



## EMPLOYER SURVEY RESULTS

# UNCOVERING RECRUITMENT AND INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

MARCH 2018



**IEC-BC** IMMIGRANT  
EMPLOYMENT  
COUNCIL OF BC  
*Connecting Employers to Immigrant Talent*

**W**hile many BC employers are eager to tap into immigrant talent to meet their workforce needs, there are still a number of challenges affecting the recruitment and hiring process for skilled immigrants.

In an effort to identify effective, employer-facing strategies and solutions, in June 2017, IEC-BC created an Employer Advisory Group (EAG). Its primary objectives are to inform the development of future IEC-BC programs, as well as provide input on ways to improve its current offerings. The ultimate goal is to increase employers' ability to tap into the newcomer talent pool and create more inclusive workplaces.

Based on EAG recommendations, IEC-BC conducted an employer survey *Uncovering Recruitment and Integration Challenges*.

**The survey aimed to:**

- › Identify the most promising and effective practices with a specific focus on employer involvement in attracting, hiring, onboarding and retaining immigrants.
- › Understand employers' perspective of the "value proposition" for attracting and hiring newcomers.
- › Find alternative solutions to assist employers to participate in the social/economic integration of newcomers.
- › Provide employers with innovative learning tools and resources.

**KEY SURVEY FACTS**

- › Distributed online from September 27, 2017 to October 11, 2017
- › With support from the Surrey Board of Trade (SBOT), Chartered Professionals in Human Resources BC & Yukon (CPHR BC & Yukon); Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC); 4 Professional Immigrant Networks.
- › 84 responses from organizations representing 18 different industry sectors.

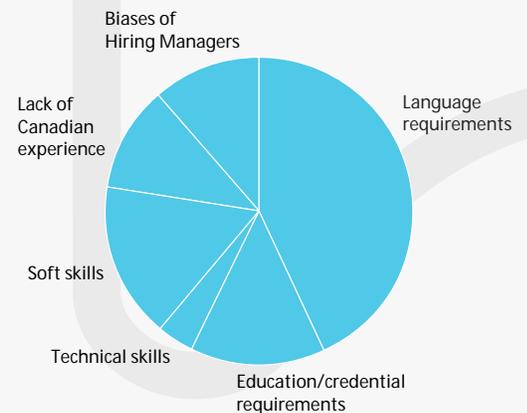
## KEY FINDINGS

- › Over 45% of respondents identified tools and resources their organizations have in place to attract, hire and retain immigrant talent.
- › 70% of respondents indicated their organizations have hired internationally-trained professionals in the last twelve months.
- › Over 60% of respondents strongly agreed that the most significant factors for immigrant integration are:
  - › Recognizing the value of diversity through overall employee engagement and learning in a diverse environment;
  - › Fair and unbiased recruitment and hiring process;
  - › Promoting opportunities and accommodating differences;
  - › Meeting employer’s business objectives;
  - › Demonstrating return on investment (ROI);
  - › Sustainable and transferable programs to be modified and used by other employers;
  - › Recognizing and valuing the international experience of immigrant talent, which will lead to broadening customer base, using multicultural and multi-language knowledge.

Respondents also noted that “online job search sites” are the most commonly used recruitment method. Other frequently-used methods included “internal referrals” and “networking events”. The EAG group agreed the latter are the most effective methods for recruiting candidates.

### The following key challenges to recruitment and integration of skilled immigrants were identified:

- › Employers recognize that the number one challenge faced by immigrants during the recruitment stage is the language-proficiency requirement. Respondents noted that their organizations may require that applicants’ ability to communicate effectively in English be specific to their industry/business. This is often different from generic language proficiency. For some employers, this may also indicate a concern about immigrants’ understanding how to communicate in a Canadian business setting.
- › Soft skills and education/credential requirements were also a concern, followed by a lack of Canadian experience and biases of hiring managers.



RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- › Create more specific Employment 101 (career planning) programs to prepare immigrants for working in Canada, based on employer needs.
- › IEC-BC should provide assistance and incentives for employers to implement solutions, and also provide tools and info on where and how to connect with immigrant talent.
- › Provide ongoing support with workplace integration after hiring, including onboarding tools/training that are based on specific needs of employers and their immigrant hires.
- › Voice employer concerns to educational institutions or community/immigrant service providers, so that programming can be created to effectively overcome these shortfalls/concerns.
- › Create programs/software that employers can access to find talent. Employers are eager to find talent quickly, so a database where immigrant talent is available would be an asset.



*Of the comments received, some referred to employer-focused initiatives and programs that IEC-BC is already implementing to help employers integrate skilled immigrants into BC's work places. For further information, please visit the Employer Tools & Resources section at [www.iecbc.ca](http://www.iecbc.ca).*

### **From the comments above, the EAG has proposed the following set of solutions:**

- › Workplace Training on Diversity and Inclusion Supported by Organizational Leadership
- › Increasing Awareness of Unconscious Bias in the Workplace
- › Industry Specific Networking Opportunities with Immigrant Talent
- › Strong and Consistent Onboarding Process (Orientation, Job Training)



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