Governments as Employers of Skilled Immigrants

October 30, 2014 | 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. EST

- Listen to the webinar through your computer's speaker or headphones.

- If you are having technical problems, please contact us using the **chat box** on the right side of your screen.

Agenda

Host

- Peter Paul, Project Leader, ALLIES

Speakers

- Sarah Wayland, Owner, Wayland Consulting

- Lois Emburg, Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, City of Ottawa

- Gaya Hapugalle, Program Consultant, Corporate Leadership Branch, Treasury Board Secretariat, Government of Ontario
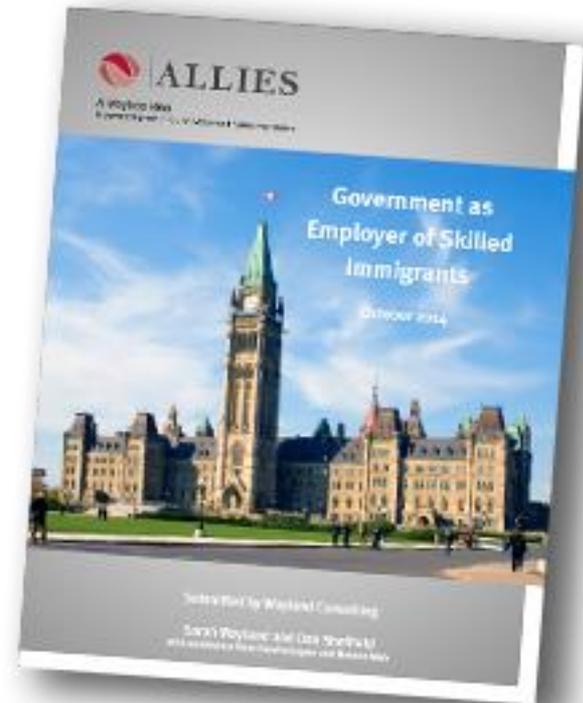
Question & Answer Period

- You will be given the opportunity to type in a question

- Evaluation of the webinar

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Governments as Employers of Skilled Immigrants

Presentation by
Sarah Wayland, PhD

Based on the report by Sarah Wayland and Dan Sheffield
with assistance from Sandra Lopes and Bonnie Mah

Content

I.   Introduction

II. Why Should Governments Employ Immigrants?

III. What Barriers or Conditions Impact Government Employment Practices?

IV. Some Good Employment Practices Used by Governments

V.   Conclusions

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I. Introduction

- Governments are Canada's largest employers.

- Immigrants are key to net labour force growth.

- Skilled workers form the largest immigration category.

- YET...Immigrants are only about half as likely to work in the public sector compared to Canadian-born populations.

- Why is this the case?

This report

- What do we know about immigrant employment in the public sector?

- Do governments have any practices or policies to encourage the employment of immigrants?

- What could governments do to prepare for and respond to demographic shifts in the labour force?

Objectives

- Explore the reasons why governments should be leaders in immigrant employment

- Understand the conditions that influence behaviour on hiring immigrants

- Identify good immigrant employment practices and approaches currently used by governments

- Provide credible findings that can be used to stimulate discussion about government immigrant employment practices

Research Methods and Scope

1. A targeted literature review and a broad environmental scan examining websites and other public documentation at various levels of government across the country

2. Key informant interviews with employees at federal, provincial and municipal levels of government

II. Why Should Governments Employ Immigrants?

1. To reflect the populations served

2. To proactively address demographic trends

3. To incorporate innovative and diverse perspectives

4. To acquire employees with needed skills, experience, and international connections

III. What Barriers or Conditions Impact Government Employment Practices?

1. Lack of data on immigrants in the public sector

2. Retrenchment trends in the civil service

3. Seniority and collective agreements

Barriers (2)

4. Lack of political leadership and policy imperatives

5. Requirements around citizenship, bilingualism, and credentials that adversely impact skilled immigrants

6. Lack of supports for immigrants in smaller communities

IV. Some Good Employment Practices Used by Governments

- Practices that *directly* affect hiring:

  – legislation

  – tracking hires

  – use of equity or inclusion lenses

  – community outreach and marketing

Example of a Direct Practice

Tracking immigrant hires and use of an Inclusion Lens - City of Ottawa

Indirect Practices

- *Indirect* practices that improve the overall employment climate for immigrants:

  - embedding diversity across organizations
  - providing work experience to immigrants (e.g., paid internships)
  - helping immigrants form professional networks (e.g, employee networks, mentoring)

Example of an Indirect Practice

Federal Internship for
Newcomers (FIN)
Program - Citizenship
and Immigration
Canada

Practical Next Steps

1. Recognize the benefits of diversity, and the assets that immigrant employees bring to the public service.

2. Designate immigrants as a target group.

3. Simplify and centralize the application process for public service positions.

4. Set targets, measure, and report on progress.

Practical Next Steps

5. Back up intentions with policies or legislation.

6. Support human resources staff and hiring managers with the training and resources needed to implement effective immigrant employment practices.

7. Form "communities of learning" among diversity and inclusion practitioners.

8. Use workplace orientation and wraparound supports for immigrant hires, especially in smaller communities.

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Panel Discussion

- **Lois Emburg**, Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, City of Ottawa

- **Gaya Hapugalle**, Program Consultant, Corporate Leadership Branch, Treasury Board Secretariat, Government of Ontario

Question 1

What are the primary benefits of having newcomers in the workforce in the public service?

Question 2

Tell us the story of the Equity and Diversity Policy at the City of Ottawa? How did it come about?

Who led the effort? What does it take to get something like this adopted by a municipality?
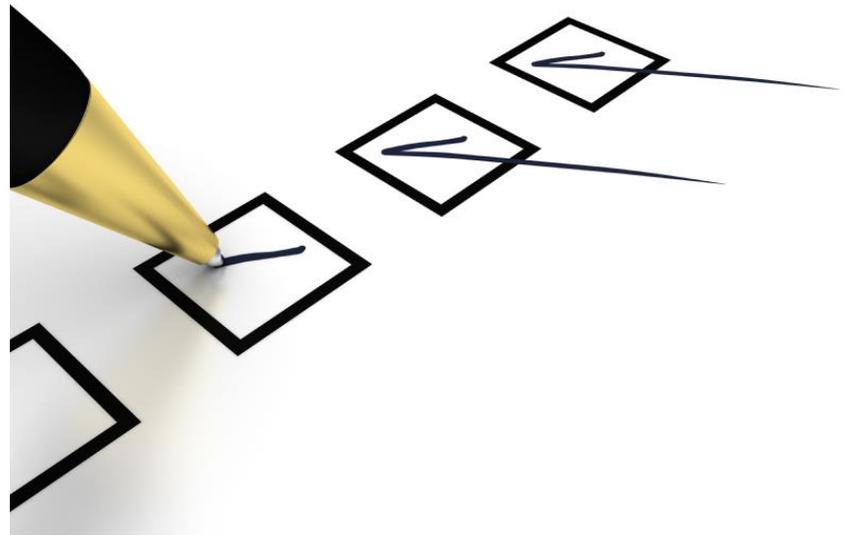
Question 3

- How can management best support HR staff with inclusion initiatives?

What tips can you provide on how to evaluate initiatives aimed at hiring and retaining skilled immigrant talent?

Question 5

What advice do you have for others who are at the early stages of formulating policies or programs that will help them employ more newcomers?

What are some practical tips that you can suggest?

Question & Answer Period

- Please type your questions in the question box in the centre of your screen.

Wrap-up

- Recording will be available shortly

- Visit www.hireimmigrants.ca to access success stories, sign up for etips and watch past webinars

- Feedback survey