
RAISE

RESOURCE AWARENESS ABOUT internationally trained professionals FOR SMALL/MEDIUM EMPLOYERS

Addressing On-the-job Challenges of Internationally-trained Workers (ITWs)

When hiring new employees, there are always challenges; these challenges may be increased when the employee is new to the Canadian workplace.

Challenge: Communication

Other employees may not understand the ITI working with them.

Solutions: Ensure that all employees recognize that everyone has an accent.

Emphasize that clarity is most important; seek advice from English as a Second Language experts if necessary. There are many issues regarding accents that can be improved with specialized training.

If your company provides health insurance, check if it will cover a speech pathologist. Speech pathologists can assist with reducing a strong accent.

Support your ITW employee to develop their language skills.

Remember that communication is a two-way street. Use this as an opportunity to develop the communication skills of all employees. Learning how to communicate across cultures will also help your staff communicate more effectively with clients, suppliers and business partners.

Challenge: The ITI may not understand how we work in Canada.

Solutions: Build on the transferable skills that the ITI brings to the Canadian workplace.

Recognize that the ITI has already demonstrated flexibility, risk-taking and a desire to learn new things by moving to a new culture.

Provide workplace orientation and a mentor.

Challenge: The ITI may not fit in and may be resented by other employees.

Solutions: Promote the fact that Canada is multicultural.

Educate your staff about the demographic changes in the labour market, and what they mean for businesses.

Encourage all employees to learn more about cultural differences and working in multicultural teams: refer staff to resources on this Web site. Approach settlement organizations in your area to provide lunch-and-learn presentations or training sessions.

Promote mutual understanding: talk to your staff about the experience of settlement and immigration. Point at the courage, determination and tenacity needed to build a life in a new country.

Create opportunities for employees to talk about and ease concerns.

Get a competitive business edge by using ITIs' knowledge and experience to serve diverse local and international markets.