

# Building Diversity

## *Targeted strategies to recruit skilled immigrants begin with a welcoming workplace*

The future of the nation's trucking industry will obviously depend on the skills and expertise of new Canadians. Low birth rates among the Canadian-born population

-- combined with an aging workforce -- mean that immigrants will account for all of the net growth in the country's labour pool as early as 2012, according to the 2006 Census.

It is a reality for every industry, and fleets will face some stiff competition when trying to recruit the best candidates.

While some recruiting strategies will be common for workers from any cultural background, fleets can take some specific actions to build a multicultural team, and it all begins by establishing a welcoming environment in the workplace.

When trying to ensure that existing workers understand the skills and knowledge that immigrants can offer, a clearly worded Diversity Statement can formally establish a fleet's

related values in a couple of sentences. That in turn can be used as a test for any business practice or policy.

There are a number of new resources that can help to ensure the commitment involves more than words on a piece of paper. New modules in Your Guide to Human Resources, offered through the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, provide tools and templates to assist in recruiting, cultural awareness, orientation and integration of foreign trained truck drivers. A related Report for Employers on Hiring Immigrants and Temporary Foreign Workers delivers



step by step guidance for federal and provincial government immigration programs, processes, costs and timeframes.

Like any other effective recruiting effort, a strategy that reaches out to immigrants will also need to clearly show how candidates will feel welcome.

Targeted recruiting ads can reference policies that support a respectful workplace, the positive experiences of other immigrants, and related resources such as training in English as a second language. And immigrants who have management or supervisory experience from another country will certainly be interested in a fleet's potential career paths.

A number of targeted tools such as ethnic publications and websites can help to ensure these messages reach an appropriate audience, especially when reaching out to people who may not have considered a career in the trucking industry.

The use of a fleet's website as a recruiting tool will also play a leading role when delivering messages to recent immigrants. The web has been embraced by 78 per cent of immigrants

who have arrived in Canada within the last 10 years, according to Statistics Canada. That means it will be important to populate the site with a fleet's Diversity Statement, a list of Immigrant Serving Agencies that the company has worked with, or a summary of any Respect in the Workplace policies.

But as important as all these mediums can be, word of mouth remains a vital source of information for immigrants who establish strong connections in their respective ethnic communities. Combined with a referral bonus, existing employees may offer one of the best ways to reach out to families and friends as part of a recruiting strategy.

Collectively, they are steps that can help a fleet to realize all the benefits a diverse workplace can offer.

The future of the trucking industry depends on it.

*– Funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program, the Canadian Trucking HR Council (CTHRC) is an incorporated not-for-profit organizations that helps attract, train and retain workers for Canada's trucking industry. For more information, visit [www.cthrc.com](http://www.cthrc.com).*