are preferred but not necessary for a position. Ensure members of your hiring team reflect the cultural diversity of your employees. Practice culturally diverse interviewing techniques such as using culturally appropriate body language, using plain language to pose your questions, allowing immigrants more time to answer your questions, and providing feedback to candidates after their interview.

Set Targets for Interviewing Newcomers

Commit to interviewing a certain number of newcomers to fill vacancies within your organization. By making such a commitment, organizations can objectively assess recruitment practices to ensure that they are inclusive.

Analyze Recruitment Patterns

Analysis of recruitment patterns will help you determine whether the number of newcomer hires in a year is appropriate given the number of candidates who were interviewed that year. Maintain a record of recruitment outcomes, including reasons for hiring or rejecting newcomer applicants. In this way, you can determine whether an insufficient number of newcomers were interviewed or if those interviewed did not possess the skills necessary to perform the job.

Reduce Unconscious Bias

Unconscious or cultural biases can have a negative impact on hiring practices and on the ability of newcomers to successfully integrate into the workplace.

Consider:

- Diversity training for employees, executives and hiring managers.
- Blacking out both names and places of education from candidates' resumes so that selection is based solely on qualifications.
- Provide training on interviewing techniques that are more culturally appropriate.
- Support cultural and religious practices in the workplace such as providing time for prayer.
- Encourage employees to share and learn about each other's cultures.
- Provide a multicultural calendar for the workplace.

Take Advantage of Programs and Subsidies to Support the Hiring of Skilled Newcomers

Programs and subsidies are available to encourage the hiring of skilled newcomers and help minimize risk while filling vacancies.

- Employment Ontario offers employee training subsidies www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario
- Wage subsidies and tax credits are available for internships and apprenticeships
- Check out mentorship programs such as ALLIES Canada's National Mentoring Initiative at alliescanada.ca
- Use a reputable credential evaluation service such as World Education Service

Create Partnerships with Community Organizations

Reach out to organizations such as local Chambers of Commerce and settlement and employment agencies that can help you develop a talent pool and support your efforts to hire and retain skilled newcomers.

Get to know the diversity that lies within the local community. Consider advertising in local ethnic newspapers. Participate in local job fairs and forums to promote your business and help newcomers learn about the types of positions available within your organization.

Connect with local post-secondary institutions and get involved in bridge training and work placement programs.

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'There needs to be more outreach to local employers to educate about the kinds of services that are available to employers who want to hire professionally trained newcomers.' - Employer
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Make Use of Credential Equivalency Tools

A variety of credential evaluation tools are available to help organizations assess international education. Credential assessment service providers can provide cost effective and reliable assessments and employment service agencies can provide pre-screened newcomer candidates.

Mentor a Newcomer

Engage staff in mentoring activities in order to make your organization more attractive to newcomers, increase training abilities within your organization, and increase your public profile as an organization that values diversity. Mentoring a skilled newcomer can be developed as part of the on-boarding strategy for new hires or as a way to get involved in supporting newcomers and sourcing new talent pools.

Consider offering incentives to employees who agree to mentor a skilled newcomer and/or provide leads that result in successful hiring of skilled newcomers.

Provide Work Placements

Paid internships and work placements are a great opportunity to assess skilled newcomers' abilities in order to determine if they are the right fit for your company. Wage subsidies and tax credits may be available to help offset the costs of providing such placements.

Provide Top-Down Support

Organizational best practices can only be effectively implemented and maintained if they receive top-down support. Developing a strategy that provides a clear directive for inclusive hiring practices within an organization must come from, and be championed by Senior leadership. Leading by example helps to ensure that all are on board to create a diverse workplace.

Share Your Story

Organizations that have realized the benefits of hiring newcomers should share their experiences through testimonials. Newcomers bring an understanding of other cultures that helps businesses compete in the global market. Having a diverse company better reflects the customers and clients that are being served and increases your business profile.

Consider adding testimonials to your website, advertising promotions and job postings. Check out the testimonials on www.hireimmigrants.ca.

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Layout and design: Sarah Gledhill, Maytree

Get Recognized as an Employer Who Values Diversity

Addressing the upcoming lack of skilled workers will be a key issue for Canada's labour market in coming years. In Canada, as is the case for many developed countries, a skilled workforce needs to be found from a diminishing pool of qualified workers. Skilled newcomers are important to Canada's future economic success.

Having a diverse workforce with global perspective can give your company an edge over competitors.

Contact your local immigrant employment council to see how you can get listed as an employer who values diversity.

