

Smart Hiring: Three Strategies for Recruiting Immigrant Talent

Employer Challenge

“New immigrants are not in our networks”. This is a commonly heard phrase among employers who are interested in improving their organization’s ability to access and attract qualified job candidates from Ottawa’s pool of skilled immigrants.

Commonly used recruitment methods, such as job postings within the organization, employee referrals, and advertising to attract external applicants, can miss qualified immigrant job seekers, who may lack professional and social networks within Canada. Moreover, resume screening techniques, including automated applicant tracking systems (ATS) often miss otherwise qualified immigrant candidates because of unfamiliar international credentials or when keywords chosen by hiring managers are not found by the ATS scan.

Employer Tips

These proven strategies will effectively and efficiently improve your organization’s ability to recruit from Ottawa’s immigrant talent pool:

1. Take advantage of the Free Job Placement Services available from local agencies

- Make it a routine practice to post your organization’s job openings with local immigrant employment agencies. World Skills Employment Centre, the YMCA-YWCA Employment Access Centres, the International Talent Acquisition Centre (In-TAC), and other agencies can give you access to large numbers of qualified professionals.
- Use the pre-screening services provided by many agencies to give you the top candidates who meet your specific requirements.
- Recruit skilled immigrants from the award winning Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) Program, where successful candidates have been screened for and/or have completed 8 month internships within the federal government.

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Hire Immigrants Ottawa
is an initiative that works with employers to enhance their capacity to effectively hire and integrate skilled immigrants into the workplace.

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2. Build an effective Talent Pipeline by connecting with local agencies

- Talk directly with agency representatives and let them know about your organization's skills requirements and expectations for job applicants.
- Involve your organization in targeted recruitment events and career fairs hosted by agencies serving skilled immigrant job seekers.
- Support the advancement of local immigrant talent – get your organization involved in agency mentoring, coaching and networking programs and events.

3. Review internal hiring practices

- Be specific about the skills you need, and don't insist on Canadian experience or qualifications.
- Use diverse panels for interviewing to minimize unconscious biases and cultural misunderstandings during interviews.
- Promote and support cultural competency training for your hiring managers and recruiters.

Did You Know?

HIO has developed a **Directory of Ottawa Programs and Services** to support employers recruit and integrate skilled immigrants into the workplace.

This Tip Sheet is based on the proceedings of a HIO Employer Learning Forum held in November 2015, where participants discussed the topic of "Smart Hiring: Proven Strategies and Programs for Recruiting and Integrating Top Immigrant Talent".

Visit the HIO website for a schedule of Learning Events.

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