

# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT

RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP



**An Employer Resource**  
For Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk

**TAPPING INTO  
GLOBAL TALENT**  
RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

**Special thanks to those who contributed to  
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**And most of all, to the many talented individuals  
and employers who shared their stories.**

# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT

## RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

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Grand Erie is home to many motivated, well educated and well trained immigrants who can help your business succeed. Join us as we introduce you to fourteen outstanding professionals ready to put their skills to work for you.

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### [Hiring Newcomers: An Employer's Guide and Perspective](#)

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We are a multi-stakeholder ACTION committee comprised of local employers, immigrants, and community services working hard to strengthen the connections between immigrants, employers, and community. Learn more about what your community is doing and how you can get involved.

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# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

What does it take to make your business successful today? What ingredient will give your company the competitive edge? The answer is people – people with the skills, knowledge and talent you require to be a leader in today's global economy.

New comers calling Grand Erie home are shining examples of the skilled talent pool you are looking for. This guide introduces you to fourteen talented, highly skilled individuals who want to help build the economic and social prosperity of our community. These individuals represent foreign trained workers who are already contributing to our community and others who are seeking employment. You will also learn about organizations in our community who can connect you to the people you are looking for.

You will learn practical advice from local employers who share how a culturally diverse workforce can benefit your company by improving employee relations, enhancing your reputation as an employer of choice, and increasing your ability to compete globally through a better understanding of international communications, business and financial practices.

Of course, there is also information on how you can work with others in our community to build our communities competitive edge.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Immigrant Settlement Transition, Employment and Partnership Committee  
Hosted by: Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie

welcome

**Name** Sanjeev Kumar **Country of Origin** India **Years in Canada** Five  
**Education** Master's Degree in Pharmacy **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Assistant Manager **Current Occupation** Pharmacist at the Brantford General Hospital



Five years ago, Sanjeev immigrated to Canada from India. While he was in India he received his Master's degree in Pharmacy. He was also working as an Assistant Manager of Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs for AstraZeneca.

Once Sanjeev was in Canada, he had to become certified through the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC). This process is necessary in Canada because of the different approaches to pharmacy each

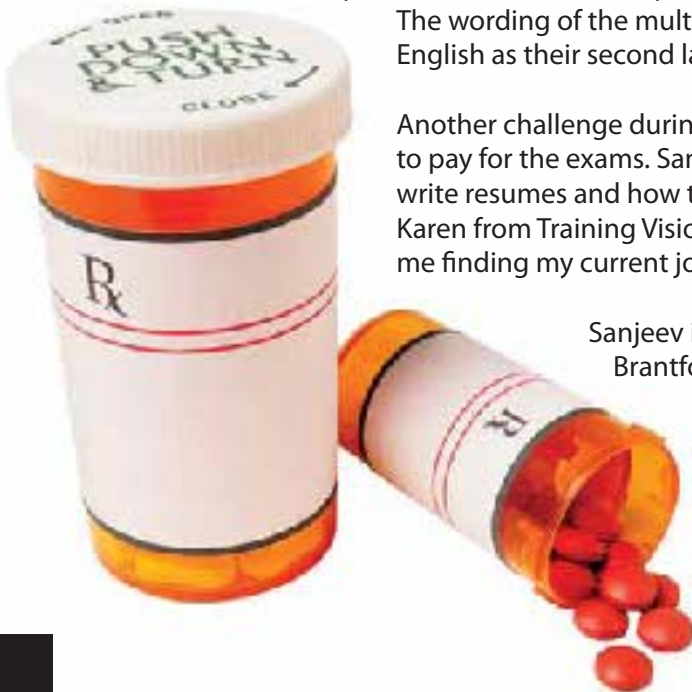
country has. In India, pharmacy is more industry based, whereas in Canada it is more patient based. Because of this difference, Sanjeev had to learn the different medications and the approach that Canada has. It took Sanjeev about three years to become a certified pharmacist in Canada.

During the three years it took to finish his certification, Sanjeev was working in retail pharmacy as a pharmacy technician, which helped him learn about and be experienced with Canadian expectations. His employer at the time paid for him to attend the University of Toronto for a six month course for international pharmacy graduates. This course taught Sanjeev the expectations of Canadian pharmacies.

After the course at the University of Toronto, Sanjeev had to take the PEBC exams in Toronto. There were two exams he had to write: one was multiple choice and one was a practical exam. These exams were not easy and were very expensive. The wording of the multiple choice questions was difficult for the students who had English as their second language.

Another challenge during this time was finding time to study, while also working in order to pay for the exams. Sanjeev went to Training Visions, where he found help with how to write resumes and how to be prepared for interviews. He said, "I would really like to thank Karen from Training Visions. She was the one who set me up with a contact which led to me finding my current job."

Sanjeev is now a certified pharmacist in Canada, and is working at the Brantford General Hospital.



**Name** Patrick Taruvinga **Country of Origin** Zimbabwe **Years in Canada** Three years **Education** Received accounting degree in Zimbabwe in 1997 **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Worked as an accountant for eight years **Current Occupation** Accountant at the Best Western

Patrick Taruvinga immigrated to Canada from the United States in 2005. Before living in the U.S., Patrick was born and raised in Zimbabwe. He came to Canada with a degree in accounting and six years of experience as an accountant in both Zimbabwe and the U.S. However, it was not until June of 2008 that he was finally able to get an accounting job in Canada. Since then he has been working as an accountant at the Best Western in Brantford.

Despite the fact that Patrick had worked in accounting for six years before coming to Canada, local businesses would not hire Patrick as an accountant until he gained some more “local” experience. It was not that they did not recognize his work in Zimbabwe - they in fact did appreciate that experience - but they all required him to gain Canadian experience first.

As a result, Patrick was forced to work lower-paying jobs in order to make ends meet. While he worked these lower-paying jobs, Patrick picked up a few courses at the Skills for Change school in Toronto to upgrade his skills. After around a year of this, Patrick was able to get an accounting job at the Best Western in Brantford. He came to Brantford because he was looking for a community smaller than the Greater Toronto Area.

Patrick found the transition to life in Canada relatively easy for two reasons: Patrick had an American driver’s license when he came to Canada, so it was easier for him to get most of his documentation set up; and Zimbabwe’s official language is English, so Patrick has been speaking English his entire life. However, his advantage in English was almost passed over. When he enrolled in the accounting courses to upgrade his credentials he was pushed into the English as a second language course.

The biggest barrier he faced was in gaining Canadian experience. Patrick believes that other immigrants who have similar problems should take a similar path as he did. While he did accept lower paying jobs, Patrick also made sure that they were in or close to the same field as accounting.



**Name** Anthony Francis **Country of Origin** India, immigrated to Canada from Australia **Years in Canada** Seven **Education** Millwright Mechanics from Australia **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Worked as a Millwright for the Sydney Water Treatment Facilities **Current Occupation** Self-employed in construction

Tony immigrated to Australia from India in 1986. While Tony was in Australia he was educated in Millwright Mechanics and, after graduating, worked as a Millwright for the Sydney Water Treatment Facilities. Tony immigrated to Canada in 2001 and experienced many challenges in finding employment in his field. He could not find many opportunities as a Millwright in Brantford and was turned down for being overqualified and not having Canadian work experience by all of the potential employers that interviewed him.

Tony is frustrated because he is working in a completely different field than what he studied. The most experience Tony can get in his field is through contract work commissioning machines on a temporary basis. He cannot get the experience he needs due to the lack of employment opportunities found locally.

Tony is now self-employed, specializing in custom home construction and home efficiency. He is proud of his business and employs those who have been through similar difficulties. Tony plans to stick with his business because he believes there is value in his specialization due to the recent focus on the environment.

Tony generously contributes to Habitat for Humanity, an international, non-profit organization devoted to building affordable housing using volunteer labour. His contributions include helping with construction of homes and donating materials salvaged from properties demolished by his company.



**Name** Rashda Rana **Country of Origin** Pakistan **Years in Canada** Thirty-four years **Education** Degree in Pharmacy in Pakistan **Work Experience in Country of Origin** No pharmaceutical experience in Pakistan **Current Occupation** Owner of Zellers Pharmacy in Brantford



While Rashda is quick to admit that she is one of the lucky ones, her hard work and persistence played a huge role in her ability to lead a very successful life in Canada. Rashda emigrated from Pakistan in 1974, shortly after acquiring her degree in pharmacy. While she had the advantage of having a husband who had already gone through the process of immigration some years earlier, Rashda admits that being a woman presented her with unique challenges with regards to immigrating.

When Rashda started the process of getting her Pharmacist credentials accepted at the University of Toronto she had a three-month old son. In the class of fifty other immigrants undergoing the same process, Rashda was one of three women. "At the time it was not a profession for women," she said. However, she was able to get through the three years and write her licensing exam. She admits that she sometimes looks back on it and is herself unsure how she managed.

After getting her license, Rashda got a job at a pharmacy in Brantford. Heading into the job she felt very intimidated and was unsure how it would turn out. One day she helped a man wandering through the pharmacy and it turned out to be a major turning point in her life.

Shortly thereafter Rashda received a phone call from that man, who turned out to be the owner of the company. He had been checking up on all his pharmacies, and was so impressed with Rashda that he asked if she would run the pharmacy. After considering it for some time, she eventually agreed to try it out. The rest, as they say, is history.

There are two things that Rashda attributes to her success in Canada: a desire to keep learning and her faith in a higher being. She has always believed that there is some being that has been looking out for her throughout her life. She is also always looking for ways to acquire new knowledge. Rashda is never content with what she knows, and believes she can learn something from everything and everyone she encounters.

"I accept challenges just to test myself," she said. She will ask herself, "can I do this?" Despite spending over thirty years in Canada, finding employment she loves and raising a family she is extremely proud of, Rashda admits that she still faces some challenges. While she no longer feels isolated on the basis of being a woman, Rashda sometimes feels left out of general conversation. Because she was not raised in Canada, there are a myriad of slang terms and references that she simply does not understand. At meetings and conferences, she sometimes feels out of the loop, something she hopes to address in the coming years.

**Name** Ruchika Angrish **Country of Origin** India **Years in Canada** Three and a half **Education** Bachelor's Degree in Urban Planning from India **Current Occupation** Planning Assistant for Brant County



Ruchika immigrated to Canada three and a half years ago. She moved here from India where she had already received her Bachelor's degree in urban planning. Although she did not have work experience in her field before immigrating to Canada, once she was here she started looking for work.

She started by applying for jobs online, but never got any responses. She did not give up, and eventually got hired as Christmas help at a popular retail store. This experience helped her learn how to deal with people and added to her skills. She then held a job for a couple of months with the Ontario Conservatory of Music. While she was in Toronto, Ruchika had also applied to a correspondence program with the University of Toronto. However, even though she met all of the requirements, she did not get in because of limited seats.

Ruchika accessed programs, such as Training Visions and the Immigrant Settlement Services (ISS) through the YMCA, to help her with finding employment. Training Visions really helped her with resume writing and skills needed for applying to jobs and going to interviews. This helped to build her confidence when going to job interviews.

In Brantford, she applied for a job with the County of Brant. After a phone interview she was rejected. A lady she met through the training programs told her to call back to ask why she did not get the job. This led Ruchika to make a contact with the Chief Planner. She kept in touch with the Chief Planner, and eventually was contacted again about a job opening. She was offered a contract to update the official plan amendment which has been extended until the end of the year.

Finding work in your field is not always easy but Ruchika says, "Building confidence and using programs such as Immigrant Settlement Services and Training Visions can be very useful". It took a lot of patience, but Ruchika has finally accepted a job that will give her work experience in her field, and hopefully help with her job searches in the future.



**Name** Clara Siisii **Country of Origin** Zambia **Years in Canada** One year  
**Education** Master's Degree and PhD in Agricultural Economics (University of Missouri), MBA in Accounting (William Woods University), Bachelor's Degree in Economics (University of Zambia) **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Worked in the Ministry of Agriculture in Zambia; worked for the United States Agency for International Development **Current Occupation** Unemployed



Clara Siisii came to Canada a year ago from the United States, where she had been living since 1992. She is originally from Zambia and went to the U.S. to pursue further education.

She received her first degree, a Bachelor's degree in Economics with a minor in business administration, at the University of Zambia. While working for the United States Agency for International Development in Zambia, she started studying agricultural economics.

In 1984 she went to the University of Missouri to get her Master's degree in Agricultural Economics. After graduating in 1988 she went back to Zambia to work for the Ministry of Agriculture. The World Bank, in 1992, chose Clara as one of the winners of the graduate program scholarship. Of the 3000 applicants worldwide, only 130 were given the award, and only two of them were from Zambia.

This allowed Clara to return to the University of Missouri where she got her PhD in Agricultural Economics. She then went on to work for the Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute, where she did research for U.S. senators and forecasted worldwide crop yields.

Before coming to Canada, Clara decided, for good measure, to get her MBA in accounting.

With all this education and experience, both in North America and back home in Zambia, one would think Clara would have no trouble finding a well-suited job in southwestern Ontario. However, despite countless resume submissions, she has been unable to secure a job in her field. Clara has bounced around in unskilled labour positions but has been unable to find a suitable job. Unfortunately, she has no idea why she has been rejected so many times.

When Clara first came to Brantford she enrolled in the Training Visions program, which helped her with resume-writing skills and job-searching skills. Thus far it has yielded no results.

She has tried applying for government jobs, jobs in the private sector, and jobs at universities with no luck. Not only has Clara been unable to secure a job, she has not received any interview requests at all. While she was prepared to struggle a bit when she first arrived in Ontario, Clara was not expecting to have this much trouble.

"I compared my resume with the job requirements and I thought I would fit," she said. "Maybe I'm competing with a lot of high quality people in Canada." For now, though, Clara is just going to keep plugging away and hope she finds a job in her field somewhere.

**Name** Dr. Edward Shizha, PhD **Country of Origin** Zimbabwe **Years in Canada** Seven **Education** Master's in Sociology of Education from the University of Zimbabwe; PhD in Educational Policy Studies from the University of Alberta **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Elementary school teacher, high school teacher, and university lecturer. **Current Occupation** Professor of Children's Education at Wilfrid Laurier University in Brantford



Edward immigrated to Canada seven years ago as a student. He had applied to a university in Alberta for a PhD program. His previous education from the University of Zimbabwe had been recognized by this Canadian University, and he was accepted into their PhD program. Before immigrating to Canada, Edward had received his Master's degree in Sociology of Education from the University of Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, Edward had worked as an elementary school teacher, a high school teacher, and a university lecturer. Once he finished his PhD in Alberta he was working as a research assistant, but was also looking for permanent work. Edward has been hired as a professor by Wilfrid Laurier University in Brantford where he continues to work.

Although Edward did not have trouble finding a job in Canada, he believes it has to do with getting a Canadian education first. Edward feels that "Canadian experience and Canadian education are big challenges for immigrants finding jobs". Since Edward came here as a student and received a Canadian education, it appears to have made his transition into the labour force easier.



**Name** David Hyde **Country of Origin** England **Years in Canada** One (Arrived March 2008) **Education** Trade School as a plumber **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Twenty years as a plumber in England **Current Occupation** Undergoing interview process for plumber position

David Hyde immigrated to Canada from England in March of 2008. His family was originally planning to move to Vancouver, as David had a job offer waiting in British Columbia. However, after spending a couple of weeks in Brantford visiting his in-laws, it became clear to David that they were going to stay in this city.

His wife is originally from the region so it made sense for his family to stay here. Having spent ten years with his wife in England, it seemed both practical and fair to move closer to his wife's family. Unfortunately, this meant that David had to start back at square one, as he had to give up the job opportunity in Vancouver.

He is trained to be a plumber, and worked as a plumber for twenty years in England before coming to Canada. While he has had some trouble finding work in Brantford, he continues to maintain a positive attitude and says that the transition to life in Canada has been fairly easy.

David says that having his credentials recognized was not a big issue. Some of the terminology is different in Canada, and he will have to familiarize himself with the plumbing and building codes. Other than that, he doesn't expect to have much trouble when he starts working.

Most of the training, he says, will be done on-the-job as he gets acclimated to working in Canada. The employer who is looking to hire David has hired British plumbers before and, according to David, has been quite pleased with how they have turned out.

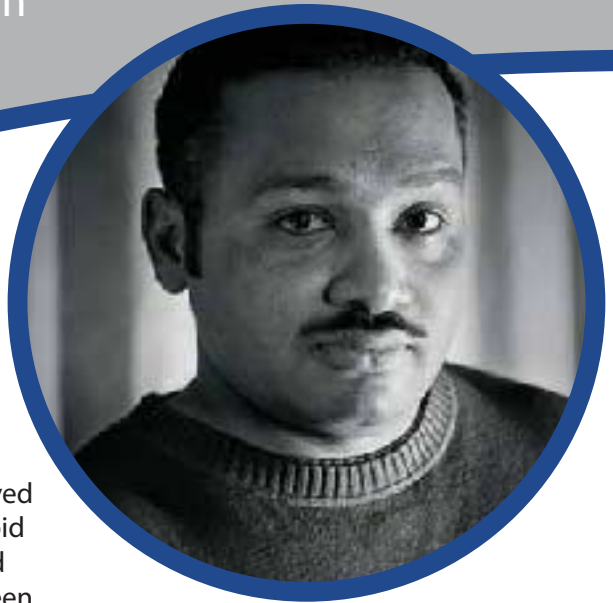
He admits that his transition to Canada has been much easier as a result of having family members who live here. In addition to having that support, he has also visited Canada a number of times, and has an idea of how the country operates.

One of the frustrating aspects of immigrating, however, was the time it took to get all his paperwork in order. "Having to deal with the government to get residency cards and other paperwork can be a tedious ordeal," he says. In fact, that would be David's best advice for other newcomers – to make sure all your paperwork is in order. He says that the more you can do before coming to Canada, the better.



**Name** Gajendra Hangalur **Country of Origin** India **Years in Canada** Seven (spent four years in Singapore before coming to Canada) **Education** Trade School (tool and die maker); currently working toward a Bachelor's degree in tool and die. **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Went to trade school in India; received trade certificate in Singapore **Current Occupation** Tool and die maker at Meridian Automotive System

Gajendra came to Canada in 2001 after spending four years in Singapore. He was born and raised in India, where he went to trade school to be a tool and die maker. Gajendra currently works at Meridian Automotive Systems in Brantford.



While he is working in his field of expertise, Gajendra has not “moved up the ladder” as far as he could have if he stayed in India. With the rapid growth of the Indian economy over the past number of years, the tool and die sector is much larger in India than in Canada. As a result, he has not been able to advance as far as he would have liked.

In addition, one of the problems Gajendra has faced since immigrating is job saturation. There are so many people who are educated in his field that competition for the relatively few jobs available is quite high. He is currently attending classes at Mohawk College to receive his Bachelor's degree in tool and die. Unfortunately, even after furthering his education, he does not see much hope for advancement.

When he immigrated, Gajendra was lucky to know a number of people in Canada who had already gone through the immigration process and were working in the tool and die field. As a result, Gajendra found it fairly easy to integrate into Canadian society.

One of the biggest issues that immigrants face, according to Gajendra, is mastering the language and being able to communicate. Luckily for Gajendra, his communication skills in English are quite strong. Despite this fact he believes language barriers were the reason he had some trouble holding onto a job when he first moved to Canada.

Gajendra bounced around between several jobs in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Kitchener before coming to Brantford. He believes that part of the reason why he lost his earlier jobs was because of the perceived lack of communication skills. “Having proper communication skills before you come to Canada is one of the biggest advantages [you can have],” he said.

Some of the more practical issues Gajendra faced revolved around setting up his finances and getting his driver's license. He found it was a struggle to get a line of credit and it took him five months before he received his driver's license. However, he considers himself lucky, as he knew some people who had already gone through those processes. This meant he already had an idea of where he needed to go and what he needed to do. He says that there are other people he knows who are still struggling to get all the necessary licenses and finances.

**Name** Baha'a Hanane **Country of Origin** Jordan **Years in Canada** Five  
**Education** Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Russia **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Eight years: Four years working in a factory, and four years working for the government **Current Occupation** Auto Mechanic

Baha'a immigrated to Canada from Jordan five years ago. Before he came here, he had received his Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering in Russia. In Canada, his education is acknowledged by the government, but as the equivalent to a Bachelor's degree instead of a Master's. Baha'a also has management training with the ISO system, and has worked as a management representative.

Finding a job in his field has not been easy. The major challenges to finding a job here is that companies ask for Canadian experience. As an immigrant, Baha'a did not have Canadian experience, but did have experience in his field. He worked Russia for four years in a factory and for four years with the government. In these jobs he was working as a mechanical engineer and gaining experience. Baha'a's next challenge is that he does not have a Canadian education. Even though the Canadian government recognizes Baha'a's education, most companies do not.

Baha'a eventually got a job as an auto mechanic here in Brantford, but working with cars is not the field he wishes to be in. There are also many stories of engineers who have immigrated here to be hired as an engineer but are only receiving pay as a technician.

In the future, Baha'a plans to contact McMaster University in Hamilton and look into courses that will upgrade his education, which he believes will allow him to find work in his field.



in



**Name** Heart Su **Country of Origin** China **Years in Canada** Nine years  
**Education** Graduated from law school in China in 1993 **Work Experience in  
Country of Origin** Practiced law in China for six years **Current Occupation**  
Assistant: Host Program at the YMCA Immigrant Settlement Services of  
Brantford



In 2000, Heart Su came to Canada after spending one year in the United States. She is originally from China, where she was born, raised, and educated. Heart Su is currently working at the YMCA's Immigrant Settlement Services in Brantford.

In China she went through law school, from which she graduated in 1993. Upon her graduation she practiced law for six years before following her husband to Ohio, where he was doing research at a university.

When her husband began research at the University of Toronto, both of them moved to Canada. Heart Su then enrolled in an accounting program, which she completed in 2004, before beginning part-time accounting work in 2005.

Heart Su got involved with the Immigrant Settlement Services several years ago as a volunteer. They then offered her a job, which she still holds.

Unfortunately, because the legal systems in China and Canada are so different, Heart Su's education is not recognized in Canada. For her to get back into law she would have to start pretty much at the beginning. While she has considered doing so, she does not think she has the energy to go back to law school.

The biggest barrier Heart Su has faced is the language barrier. While she admits that her English has improved since coming to North America, she still finds herself struggling at times to understand what people are saying. She finds her reading and writing skills to be fine, but still struggles with oral communication.

Luckily, she has been able to get involved with some groups to help maintain her Chinese culture. There is a Mandarin language class she works with to maintain her native tongue, and she also runs a Chinese dance class where the students practice traditional Chinese dances. These groups have helped her both ease into the Canadian lifestyle and still maintain some cultural practices.

Heart Su believes that it is the first six months after someone immigrates that are the toughest. After around the six month period she found that she started to get more comfortable with North American life. However, in those first six months she felt quite alone as she did not know anyone, could not speak English very well, and felt quite a bit of anxiety about being away from home.

Some advice she would give other newcomers would be to cherish what you gain when you come to Canada and do not dwell on the things you lose. "When you immigrate, you lose something and you gain something," she said. "You should focus on what you gain." She also believes that newcomers should get involved in services to help you integrate and services that help you maintain your culture. She says that there are quite a few services in the community and that getting involved with them will help newcomers feel more comfortable in Canada.

**Name** Santosh Manjunath **Country of Origin** India **Years in Canada** Seven **Education** Master's Degree in Pharmacy **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Worked for AstraZeneca, a pharmaceutical manufacturer **Current Occupation** Pharmacy Manager



Santosh immigrated to Canada from India seven years ago. While he was living in India, he completed his Master's degree in Pharmacy and was working for AstraZeneca, a pharmaceutical manufacturer.

Once Santosh came to Canada, he got a job at another manufacturing company, Apotex Pharmachem Inc. He then had to go through the steps to become a qualified pharmacist in Ontario. Santosh says that "Canada does not accept international degrees, so I had to do exams to prove my degree equalled a Canadian degree." He took the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) examinations. These exams tested his English fluency, knowledge of Canadian pharmacy and his ability to deal with patients. It took Santosh approximately three years to prepare for these exams and complete them.

During the three years before Santosh was qualified, he spent a lot of time studying. Six months after he arrived in Canada, he got a job at a pharmacy working as a pharmacy technician. After he finished his exams he was able to be promoted, and is now currently working as a Pharmacy Manager.



**Name** Rodolfo Flores **Country of Origin** Venezuela **Years in Canada** Seven **Education** Master's Degree in Administration; Diploma in Social Work **Work Experience in Country of Origin** Manager in Administration; Administration Assistant for IBM and Xerox **Current Occupation** Social Worker

Rodolfo immigrated to Canada seven years ago from Venezuela. In Venezuela he received a diploma in Social Work, and a Master's degree in Administration. Before immigrating to Canada, he had worked as an Administration Assistant for IBM and Xerox. He also had experience working as a Manager in Administration.

The first challenge for Rodolfo in Canada was learning the language. Once he started attending English as a Second Language classes he began to feel more comfortable with the language and started looking for a job. Unfortunately, he had difficulty finding a job because of the language and because they always asked him for Canadian experience. He felt discriminated against. He said, "I applied at a retail store with my qualifications in administration, and the only job they called me back for was to be a cleaner on the night shift. Do I look like a cleaner?"

Rodolfo began to volunteer at the Home of Learning Development which a friend had told him about. Volunteering there really helped him to improve his English, and eventually he was offered a part-time job. Now he is working there full-time as a social worker.



**Name** Khaled Khanfar **Country of Origin** Palestine **Years in Canada** Four years **Education** Received a Master's of Science in Geology in Pakistan **Work Experience in Country of Origin** One year as an engineer in Kuwait; two years as a soil technician in Jordan. **Current Occupation** Owner/operator of Sooho's Restaurant

Khaled Khanfer moved around quite a bit in the Middle East before coming to Canada in June of 2004. Khaled was born in the West Bank and got his post secondary education in Pakistan. While working in Kuwait after his graduation, the first Gulf War broke out, so he fled to Jordan. Khaled came to Canada in 2004 after spending 14 years in Jordan.

Despite his Master's degree in geology, Khaled has not been able to find work in that field since coming to Canada. Out of necessity he opened Sooho's Restaurant in downtown Brantford. Khaled is supporting his wife and five kids – one of whom is currently studying at McMaster University – and needed more than the seasonal job he had as a soil technician.

When he came to Canada, Khaled took a government course to become a building inspector. Due to the credential recognition, his Master's degree was only recognized as a Bachelor's degree in Canada. However, he was told that if he enrolled in this course he could become a building inspector.

Khaled spent one year taking courses, but after passing five exams he could not get an internship and thus his studies were rendered useless. While he is trying to make the best of the situation, and has not given up hope of one day getting back into his field, Khaled remains upset for the way in which he was treated.

One of his dreams when he came to Canada was to become a high school science teacher. He believes that if he had not been pushed into taking the Ontario Building Code course he could have enrolled in teacher's college and found work as a teacher.

Now he is trying to make ends meet with his restaurant, and is being forced to work nearly every day of the week. As a result he has little time to take anymore courses. Also, he is worried he could enroll in another course that leads him nowhere.

The simple process of applying to teacher's college would be an overwhelming task for Khaled. Even though he has his graduation certificate, the Ministry of Education requires authentication from the school in Jordan - something that Khaled says would be no easy task. "The business takes all my time," he said. "I'm not making any money and I'm losing experience [in my field]." in Canada.



# Hiring Newcomers in Canada

## An Employer's Guide and Perspective

Over the next decade Canada will face two related challenges: the country's birthrate is expected to continue its decline and, due to the baby boomer population, much of our population will be reaching the age of retirement. Together, these issues will and are creating gaps in our labour force. It is estimated that by 2020, 1 million Canadian jobs could go unfilled.

In 2006 57% of immigrants to Canada were "prime working age" – between 25 and 54 years old. It is expected that immigrants and non-Canadian trained residents will provide the solution to Canada's unfilled job market. In order to keep a competitive advantage in your business, employers need to begin building or expanding their strategies for hiring individuals who are new to Canada or who have obtained their training in another country.

In this book you have already read the stories of local individuals who have experienced the struggle of obtaining employment in Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk with foreign credentials and training. Now, this section will discuss the barriers to and benefits of hiring newcomers, some strategies you may be able to apply in your place of business (including recruitment and retention plans), and some possible concerns you may have as an employer. Several local employers also offer their perspective on the benefits of diversity in the workplace.

We invite you to continue reading to find out what you can do to benefit your business and the workforce in our community by increasing and encouraging diversity in your place of work.



# Barriers & Solutions

## Hiring Newcomers and International Trained Workers

When hiring internationally trained workers, many employers have questions about recruitment, assessment and selection, and how to integrate Canadian immigrants once they become new employees. There are also concerns about whether these initiatives will cost time, money and resources.

There are certainly some potential barriers when hiring immigrants. However, by identifying these difficulties, employers can work with their hiring team and the candidate to see past these barriers, instead of being caught off guard by them during the hiring process.

Below is a chart depicting what some employers might consider barriers to hiring immigrants or newcomers to Canada. Listed beside each barrier are some potential solutions. This chart may help you prepare for the process of diversifying your employee population.

Barrier	Solution
<b>Language and communication differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about the high standard of language qualification and skills required for entrance into Canada as an Economic Class immigrant</li> <li>• Offer language and literacy upgrading programs for all employees</li> <li>• Consider what level of literacy skill is really needed for the job</li> <li>• Look beyond “superficial” aspects of language (like accent and terminology) to assess their true level of proficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of Canadian experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer meaningful volunteer opportunities for newcomers to gain experience in your company before hiring them</li> <li>• Focus on skills needed for the job and identify the benefits of a candidate’s past experience, not where they gained that experience</li> </ul>
<b>The recognition of foreign credentials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on skills needed for the job and identify the benefits of a candidate’s past experience, not where they gained that experience</li> <li>• Contact a credential assessment agency who can help you determine whether the candidate possesses the needed qualifications (See reference list)</li> <li>• Develop concrete criteria on which to base your assessments of all potential candidates</li> </ul>
<b>A lack of knowledge on how to recruit newcomers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let it be known that your business values international credentials and offers an inclusive work environment</li> <li>• Advertise your business in local cultural newspapers, cultural centres or places of worship</li> <li>• Consider posting the job description in a variety of languages</li> </ul>
<b>Possible difficulties in workplace integration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware that you may need to help your current employees adapt to change</li> <li>• Address basic issues like new smells in the kitchen and issues of personal space up front</li> <li>• Implement diversity-oriented training to staff</li> <li>• Offer bridging or mentoring programs for new staff</li> <li>• Post health and safety and employment standards in multiple languages to make employees feel welcome</li> </ul>
<b>Employer is unaware of real costs and benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure the qualitative differences in your staff after implementing diversity policy changes (i.e. changes in work force attitude)</li> <li>• Hire an HR team who is diversity-trained to help develop a way to track costs and benefits to your company specifically</li> </ul>

In a local example of how employers are certain they are maintaining diversity, SC Johnson & Son, Ltd. has, as part of its philosophy, the belief “that diversity makes us stronger.” When hiring and retaining staff, SC Johnson & Son always tries to “ensure a diverse pool of candidates.” Not only does SC Johnson welcome diversity, they actually seek it out. In order to attract newcomers and immigrants the company posts jobs at the Settlement Information Services Organization in Hamilton, at Ivy School, Inroads and at the YMCA in the community of Brant.

# An Argument for Diversity Policies & Inclusive Hiring Practices in the Workplace

Above all, it is recommended that all businesses create and put into practice a diversity policy to help overcome and see past these barriers. Diversity policies are simply voluntary initiatives that specifically aim to recruit, retain and develop employees from diverse social groups. Creating your own company's diversity policy should involve input from management, directors and staff, and should deal with fair hiring practices as well as treatment of employees in the workplace.

In addition to improving your company's reputation with your community, clients and employees, developing and implementing a diversity policy will increase your access to talented individuals and will reflect the multicultural society that we live in. The Canadian Government has written that:

*Canadian society is increasingly diverse, and the labour market is increasingly multicultural. Integrating internationally trained workers into your work force acknowledges the context in which your organization operates and enhances the society in which you live.*

There are many benefits to creating and using diversity policies and inclusive hiring practices for your business or organization. These can include:

- A strengthened set of cultural values within the organization
- Help with attracting and retaining highly talented workers
- The enhancement of customer satisfaction
- Lower absenteeism rates among employees
- An enhanced reputation for your company
- Improving the motivation and efficiency of employees
- A reduction in labour turnover
- The development of new markets, locally and/or globally

Often times, immigrants to Canada see their success in this country in terms of their success in the workplace. Because of this, employers may find newcomers extremely dedicated and reliable workers. In a publication put out in Hamilton, area employers described immigrants as loyal workers who possess a strong work ethic. This translates to lower turnover rates and higher feelings of enthusiasm among employees.

Local company ACIC Methapharm does not discriminate based on where an individual was educated, or what language their schooling was obtained in. At Methapharm they believe they are "truly a multicultural company that hires the best person for the job." By insisting on hiring the top candidate, Methapharm ensures they are staffed with dedicated and enthusiastic workers.

Updating your organization's staffing strategy and practices to hire and retain internationally trained staff will help you to be more effective in the recruitment and employment of all workers. In addition, your business or organization will remain innovative and competitive with other companies both locally and on a global scale.

It is important to remember that diversity is essential at every level of an organization – from the staff members to the senior managers to the board of directors; corporations that employ diverse individuals throughout all areas of work will reach a broader range of customers and clients. Whether that means attracting new customers to your neighbourhood store, or dealing with new buyers or partners on a global scale, diversity in your management team, staff and directors will help you do it.

# How to Attract Newcomers & Foreign Trained Individuals

Whether it is expanding your business into a new market, improving your efficiency and productivity through fewer absent workers and lower turnover rates, or simply wanting to create a better workplace environment, your company may wish to seek out Canadian immigrants to add to your workforce.

The first step in attracting interest to your job is advertising in the right place. In order to attract newcomers to their company, Brantford's Apotex Pharmachem advertises in "local community newspapers specifically focused and serving various cultures."

When a newcomer is considering accepting employment, there are several things they may look for. If you are wanting to make your company more attractive to newcomers you may want to think about:

- Providing compensation for relocating, etc.
- Offering benefits
- Recognizing their efforts with bonuses, certificates, etc.
- Promoting the possibility of promotions down the line
- Specifying the job is secure

Important to most any individual, these five "extras" to employment may help a newcomer to Canada feel successful and relevant in their workplace.

Employers need to be aware that the period of Orientation to a new company can be overwhelming for any employee. Newcomers in particular may be faced with learning how to adapt to a Canadian workplace in general, as well as your workplace specifically. Here are some helpful notes on how to make the transition into your workplace easier for all new employees:

- Provide a general overview the company's identity in the community and beyond to give perspective of the overall objectives of your business.
- Discuss the roles of various individuals in your business to contextualize the new employee's own role; be clear on who the person can go to for support, with concerns or maybe even with new ideas.
- If you are a larger organization, provide details about departments and their responsibilities.
- Be sure to discuss punctuality, time cards, sick leave, over-time, report time, mileage, absence notification, etc. Let employees know the procedures for each of these in detail.
- Go over any safety concerns and rules.
- Talk about what titles to use to address supervisors and coworkers.
- Be clear on dress code specifications; be sure to let them know what is appropriate for "dress down" days or days when you might have meetings.
- Specify when and how an employee's evaluation will take place. Make sure they know these evaluations are done for all employees.
- Let them know if there are ways for them to get involved in the workplace (perhaps a baseball team, potluck Friday's, etc.)

While some of these items may seem "obvious" to Canadians educated and trained here, to others who have experienced workplace practices in other cultures some or all of these practices may be new. Being clear about these rules is a benefit to all new employees, regardless of which country they were trained in.

# A Beneficial Conclusion

## & References

Hiring newcomers or foreign-trained employees has many benefits for your business or organization. While there may be a difference in the approach you take to recruiting and training newcomers to Canada, their level of dedication, work quality and enthusiasm for their job is equal to any locally-trained individual. It is diversity in the workplace that often stimulates creativity and new ideas.

Apotex Pharmachem recognizes experience and knowledge gained anywhere in the world, and hires “based on knowledge, experience (wherever acquired) and attitude.” Some of the expertise in their company comes from China, India, Russia, Romania, Germany, Britain, Mexico, USA, Vietnam, Korea, Philippines, etc. and they believe this diverse workforce is what helps to “create new pharmaceuticals, manufacture products and support the company.”

This section has attempted to identify possible barriers you may encounter while hiring a non-Canadian trained employee, provide you with suggestions for overcoming these barriers, and recommend strategies for the initial orientation process of a newly hired individual. We hope you, as an employer in Brant, Haldimand or Norfolk, will use the information provided here, as well as the personal stories from the previous section, to guide your hiring practices in the future to include a more diverse workforce!

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Government of Canada. (2009). Employer’s roadmap to hiring and retaining internationally trained workers. Retrieved June 17, 2009 from <http://www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/contents.asp>

Go to <http://www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/section4.asp> for a list of credential assessment agencies

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Wayland, S.V. (2007). Immigrant employment in Hamilton: Connecting the dots. Prepared for the Hamilton Immigrant Workforce Integration Network – an initiative of Hamilton Training Advisory Board.

# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

## **New Canadian Employment Service Providers (Employment Ontario) - (519) 756-5577**

Training Visions  
225 Colborne Street, Brantford, ON N3T 2H2  
training-visions.com

Training Visions offers new to Canada Workshops in the following areas; Resume Writing, English in the Workplace, Writing a Cover letter, Job Interview Skills, Networking, What skills you need, and additional Community Resources.

## **Grand Erie Learning Alternatives - (519) 751-2059**

Tollgate Technological Skills Centre (LINC/ESL)  
112 Tollgate Rd, Brantford, ON N3R 4Z6  
schools.gedsb.net/gela

LINC AND ESL classes are offered in day and night classes, Citizen Preparation classes (6 week course on Saturdays, literacy classes offered all year round, language assessments by appointment, and a computer lab.

## **Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology - (519) 759-7200**

Brantford Campus, Room B101d (Student Life)  
Brantford, On N3S 7P5  
ciite.ca/en\_phase\_3.asp

Mohawk College has introduced a new service exclusively for internationally trained Individuals (ITI's, and also for members of the Immigrant and Newcomers community. This is a new project called, Colleges Integration Immigrant to Employment (CIITE). CIITE is a multi-phased project that includes the following services with these objectives in mind; All ITI's must have access to programs and services in the Ontario college system tailored to their needs and aspirations, help to quickly and efficiently achieve employment that leverages their prior education, experience and expertise, work with organizations for the benefit of increased ITI integration into the workplace. Their service is closely related Settlement and Immigration Services Organization.

## **Community Resource and Employment Ontario (Job Connect) - (519) 751-4357 (HELP)**

1100 Clarence Street S. Suite# 102, Brantford, ON N3S 7N8  
jobconnect@crs-help.ca

2nd location

## **Community Resource and Employment Ontario (Job Connect) - (519) 759-4775**

170 Brantwood Park Road Unit# 7, Brantford, ON N3P 1N7  
tchusing@crs-help.ca

Community Resource and Employment Service (Job Connect) offers the following Services and Workshops to Newcomers; Employment readiness 1, which consists of, Job Search skills, resume and Cover Letters, Interview Techniques, Rights and Responsibilities.

Employment Readiness 2, which consists of Labour Market Information, Requirements for gaining a license in your profession, opportunities in related occupations, Networking, Credential Assessments, and Self Employment.

# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

## **YMCA: Immigrant Settlement Services**

### What We Do:

Immigrant Settlement Services assists newcomers in their orientation and integration into the Canadian environment.

### Employment Services Include:

- Job Search Workshops: Understanding the Canadian Workplace
- Career Counselling: How to develop a career path in Canada
- Job Search Preparation: Effective job search strategies in Canada
- Employment Planning: How to succeed "on the job" in Canada
- Employment Resource Centre: Information and research centre

### Employers benefit by:

- Having a source of qualified, pre-screened candidates
- Acquiring access to skilled workers who have a clear understanding of the Canadian workplace and their responsibilities as an employees
- Gaining increased competitive edge by hiring people with international knowledge, and a willingness to continually upgrade their skills
- Reduced labour and turnover costs as a result of candidates who have a strong work ethic and desire to succeed
- Hiring committed, resilient, hardworking employees

### Our Address:

YMCA Immigrant Settlement Services  
A branch of the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford  
38 Darling Street, Suite 201  
Brantford, Ontario N3T 6A8  
(519) 752-4568

[Immigrant\\_settlement@ymca.ca](mailto:Immigrant_settlement@ymca.ca) or [www.iss-ymca.ca](http://www.iss-ymca.ca)

## **Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie**

The Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie leads the development of local labour market strategies by:

- Providing evidence-based research and analysis
- Identifying employment trends
- Targeting workforce opportunities
- Initiating workforce development strategies
- Working with community partners
- Assisting employers with human resource planning

Employers seeking labour market information or wanting assistance with labour market strategies are invited to contact [admin@workforceplanningboard.org](mailto:admin@workforceplanningboard.org), or call 519.756.1116

[www.workforceplanningboard.org](http://www.workforceplanningboard.org)

# about us

# TAPPING INTO GLOBAL TALENT RIGHT AT YOUR DOORSTEP

*A Joint Partnership*



Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie  
Commission de planification de la main-d'œuvre de Grand Erie

1100 Clarence Street South, Suite 103B, Box 12, Brantford, Ontario N3S 7N8  
T: 519-756-1116 F: 519-756-4663 E: [admin@workforceplanningboard.org](mailto:admin@workforceplanningboard.org)

and

# MOHAWK

COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY  
411 Elgin Street, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5V2

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# EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

*The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.*