



Good Employer Practices:

Attracting and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers
in Canada's Tourism Sector, Volume 2



CANADIAN TOURISM
HUMAN RESOURCE
COUNCIL

CONSEIL CANADIEN DES
RESSOURCES HUMAINES
EN TOURISME

emerit[®].ca



CANADIAN TOURISM
HUMAN RESOURCE
COUNCIL

CONSEIL CANADIEN DES
RESSOURCES HUMAINES
EN TOURISME



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
1. Why Develop a Compendium of Good Practices?.....	2
2. Why Focus on Internationally Trained Workers?.....	3
3. Good Employer Practices: The Case Studies.....	4
4. Good Practice Impacts, Elements and Learnings.....	23
5. Tips for Implementation	25
ANNEX A: Research Methodology	27
ANNEX B: News on Programs and Regulations—2012 Snapshot	29

This compendium was prepared for the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) under the direction of Emily Harrison. The report was researched and written by Sara Delaney and Denise McLean of Graybridge Malkam.

Steering Committee

Valuable direction, feedback and input to the compendium was provided by the following project Steering Committee members:

Margot Bowen; Product Innovation Manger	Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council
Kelly Pollack; Executive Director	Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia
Peter Paul; Project Leader, ALLIES	Maytree Foundation
Darlene Doerksen; Chief Executive Officer	Yukon Tourism Education Council

Industry and Other Stakeholders

The compendium was produced with the cooperation of stakeholders representing the tourism sector in communities across Canada, and organizations involved in promoting the employment of internationally trained workers. These include:

Karen Harrison	Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association
Peter Larose	go2 British Columbia
Akbar Khan	Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services, Nova Scotia
Lori Slobodian	Manitoba Tourism Education Council
Jan Rodda	Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council
Sheila Atkinson	Tourism Industry Association of New Brunswick
Kathy Livingstone	Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island

Good Practice Employers

The CTHRC gratefully acknowledges the support it received from employers and individual employees who willingly shared their experiences and committed their time, resources and enthusiasm to creating this second CTHRC Good Employer Practices Compendium.

Lydia Warkentin; Senior Executive Officer and Kirsten Godbout; Manager of Food Operations	Diversity Food Services; Winnipeg, MB
John Robertson; General Manager	Best Western Gold Rush Inn & Spa and High Country Inn & Yukon Convention Centre; Whitehorse, YT
Don Renshaw; Owner/Chief Executive Officer and Elena Andriyashyna; Business Development Manager	Renshaw Travel; Vancouver, BC
Newell Johnston; General Manager and Shannon Johnston; Event Coordinator	Asessippi Ski Area and Resort; Inglis, MB

1. Why Develop a Compendium of Good Practices?

The economic importance of the tourism sector in Canada is undeniable. The sector contributes as much to Canada's wealth as the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries combined, and employs more than 1.6 million people in Canada—or one in ten Canadian workers. Despite these positive trends, Canadian tourism employers face real and growing human resource challenges that must be addressed to ensure their sustainability and continued competitiveness.

Recruiting internationally trained workers (ITWs) is becoming an increasingly important strategy for tourism sector employers to find employees best suited to their needs. To ensure they open the door to this labour pool, employers must learn how to adapt their HR practices. Including ITWs in their recruitment efforts will help tourism employers maintain a stable workforce, which places them in a better position to welcome and serve the 16 million international tourists that Canada welcomes each year.



What is the Good Employer Practices Compendium?

Building on the success of its 2009 Good Employer Practices compendium¹, the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) is developing an additional set of case studies, with a focus on the practices of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The case studies describe practices that Canadian tourism SMEs have successfully implemented to recruit, integrate and retain internationally trained workers (ITWs). This document highlights the first set of case studies; the complete version will be released in Spring 2013.

Who Is It For?

The compendium was developed as a resource for Canadian tourism employers either currently or considering employing ITWs. Most tourism businesses are small or medium-sized: 77% have fewer than 20 employees; 21% have 20–99 employees; and just 2% have 100 or more employees. As such, this compendium was created to inspire and offer solutions to management and human resource professionals across the full range of tourism employers—with a focus on small to medium-sized enterprises.

In line with Industry Canada's definition, to be considered small to medium-sized, a company should have fewer than 500 employees. As identified by the North American Industry Classification System, a tourism employer is one that operates in any of the following five industry groups: food and beverage services; transportation; accommodations; recreation and entertainment; and travel services.

How Can it Help Tourism SMEs?

In combination with the first compendium, the case studies reflect the full diversity of the tourism sector—coast to coast to coast, and across the broad spectrum of activities. Its aim is to build capacity in the industry to attract and retain ITWs—an increasingly in-demand source of talent that will be tapped by employers from all sectors of the Canadian economy.

Tourism employers will learn about the variety of practices that can be implemented to attract and retain ITWs, regardless of their company's location, HR capacity, training and program budgets, or HR structure. Employers can consult these case studies for business-relevant ideas and inspiration for human resource solutions within the employers' own context.

¹ Available at http://employersofchoice.ca/en/success_stories/~/_media/Files/EOC/compendium/CTHRC_Good_Employer_Practices_ENG.aspx.

2. Why Focus on Internationally Trained Workers?

Who are Internationally Trained Workers?

Internationally trained workers are people who have pursued education and training in other countries and whose work experience was gained outside Canada. They may be:

- › immigrants
- › refugees
- › foreign students living in Canada
- › citizens of other countries willing and able to work in Canada
- › Canadians who trained or worked outside of the country²

DID YOU KNOW?

The tourism industry expected to face the most acute labour shortages over the long term is food and beverage services: by 2025 this industry could face a potential shortage equivalent to 142,000 full-year jobs.

Cooks, bartenders and program leaders and instructors in recreation and sport are among the top five occupations forecast to experience the greatest labour shortages.

Why are ITWs Important for Tourism?³

Tourism employers face increasing challenges recruiting and retaining the staff they need to operate effectively. Following are some key factors driving employers to actively include ITWs in their recruitment efforts.

Severe labour shortages

By 2025, the Canadian tourism sector's supply of labour could fall short of potential demand by an estimated 219,000 jobs, leaving up to one in ten jobs unfilled. Growing demand for labour in the sector, coupled with the departure of baby boomers from the workforce, means that Canadian tourism employers need to look further afield for talent.

Increasing reliance on immigrants as labour source

Immigration is projected to account for 100% of net growth in the Canadian labour force over the next decade. Furthermore, according to the 2006 Census, while 22% of the overall Canadian workforce is ITWs, the share of ITWs in the tourism labour force is 24%. This dependence will only accelerate as ITWs become a more significant proportion of the available labour pool. As a result, Canadian tourism employers will need to prepare and inform themselves so they can compete with other industries for this increasingly valuable source of talent.

Growing diversity of tourism customer base

From 2009 to 2010, visitors from emerging markets to Canada increased by 10.5%. Corresponding spending from this group also increased by 11.3%. Of the six markets identified, three (China, India and South Korea) are also among the top ten source countries of immigrants to Canada. Having multilingual employees who can understand the needs of customers from various cultures is a great asset to any tourism employer and enhances the level of customer service the business can provide.

² *Employer's Roadmap to Hiring and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers*. Foreign Credential Referral Office (FCRO). Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2010.

³ *The Future of Canada's Tourism Sector: Economic Recession only a Temporary Reprieve from Labour Shortages*. Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council. February 2010.

Newcomers to Canada Employed in Tourism. Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council. 2006

Tourism Snapshot: 2010 Year-in-Review. Canadian Tourism Commission. 2011.

3. Good Employer Practices: The Case Studies

What Are Good Employer Practices?

Good employer practices are policies or processes that:

- › are in place, actively implemented and used consistently
- › have had a demonstrated positive and tangible impact on the attraction and retention of ITWs within one business in the tourism sector
- › help an employer meet business objectives and break down employment barriers for ITWs
- › have proven to be valuable or effective for one employer, and may have applicability to others

How Were the Good Employer Practices Compiled?

The CTHRC acknowledges that many tourism employers across Canada already have good practices in attracting and retaining ITWs in place. For the purpose of this compendium, researchers engaged with the CTHRC's provincial and territorial partner human resource organizations (HROs) to identify employment leaders in the sector. As a secondary process, employers were identified using lists of best employer award programs and various media reports in the public domain.



In selecting employers, the research aimed to achieve representation of:

- › the sector's main industry groups (food and beverage services; transportation⁴; accommodations; recreation and entertainment; and travel services)
- › stages of the HR management life cycle
- › immigration and labour mobility programs
- › geographic location of tourism businesses

What Criteria Were Used to Select Good Employer Practices?

To be considered a good practice, an initiative should have met all, or most, of these key criteria:

Recognized	Practices have been independently confirmed to be in place and effective
Fair and equitable	Practices promote fair treatment and access to opportunity, accommodating for differences, as needed
Strategic	Practices have been introduced to help the employer meet its business objectives
Demonstrates return on investment (ROI)	Practices have produced positive outcomes for the employer
Engaged with the community	Practices support the integration of ITWs into the wider community
Sustainable and transferable	Practices, or elements thereof, have the potential to create lasting change, and be replicated by other employers with modification

For a full list of criteria and more information on the selection process, see Annex A.

⁴ Efforts will be made to include a case study from the transportation industry group for the second set of case studies, to be published in Spring 2013.

DIVERSITY

food services

Diversity Food Services Inc.,
Winnipeg, MB

Reflecting and Catering to the Needs of the Local Community

As part of its drive to renew its campus and make post-secondary education more accessible to the local community, the University of Winnipeg established Diversity Food Services—a unique social enterprise with a mandate to train and employ new Canadians and other inner-city residents while providing nutritious, affordable and culturally authentic food. With its diverse staff, 60% of whom are new Canadians, the University has managed to translate its ambitious goals into a profitable, award-winning food service operation.

PROFILE

Size: From a fledgling staff of 25, Diversity Food Services now employs just under 100 workers, over 60% of whom are ITWs.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women, ranging in age from 20 to mid-50.

Countries of origin: About 15 countries are represented among staff, including Burma, Cuba, India, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Moldavia, Nigeria, Philippines and Sudan.

Occupations: Line supervisor, cashier, line cook, server, bartender, barista, dishwasher, baker.

Immigration programs: Workers with Canadian permanent resident status, international students and refugees.

Great Employer

In 2009, the University of Winnipeg made the bold move to replace its cafeteria with an innovative concept in campus dining. Diversity Food Services is one social enterprise built around four unique food establishments: a coffee shop, a world fast-food outlet,

a cafeteria, and a full-service licensed restaurant. This operation—the first university-based service of its kind in Canada—promotes locally sourced and organic products as part of its socially responsible approach.

The idea first came about when, in 2006, SEED Winnipeg undertook a feasibility study to determine the viability of a food enterprise that would celebrate diversity in its menu and its staff. The study recommended the area in and around the University of Winnipeg as an ideal neighbourhood to locate such an enterprise. In 2008, the University recognized the need to develop new food options including a daily meal plan to accommodate students from all ethnic backgrounds who would be living in the new student residence. Together, these factors prompted the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) and SEED Winnipeg to partner to form Diversity Food Services.

By providing jobs to members of the surrounding diverse community—including internationally trained workers (ITWs)—this new initiative has simultaneously managed to break down barriers to employment for community members, build a workforce that reflects the community and student population it serves, and cater to the community's culturally diverse palate. The innovative approach paid off—in the first year food sales increased by 20% over the previous year.

To help both attract and retain its diverse staff of new Canadians, Aboriginal peoples, community residents and University students, Diversity Food Services is committed to providing quality jobs, a respectful workplace, training and development, and eventual ownership opportunities for its employees. Diversity Food Services has been recognized for both its commitment to sustainability and food quality as demonstrated in the following awards:

- › 2010 *Winnipeg Iron Chef Competition*
- › 2010 *Manitoba Excellence in Sustainability Award*, which recognizes Manitobans who embrace the spirit and principles of sustainable development; Diversity Food Services was recognized for its “accomplishments and efforts and commitment to sustainability” in the area of education
- › Food Matters Manitoba's 2010 *Golden Carrot Award*; the company was acknowledged for “helping to revolutionize campus food services at The University of Winnipeg, by providing sustainable, affordable, fair and delicious foods”⁵

⁵ University of Winnipeg News. “Diversity Foods Wins 3rd Major Award”. November 25, 2010. <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/uw-news-action/story.464/title.diversity-foods-wins-3rd-major-award>

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

“SEED has connected us with many local agencies that work with new Canadians. We now send our job postings to these agencies, and do our own interviews with job candidates. We have become well-known as an employer that hires people from different backgrounds, and often receive many applications per job.”

Lydia Warkentin, Senior Executive Officer

Great Practices

As part of its commitment to creating a viable, sustainable enterprise, Diversity Food Services has implemented a range of practices that break down cultural, language and work experience barriers, enabling it to leverage the talents of its employees. These practices facilitate:

- › a cooperative and diverse work environment that supports and challenges individual employees to bring their best to work each day
- › opportunities to develop new skill sets and build long-term capacity
- › participation in decision-making and opportunities for ownership

Recruitment and Staffing

Diversity Food Services has intentionally designed its recruitment processes to attract a wide range of talent from the local community. It is explicit and public about its commitment and it has created an active successful partnership with SEED Winnipeg to make this commitment a reality:

- › To attract a wide range of talent, Diversity Food Service’s job postings include its clear commitment to diversity: *“Diversity Food Services is committed to the principles of employment equity and diversity and will undertake such practices and special measures to improve opportunity for under-represented groups and promote an equitable workplace environment.”*
- › SEED Winnipeg connects management with other local agencies with which the company has posted jobs and sourced many employees with great success.

Integration and Development

Diversity Food Services’ strong commitment to integrating its workers begins early in the hiring process. Sensitive to the barriers and challenges faced by newcomers to Canada, Diversity Food Services starts by offering pragmatic support and information:

- › Management spends time with each new employee, explaining the benefits package offered and how to access it.
- › Employees are provided with slip-free work shoes (thanks to the support of an external business), which means workers do not need to purchase their uniform from their first paycheque, as is the case in many other businesses. This small gesture has been very well received by workers.
- › Newcomers continue their relationship with SEED and are offered support with practical life tasks such as setting up a bank account for their paycheques, etc.

Ongoing training and development are valuable benefits of working at Diversity Food Services. Very few new hires have previous training in their home countries in food and beverage service, so Diversity Food Services begins their training with the basics required for each position. But the learning does not stop there; management also ensures that each person has an individual development plan and that opportunities are made available for career growth and development of broader business skills. The main components of Diversity Food Services’ training include:

- › **An intensive, four-week training program in both industry and business skills for entry-level staff, delivered in-house prior to starting work.** It covers areas such as customer service, time management skills, hygiene, kitchen equipment usage, safe food handling, cashier duties as well as meal preparation. Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Employment Manitoba and the United Way have generously provided funding for the training program.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA PROGRAM

Full-time international students in Canada with a valid Study Permit may be eligible to work under one of the following programs:

- › on campus without a work permit
- › for 20 hours per week during the regular academic year and up to 40 hours per week during school breaks with an Off-Campus Work Permit
- › in co-op programs, either on- or off-campus with a Co-op Work Permit
- › upon graduation with a three-year open work permit through the Post-Graduation Work Program (students must have completed a program of at least eight months in length)

Contact your local immigration office for more details.

- › **emerit Tourism Essentials and Canadian Workplace Essentials training programs.** These programs, developed by the CTHRC, are delivered by the Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC).
- › **Job-specific language skills training.** Again, with SEED support, Diversity Food Services makes use of SEED’s EAL (English as an Additional Language) specialist, who works on the floor with individual employees to explain, for example, differences between “chop”, “dice”, and “slice”, and who conducts a weekly class with a small group of employees during the last few hours of their shift.
- › **An individualized and intentional personal and employment development strategy with goals and plans to achieve them.** The organization works with each person to develop a detailed and personalized plan. Employees are asked about their hopes and where they see themselves going, and are advised on which skill sets they should build to achieve this.

Retention

The management at Diversity Food Services recognizes that making the effort to create an environment where every person is treated with respect and whose skills are valued is worthwhile, as it leads to happier, more motivated workers who want to stay. This, in turn, not only saves in recruitment and training costs, but also improves the quality of service delivered to customers. The management team has worked to develop its management practices and communication skills to effectively lead and motivate a diverse workforce.

The organization consistently promotes the importance of a respectful workplace, with a particular focus on managing differences.

- › Employee orientation emphasizes organizational values such as diversity, respect, community, sustainability, social responsibility, and a caring work environment.
- › “Build a TEAM Culture—Teambuilding & Conflict Resolution” training is provided through MTEC to all staff to help employees learn how to communicate differences and concerns in a respectful and straightforward manner.
- › Managers are trained on techniques based on service leaders’ best practices via MTEC’s MANITOBA BEST Managing Service Excellence.
- › Management staff are trained on working with people from different cultures—including what it means to be a new Canadian, language and cultural barriers faced, and how to address them. The partnership with SEED was helpful in developing and delivering this training.
- › The organization aims to create a space for learning where people respect not only co-workers and others in the workplace, but also vendors and the broader community.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

“In my last job I worked in a Chinese restaurant. When I first started at Diversity Foods I worked as a Cook, and I am now the Stir-Fry Supervisor. I really like working here—it is very interesting as there are people from lots of different countries, foods from different cultures and we have a great supervisor. We receive a lot of training, which is very helpful. At the start I was trained on food service, cutting and stir fry. During quieter periods, SEED provides us with additional training. Next month we will learn about working in a multicultural workplace, customer service, EAL (English as an Additional Language) and teambuilding. I have recommended it to some of my friends as a good place to work—a few are being interviewed today for a job!”

Biding Xu, Stir-Fry Supervisor

For Diversity Food Services, a successful organization is built upon an engaged and committed workforce. The management team has found that the simple practices of ongoing communication and maintaining personal connections with individual workers are highly effective in making employees feel recognized and valued.

- › Management staff use a participatory management style, regularly encouraging workers to voice their opinions and talk about what’s important to them.
- › Managers invite employees to propose their own ideas for menu items. In one case, an employee from India who had won a curry cook-off in the city had one of her dishes featured for a week.
- › Efforts to fully engage all staff are enhanced by active and vocal support from senior leaders within Diversity Food Services and University administration. Senior university leadership has also promoted Diversity Food Services externally. The Board is described as very strong, caring and involved. The Executive Manager of Operations actively promotes mentoring of junior staff through frequent visits with staff members and taking time to offer advice and answer any questions.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

“We quickly realized that a candidate’s personality can compensate for gaps in language skills. It’s amazing how far a gesture and a smile can go when communicating directly with customers.”

Kirsten Godbout, Manager of Food Operations

Great Results

The company credits its diverse staff with giving it the capacity to:

- › engage and reflect the incredible diversity of ethnicity and culture present in the University of Winnipeg community and its surrounding neighbourhoods
- › provide quality food that reflects the rich diversity of cultures on campus
- › create a work culture of innovation and vitality that leverages the range of perspectives and approaches to work that employees bring

Diversity Food Services attributes its employee retention rate of over 50% in large part to its focus on creating an inclusive workplace, and offering training and benefits to staff.

Regarding next steps, Diversity Food Services is currently developing a catering service for the broader community, in which many ITW staff members are involved.

With one ITW supervisor already in place, Diversity Food Services plans on training and developing other interested workers from diverse backgrounds for management roles.



EMPLOYER TIPS

Create an inclusive work environment, and provide benefits and training opportunities to improve retention.

Partner with community organizations to access funding and support, such as language training.

Garner support from senior management, as it is crucial for employee retention.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
Canadian Workplace Essentials (CWE)	Training module designed to inform new employees about the ten critical soft skills most tourism employers in Canada look for in new hires. People who complete the training and successfully challenge the exam will receive a CWE certificate.	Delivered through regional tourism human resource organizations (HROs) – see http://cthrc.ca/en/about_cthrc/local_contacts
emerit HR Toolkit	Provides the ready-made tools needed to recruit, select, hire, train, coach and manage employees effectively.	http://emerit.ca/en/business_tools/hr_toolkit
emerit Training and Certification	Products are based on emerit National Occupational Standards, and are designed to help candidates master the skills and knowledge required to pass certification exams for a range of tourism occupations.	http://emerit.ca/en/emerit_training



GOLD RUSH INN
 Spa & Conference Centre

Best Western Gold Rush Inn & Spa and the High Country Inn & Yukon Convention Centre, Whitehorse, YT

Yukon Nominees: Key Ingredients in a Recipe for Success

Unable to fill a number of its vacancies from the labour pool in Yukon and the rest of Canada, management at the Best Western Gold Rush Inn and the High Country Inn in Whitehorse turned to the Yukon Nominee Program. Participation in the program has enabled the hotels to maintain a stable staff who bring not only solid experience and skills but also a conscientious attitude and great pride in their work.

PROFILE

Size: Up to 130 staff, of whom half were born outside Canada.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women, mostly in the age range of 20 to 40.

Countries of origin: 26 different countries, including Philippines, Germany, Brazil, Vietnam, France, Japan and Thailand.

Occupations: Various roles, including accountant, housekeeping, front desk agent, dishwasher, food prep, chef, line cook.

Immigration programs: Yukon Nominee Program, Student Work Abroad Program, workers in Canada with permanent resident status.

Great Employer

The Best Western Gold Rush Inn and the independent High Country Inn are full-service hotels located in historic downtown Whitehorse, offering food and beverage services, a spa, accommodations, and convention and meeting space. Owned and operated by Northern Vision Developments LP (NVD), a leading real estate development and property management company in Whitehorse, the hotels employ approximately 130 staff, of whom over half are internationally trained workers (ITWs).

In 2008, after facing ongoing challenges to maintain a stable employee roster and feeling they had exhausted the available labour pool both in the Yukon and nationally, the two hotels tapped into the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP). The hotels made use of two of the YNP's three streams: the Critical Impact Worker stream, for semi-skilled jobs, and the Skilled Worker stream. Like other provincial nominee programs offered across the country, the YNP is industry-driven and assists employers in fulfilling their labour needs more quickly by nominating potential qualified immigrants to fill full-time, year-round positions that they cannot fill from the territorial or national labour market.

In the past three years, the hotels have hired close to 30 ITWs in a range of roles and skill levels through the YNP, and are now two of the biggest program participants in the territory. Management credits ITWs with exhibiting a great work ethic that is contagious amongst other employees, as well as fostering a culture of respect and pride in one's work throughout the organization. ITWs have brought a range of international experience, multilingual capabilities and a strong commitment to their employer—manifesting in a retention rate of over 80%. Building upon this success, the hotels have also employed many ITWs already working or studying in Yukon or elsewhere in Canada. The majority of the two hotels' ITWs have applied for permanent resident status and plan to stay working and living in Yukon.

The Best Western Gold Rush Inn and the High Country Inn are part of a family of hotels that have been recognized for the quality of the service they offer. For example:

- ▶ The Gold Rush Inn's Gold Pan Saloon was recognized by the Globe and Mail as one of the "Best Bars across Canada".
- ▶ In 2008, the High Country Inn was nominated for the *Golden Bravo Award*, which is presented to a Yukon service provider that exceeds client expectations and provides outstanding service in the Meetings and Convention market.
- ▶ In 2011, Northern Vision Developments LP was awarded the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce *Business of the Year* award.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

“Our internationally trained workers may come from different cultures, with different languages and different perspectives, but they all have one thing in common: they are all hard-working.”

John Robertson, General Manager

Great Practices

Management has initiated several of its own practices as well as taken advantage of external programs to strengthen its HR practices to recruit and retain ITWs.

Recruitment and Staffing

The two hotels are a model of success for the Yukon Nominee Program. Through the use of the YNP and ongoing advice offered by the Yukon Government Department of Advanced Education, the hotels’ recruitment process unfolded as follows:

- › After advertising available positions in local and national media for six weeks without success, and documenting their efforts, the hotels applied to hire foreign workers through the YNP.
- › In sourcing ITW candidates, management did not have to make many additional recruitment efforts. The hotels received applications from ITWs both within and outside Canada who heard about the job openings through word of mouth from current ITW employees who are friends or family members, or through other ITWs in the Yukon region. Others applied in response to advertisements placed on online job boards, such as YuWin, the Job Bank or H Careers.
- › The General Manager interviewed potential candidates by phone and references were checked, sometimes with the help of a current employee who speaks the language of the candidate’s country. As part of the YNP application, ITWs from most countries must provide proof that they possess the language proficiency level required for the position for which they are applying. As a result, the phone interview provides insight as to whether the worker will likely meet the required standard and if it is worthwhile to pursue the nomination on the candidate’s behalf.

- › Once the job offer is made and the work visa has been issued, the hotel owners, as the employer, cover the costs of travel to Whitehorse and medical insurance for the first three months, until the worker is eligible for territorial health care coverage. Visa processing times vary according to the country of origin of the worker and volume of applications received, but the typical processing time for Skilled Worker and Critical Impact Worker applications is six weeks from receipt of a complete application and required back-up documentation.
- › As an added benefit, the hotels provided accommodations to new employees for up to two months, as needed, before they secured their own.
- › Through job fairs organized by Yukon Advanced Education, and the English as a Second Language Program at Yukon College, the two hotels recruited several ITWs who were already living in Canada. The population of permanent residents has been steadily growing in the territory in recent years. From 2006–2011, Yukon’s population grew at double the rate of the previous five years, from 5.9% to 11.6%. This rise is related to the growing number of immigrants and non-permanent residents, as well as gains in Yukon’s migratory exchanges with Canada’s other provinces and territories.⁶

ABOUT THE NOMINEE PROGRAM

Nominee programs vary across the country, but a snapshot of how they generally work is provided below:

- › The employer identifies an ITW candidate, and submits an application for the individual to be nominated.
- › If successful, the provincial/territorial government issues letters of recommendation for a work permit and permanent resident status, which generally speed up processing times.
- › The nominee uses these letters to apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for a temporary work permit, which allows the nominee to work for the employer for two years, during which time the nominee can also apply for permanent resident status.

Contact your local immigration office for more details.

⁶ Statistics Canada. *The Canadian Population in 2011: Population Counts and Growth: Population and dwelling counts, 2011 Census*. 2012.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

“Canada, and especially the Yukon, has very many different opportunities to offer. Having researched the Yukon and my employer, I knew this was both the place for me and a lifetime chance to excel in my career. My employer was most supportive—he helped me through the provincial nominee program process, took the time to introduce me to new staff members at work, and helped me grow and improve.”

Joanna Mumar, Guest Services

Integration and Development

Hotel management places high priority on welcoming ITWs to both the workforce and the wider community to help them adapt quickly to their new environment.

- › Emphasis is placed on creating a welcoming environment for all new employees, even those who already have family and friends in town. Management tries to partner new ITW staff with experienced staff for work orientation. In addition to the on-the-job training they provide, these work “buddies” also become great assets in helping new employees feel comfortable in their new home.
- › To create an inclusive work culture, management makes a concerted effort to speak openly and frequently with staff about the various cultural and religious holidays of all staff, and accommodates the need for time off for observing such events.

Providing access to language training and ongoing skills development helps the two hotels to enhance their employees’ ability to serve customers and be productive members of the workforce.

- › To help employees improve their language skills, hotel management urges staff to take advantage of the free English as a Second Language programs offered at the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the territorial government. In addition, every effort is made to adjust staff schedules so employees will be able to attend all classes.
- › Many ITWs participate in the Ready-to-Work Program, which offers a variety of training including Tourism Essentials and additional workshops such as Human Rights & Responsibilities, FoodSafe Level 1, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System, First Aid/CPR Level C, Welcome Yukon, Résumés & Interviews, Passport to Safety, Canadian Workplace Essentials and National Occupational Knowledge in the occupation of their choice.

- › Employees at the Best Western Gold Rush Inn can access online professional development training in several languages through the “Best Western University”. Many courses are available, including one on cultural sensitivity.
- › In partnership with Frontier College, the hotels are inaugural corporate participants in the new national Workplace Literacy & Essential Skills Training program. This program places college tutors-trainers in businesses across the country, focusing on high-needs sectors and with particular attention to Aboriginal and new immigrant workers. Two workplace tutors offer customized one-on-one tutoring, mentoring and other educational support to employees at the hotels. The tutors’ salaries are subsidized by up to 50% with funding support from the Government of Canada’s Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.

Retention

The hotel owners recognize that a long-term, stable workforce is a cornerstone for a successful business. Improved retention not only saves the employer recruitment and training costs, but also allows it to develop and build employee skills in order to provide better customer service. Open communication, ongoing feedback, and attentive and prompt management are credited for the company’s 80% retention rate of its ITW staff.

- › Management at both hotels are proud of the respectful workplace culture currently in place. They are conscious and attentive to resolving any issues promptly to maintain this positive work environment.
- › The organization sets a goal of conducting performance reviews twice a year with staff.
- › Management places high priority on providing ongoing feedback and welcoming two-way, open communication with all employees.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

“Workers from foreign countries who have already settled and made a home in the Yukon have been the greatest source of success for us in finding suitable workers. They also assist in the transition of the Yukon Nominee Program workers to their new Yukon home.”

John Robertson, General Manager

They also encourage staff to “bring their whole selves to work” and share their unique skills and aspects of their culture with colleagues.

- › Staff at the Best Western Gold Rush Inn held a party at the end of the summer season for all housekeeping staff, offering a potluck buffet with many foods from staff members’ countries of origin.
- › Chefs are encouraged to make dishes from their own country for staff meals to give them an opportunity to share their cuisine with colleagues. Staff meals also take into account dietary restrictions of various cultures and religions among staff by, for example, providing meals without pork or alcohol as well as vegetarian options.



Great Results

Management at the two hotels highlight the following key benefits of employing ITWs:

- › About 50% of tourists staying at the hotels are visiting from foreign-speaking countries. Having a multilingual staff who can communicate with many guests in their own language only improves the level of service offered.
- › The majority of ITWs are very well educated, well qualified for their jobs, and have a range of experience that enhances their job performance.
- › The diverse staff members work well together—complementing each other’s strengths—and are very respectful of one another.
- › ITWs employed have been conscientious and hard-working, and take great pride in their job. This attitude has permeated the organization and trickled down to all employees.

The Best Western Gold Rush Inn and the High Country Inn plan to continue hiring and developing international workers. Employing ITWs has enabled this hotel family to maintain a strong, stable staff that delivers high quality, dedicated, multilingual customer service to travellers to the Land of the Midnight Sun.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
Employer’s Roadmap to Hiring and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers	Covers how to recruit, integrate and retain internationally trained workers. Also includes information on national and regional resources to support employers.	http://www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/index.asp
emerit National Occupational Standards (NOS)	National Occupational Standards outline the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be considered competent in an occupation. The NOS serve as the basis of every <i>emerit</i> Professional Certification program. They are the country’s most comprehensive standards for more than 40 tourism and hospitality occupations.	http://emerit.ca/en/free_downloads/occupational_standards
Ready To Work: <i>emerit</i> Tourism Essentials	A tourism internship program that provides job readiness and career planning to unemployed and underemployed people in Canada. Participants who successfully challenge the exam will receive the <i>emerit</i> Tourism Essentials Certificate.	http://cthrc.ca/en/programs_services/ready_to_work



EMPLOYER TIPS

Before recruiting externally, look at the skills and talent within the current internal ITW employee base first—many may have transferable skills from their home country that could build on their current industry knowledge and be put to great use in a new role.

Take advantage of the resources and support offered without charge by the regional and federal immigration departments. [For print version: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/hire/index.asp>]

Simple, cost-effective practices can create an environment that engages staff and makes them want to stay, such as:

- › taking the time to make new employees feel welcome and helping them settle in
- › encouraging chefs to cook their own home cuisine for staff lunches
- › acknowledging staff members' cultural and religious holidays
- › being attentive, and encouraging ongoing and open communication

RENSHAW TRAVEL

Renshaw Travel, Vancouver, BC

Unique Destination Knowledge of ITWs Helps Travel Agency Expand its Business

Specializing in à-la-carte vacations for the increasingly diverse market of luxury travellers, Renshaw Travel recognizes the competitive advantage that a multilingual staff with in-depth destination knowledge offers. The specific skill set the agency's well-travelled internationally trained workers (ITWs) bring to the business has enabled it to not only provide an outstanding level of service but also expand its business to new markets.

PROFILE

Size: Approximately 20 full-time employees in the head office in Vancouver, and seven independent agents across BC—almost 50% are ITWs.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women aged 20 to 80.

Countries of origin: Over 10 countries are represented among staff, including Argentina, China, Egypt, Germany, Korea, Japan, Russia and the United Kingdom.

Occupations: Travel advisor (various specializations, such as FIT Europe: Luxury Hotel Specialist; Japan Travel Specialist; China, Luxury Cruise, Vacation and Group Travel Specialist; Health Tourism Specialist; South America, Luxury Cruise & Yacht Specialist).

Immigration programs: Workers with Canadian permanent resident status, temporary foreign workers, international students.

Great Employer

Renshaw Travel is a family-operated travel agency in the heart of Kitsilano, Vancouver, BC with extensive expertise in the luxury travel market. It caters to both Canadian travellers and international tourists visiting Canada.

The Renshaw family has been in the travel industry for over 60 years, and has long recognized the benefits of hiring international talent. Among its team of 20 in-house travel advisors and seven independent agents across the province, nearly half are ITWs.

With its focus on developing uniquely designed trips, Renshaw Travel has benefitted from the multilingual capabilities and firsthand destination knowledge of its ITW staff.

For example, on staff is a Japan Travel Specialist who brings an intimate knowledge of Japan—its cities, culture and transportation—as well as a passion for that same nation that is her home country. Such expertise proves invaluable in ensuring a traveller's excursion to Japan will provide memories of a lifetime. Another travel advisor, from Egypt, speaks four languages; another, from Argentina, speaks five. This allows Renshaw Travel to converse with clients in their own language, thereby providing a personalized level of service, as well as the ability to communicate directly with vendors in destination countries.

Employees report that the diversity present in the office creates a vibrant work environment, and that team members' differing approaches to customer service present a learning opportunity for all.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"Having a diverse staff with a wide range of skills, abilities and approaches to customer service has enabled us to offer an exceptional level of personal service to our clients."

Don Renshaw, Owner/Chief Executive Officer

Renshaw Travel has employed ITWs who are permanent residents as well as international students. It has also employed several individuals who worked for a few years in Canada and then continued to work for Renshaw Travel as agents and local travel guides after returning to their home countries.

The company has been recognized for its high standards of service, as demonstrated by its membership in the following invitation-only travel consultant networks:

- › The Virtuoso Network, an organization that comprises over 330 agencies with more than 7,200 elite travel advisors in 20 countries. Only 1% of travel agencies in the world are members.
- › Preferred Partner of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, an exclusive network of high-end travel consultants from around the world. Renshaw Travel is one of only four members in Canada.
- › The Orient-Express Bellini Club, an exclusive network of top Orient-Express ambassadors from around the world, of which Renshaw Travel is one of only two in Canada, and 80 worldwide.

Great Practices

As a small company, Renshaw Travel has developed several simple yet effective processes for recruiting and training its invaluable ITW talent.

Recruitment and Staffing

Due to the nature of its business and the diversity of its clientele, the company explicitly targets ITWs in its recruitment efforts.

- › Renshaw Travel uses its networks effectively to find new talent. It explicitly asks employees for personal referrals and leverages its membership in the Virtuoso Travel Network to advertise positions.
- › The company also recruits ITWs through a successful internship program it has established with the Vancouver Tourism College. Three-month internships are offered to tourism graduates. This provides Renshaw Travel with an opportunity to help a graduate learn the business while it assesses the individual's skills and suitability to become a permanent employee. Renshaw Travel has previously employed interns from Germany, Korea and several countries in Eastern Europe.
- › Renshaw Travel is open to training new employees on the specifics of the travel business. In selecting candidates, the company prioritizes destination knowledge and a passion for travel over prior travel agency experience.

ABOUT THE FEDERAL SKILLED WORKER PROGRAM (FSWP)

The FSWP is a federal program through which foreign citizens can apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to immigrate or become permanent residents. Some highlights include:

- › Skilled workers are selected as permanent residents based on their education, work experience, knowledge of English and/or French, and other criteria.
- › Many employers make use of this program in conjunction with the Temporary Foreign Worker and Provincial Nominee Programs in order to fill full-time positions.
- › Employers apply to Service Canada, who assess the employer's job offer. CIC is responsible for the employee's part of the process.

The rules for this program are complex and can change from time to time. Consult CIC for the latest information.
<http://www.cic.gc.ca>



EMPLOYER TIPS

Recognize and show interest in each employee's background and unique skills.

Create an atmosphere of openness to diverse ways of completing tasks.

Be supportive of each employee's creativity and personal expression.

Encourage open and ongoing communication with individual employees.

Integration and Development

Once Renshaw Travel has hired a new ITW employee, management and colleagues step in to train and mentor the individual on industry specifics.

- › To help new employees succeed, Renshaw's early training includes a clear explanation of the company's expectations and core corporate standards.
- › The company promotes an open, collaborative environment to make learning easier. Over the years, Renshaw Travel has found that some of the best methods to train new staff are through job shadowing and encouraging employees to ask questions. This culture is supported by an open concept office where all staff can see one another and communicate easily.

Retention

Renshaw Travel benefits from employees who are highly engaged and committed, and from a stable workforce. This is achieved through:

- › a flexible company culture where each employee is given the space to work independently, to be creative and to exercise his or her own individual style in developing campaigns
- › management's active and frequent recognition of the unique talents of employees, and its encouragement of learning and information sharing between staff members

Due to the reputation of the company and its work culture, Renshaw Travel has no challenges attracting staff or meeting its labour needs. It has low turnover; it is a workplace where "people stay until they retire".

Great Results

Having such diverse skill sets in-house enables Renshaw Travel to:

- › use insider destination connections to create vacations that meet the unique needs, preferences and interests of the luxury traveller
- › communicate and build close relationships with vendors in destination countries, including hotels, guides and drivers, and immigration officials for visa support assistance
- › serve its diverse clientele in each client's own language—as Japanese and Russian travellers to Canada are key client groups, the company has even developed a version of its website in both languages to better serve these travellers to Canada

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"The owner of our company is proud of the diversity among our staff. When clients visit the office he brings them around and introduces all staff members and their backgrounds with great enthusiasm. This helps create a very positive environment."

Elena Andriyashyna; Business Development Manager

Renshaw Travel aims to increase the diversity of its staff and expand its areas of specialization to new countries and regions, thus contributing to further business growth.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
Career Edge	Career Edge connects multi-sector businesses with diverse, qualified talent through innovative paid internship programs.	https://www.careeredge.ca
Labour Market Information	Reports provide employment statistics, including supply and demand analysis, for each of the industry groups included in the tourism sector.	http://cthr.ca/en/research_publications/labour_market_information
Recruiting, Retaining and Promoting Culturally Different Employees	An easy-to-read book with many tips and resources.	La Roche, Lionel and Rutherford, Don. Elsevier Inc Publisher. Oxford UK. 2007



Meeting Seasonal Staffing Needs with Young Temporary Workers

Faced with the challenge of filling its seasonal labour needs, in 2009 Asessippi Ski Area & Resort began tapping into the talents of temporary workers from Australia and New Zealand. The positive enthusiasm and strong work ethic of this labour source, and the workers' engagement with the entire workforce, has resulted in a commitment by the company to continue and expand this initiative.

PROFILE

Size: 14 full-time core staff, rising to 200 employees during peak ski season.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women, ranging in age from 20 to 29.

Countries of origin: Mainly Australia and New Zealand.

Occupations: Outdoor jobs, such as lift operator and snowboard instructor; indoor jobs at reception, ticket sales, rental shop and kitchen.

Immigration programs: Working Holiday Program.

Great Employer

Established in 1999 by a group of local investors, the Asessippi Ski Area & Resort has become a booming business that attracts up to 100,000 visitors each winter. With 25 runs and the capacity to handle 1,800 skiers per day, the resort is located in the middle of the Asessippi Provincial Park, overlooking the 42-km-long Lake of the Prairie. The playground of choice for many Manitoba and Saskatchewan skiers and snowboarders, the resort area also offers summer visitors hiking, biking and kayaking activities.

As a rural operation, Asessippi faced issues attracting and retaining the seasonal staff it needed from the small local labour force. The General Manager (GM) then heard about the International Exchange Program (IEP), a non-profit work and travel provider that specializes in sending young Australians and New Zealanders on working holidays overseas. After further research, Asessippi joined a group of Canadian winter employers heading to Australia in August 2009 to recruit for the upcoming ski season. As a participant in the IEP's Work & Ski Canada Job Fairs, the GM had the opportunity to meet and conduct on-the-spot interviews with job candidates in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The GM was able to hire the complement of staff needed for the season before returning to Canada.

Once home, the General Manager and his team coordinated travel arrangements, and the internationally trained workers (ITWs) arrived to settle in and begin training just before the resort opened for the season. The experience of the first season was a success—the quality of work, innovative approach to tasks, and great work ethic (which rubbed off on the workforce as a whole) prompted Asessippi to recruit ITWs again, not only in Australia but also in New Zealand to meet its seasonal worker needs. Workers have been employed in all positions at the resort in its peak winter season, from December to April, and some even stay for the summer season as part of their 12-month working holiday visa. Asessippi's reputation as a good employer was shared by workers upon their return home, and in subsequent years the company has been approached directly by young workers from Australia and New Zealand who are interested in coming to work for the resort area.

The Manitoba Tourism Education Council has recognized the positive HR practices of Asessippi by awarding the company with the Tourism and Hospitality Success Award 2010 for supporting staff members through training.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"We're located in a small, remote town so it is important to be honest and upfront about the location, size of the area and the cold winter weather. We have found it useful to send pictures in advance, so the workers know what to expect and are as educated as possible."

Shannon Johnston, Event Coordinator



Great Practices

Based on its experience over the past few years, Asessippi has established several effective practices to build a successful relationship with seasonal staff. The company focuses on ensuring workers:

- › are well informed on what to expect with the job, such as location and weather
- › are provided with the appropriate training to equip them with the skills required to provide excellent service
- › are well integrated into the workforce and broader community
- › are recognized for the quality of their work

ABOUT THE WORKING HOLIDAY PROGRAM

International Experience Canada manages bilateral youth mobility agreements between Canada and over 30 countries to allow young people from around the world to travel and work in Canada. Details of the program include:

- › available to young people aged 18 to 35 from one of the 30 countries with an agreement with Canada
- › employers can hire workers without a Labour Market Opinion
- › workers receive a one-year open work permit or an employer-specific work permit; currently under a pilot project is a 24-month permit for Australians

See <http://www.international.gc.ca/experience> for more details.

Recruitment and Staffing

Through its affiliation with the IEP program, Asessippi has been able to take advantage of a well-organized, efficient structure to recruit its seasonal staff.

- › By tapping into the IEP program, Asessippi and its jobs are promoted on the IEP website; the resort area is also set up with a booth at a career fair for pre-scheduled interviews with candidates who are pre-screened by IEP. When Asessippi makes a job offer, the candidate has until the end of the day to decide whether or not to accept, at which point the contract is signed. IEP then provides ongoing pre-departure support to workers, such as helping them arrange a work visa and organizing their insurance and first night's accommodation in Canada. Workers can also choose to participate in a general orientation session on Canada once they arrive, offered by SWAP (Students Work Abroad Program), the Canadian counterpart of IEP, which offers practical information such as applying for a social insurance number and living in Canada.
- › As well as standard benefits such as free passes to the resort and meal and retail discounts, ITWs are also provided with accommodations and transportation to work. All seasonal workers are housed in the same facility, and a bus runs four times a day to and from the resort.
- › Asessippi staff prepare new workers by providing information by email—including photos—prior to arrival on how to equip themselves for the Manitoba winter.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"The seasonal workers are excited, and want to be here. When we bring them to a community event, such as ice-fishing, it is also an opportunity for local staff to take advantage of a new experience or revisit an old hobby."

Shannon Johnston, Event Coordinator

Integration and Development

Asessippi has established several simple practices that have been effective in helping ITWs feel welcome and become integrated into the broader community.

- › The Asessippi Event Coordinator travels to Regina to meet the workers when they arrive in Canada, and assists them in shopping for winter clothes. Upon arrival at Asessippi, the workers are shown around the resort and their accommodations, followed by a meet-and-greet event with all staff, including their direct managers and supervisors.
- › The Event Coordinator organizes social events, such as a staff night once a month as well as two staff parties during the season. ITW employees are also invited to become involved in the local community through visits to the local rink to learn how to curl and skate, hockey tournaments, gingerbread house-making events and ice-fishing. Asessippi makes good use of its Facebook page to keep workers up to date on activities.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

“Before we arrived, the people from Asessippi sent us lots of information so we knew what to expect when we arrived. My boss emailed to tell me all about herself and I did the same so we could start to get to know one another before we met in person. They also told us what we needed to bring and gave us an agenda, telling us who would pick us up, etc. At the start they also brought us to buy winter clothes, we went food shopping—which is very different here—and they helped us set up a bank account and get a SIN number. It was also helpful that they brought us in and gave us training before the ski hill opened. We had two days when we could get to know the hill, the equipment and other aspects of our job.”

Erin Bennett, Rental Technician

The company focuses on setting new employees up for success by providing orientation and training to perform their tasks well.

- › The GM conducts an all-day orientation session specifically for ITWs, during which information is provided on policies and procedures, the history of the resort, as well as information on the local area. The orientation is followed by job-specific and customer-service training with supervisors.
- › Asessippi allows ITW staff to participate—on company time—in the Manitoba Tourism Education Council’s (MTEC) three-hour customer service training program, Welcoming Service.

Retention

To help retain staff, Asessippi supports its managers in developing their capacity to manage teams. It also makes a point of recognizing the contributions of individual employees.

- › Asessippi works with MTEC to give management the tools to organize and motivate staff, along with communication and leadership skills training. Managers and supervisors have participated in MANITOBA BEST Managing Excellence, as well as a session on Handling Difficult Situations. Topics covered include managing employees with different learning styles, of various generations and cultural backgrounds, and overcoming language barriers with English as a Second Language (ESL) speakers.
- › Management recognizes an employee of the month, many of whom have been ITWs.
- › Asessippi has partnered with other local employers to “share” seasonal workers between various tourism businesses.

Great Results

The management at Asessippi highlight the following key benefits of working with ITWs:

- › ITWs they have hired are well educated and enthusiastic about the experience of working and living in Canada.
- › Their quality of work is “amazing” and they have a “great work ethic and maturity level, which steps up the work ethic in general.”
- › ITWs have brought fresh ideas and more efficient ways of doing tasks to the organization.
- › Having a more diverse staff has brought a positive dynamic to the workplace. Relationships among staff are very good and they “all learn from one another.”

Asessippi Ski Area & Resort plans to expand its available accommodations and increase the number of seasonal workers it will employ within the coming years. It also plans to extend its recruiting efforts to other countries.



EMPLOYER TIPS

Be explicit about working conditions, location and your expectations—norms from the ITWs’ home country might be very different.

Clarify any seasonal fluctuations in business that may impact employees’ hours.

If offering accommodations, house all workers in the same place. Employees feel they are being treated equally and it is easier to arrange transportation to and from work.

Bring workers into Canada as closely as possible to their starting date—if they arrive too early they may deplete their funds or feel isolated.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	National directory of immigrant-serving agencies (including language training and assessment).	http://www.servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca/browse.php
Guide to Screening and Selection in Employment	Covers legal rights, obligations and human rights legislation related to recruitment.	http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/publications/screening_employment-eng.aspx
Hire Immigrants	Tools, programs, webinars and videos for hiring and integrating new immigrant employees.	http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/ Local resources: http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/resources-tools/local-resources/

Overview of Good Practices

The case studies presented in this second compendium demonstrate a range of practices—most of them simple and cost-effective—that can help tourism employers create an environment that not only engages ITW staff but also benefits the entire workforce.

Good Practice Employer	Industry Group	Recruitment and Staffing	Integration and Development	Retention
Diversity Food Services, Winnipeg, MB	Food and beverage services	<p>Includes explicit commitment to diversity in job postings.</p> <p>Partners with immigrant-serving agency that has helped make connections with other community groups, through which many employees have been sourced.</p>	<p>Management spends one-on-one time with each new employee to help integration.</p> <p>Partner immigrant-serving agency supports employees with practicalities, such as setting up bank account, and provides job-specific language training.</p> <p>Offers in-house industry and business skills training funded through provincial government and local non-governmental organization.</p> <p>Offers <i>emerit</i> Tourism Essentials and Canadian Workplace Essentials training through local HRO.</p> <p>Takes individualized approach to training and development.</p>	<p>Orientation emphasizes core organizational values related to diversity, respect, community, sustainability, social responsibility and a caring work environment.</p> <p>Offers teambuilding and conflict resolution training for employees, and management skills and cultural training, through local HRO.</p> <p>Management actively promotes respect in the workplace, encourages employees' ideas and regularly engages with employees.</p>
Best Western Gold Rush Inn and High Country Inn, Whitehorse, YT	Accommodations	<p>Recruits internationally through the Yukon Nominee Program, as well as permanent residents and international students already in Canada.</p> <p>Recruits using employee referrals.</p> <p>Involves current employees who speak language of candidate in reference-checking.</p> <p>Provides accommodations for first two months if needed.</p>	<p>Management openly communicates about cultural holidays of staff and accommodates requests for time off.</p> <p>Encourages employees to participate in free English as a Second Language (ESL) programs offered through local college, and adjusts schedules, as possible, to facilitate this.</p> <p>Participates in the partially subsidized national Workplace Literacy & Essential Skills Training program to offer one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to employees.</p>	<p>Management is attentive to staff, their needs and any issues that arise.</p> <p>Conducts bi-annual performance reviews and offers ongoing feedback and promotes open communication.</p> <p>Holds multicultural buffets with staff and encourages ITW chefs to cook dishes from own country for staff meals.</p>

Good Practice Employer	Industry Group	Recruitment and Staffing	Integration and Development	Retention
Renshaw Travel, Vancouver, BC	Travel services	<p>Recruits using employee referrals, and through travel agency network and internship program with local college.</p> <p>Selects on basis of destination knowledge and passion for travel, and trains employees on industry skills required.</p>	<p>Explicit about company expectations and core corporate standards during orientation.</p> <p>Trains through job shadowing and encouraging an environment of open communication.</p>	<p>Encourages and provides flexibility for employees to complete tasks in own style.</p> <p>Encourages employees to share cross-cultural expertise.</p>
Asessippi Ski Area and Resort, Inglis, MB	Recreation and entertainment	<p>Recruits internationally through IEP program, which pre-screens and schedules interviews with candidates.</p> <p>Provides accommodations and transportation to and from work.</p> <p>Emails information on job and work environment to workers prior to departure for Canada.</p>	<p>Meets workers upon arrival in Canada.</p> <p>Provides orientation and job-specific training.</p> <p>Offers customer service training through local HRO.</p> <p>Organizes social and community events with all staff.</p>	<p>Participates in communication and leadership training through local HRO.</p> <p>Recognizes workers' efforts through Employee of the Month program.</p> <p>"Shares" workers with other local employers, depending on labour needs.</p>

4. Good Practice Impacts, Elements and Learnings

Impacts of Good Practices

Based on the small sample of tourism employers included in this research, following is a snapshot of key impacts these practices have had on these companies.

Enables employers to meet their labour needs with a viable supply of workers who:

- › are well educated, skilled and have a range of experience
- › are enthusiastic about the opportunity to work in Canada
- › deliver high quality work, and have a strong work ethic and pride in their job
- › bring fresh ideas and new approaches to work

Having a more diverse workplace has a positive impact on employee engagement and learning as a whole.

The multilingual abilities and knowledge of other cultures of ITW staff enhance an employer's ability to serve a diverse customer base.

The multilingual abilities of ITWs facilitate relationship-building with vendors overseas, and help in the recruitment of employees from the same background.

Elements of Good Practice

These good practices share several success factors. Tourism companies—particularly small and medium-sized—should keep these in mind when considering how to implement similar practices.

Build relationships with local immigrant-serving agencies, community organizations and colleges that can offer services to employers such as:

- Partnering**
- › sourcing and screening candidates
 - › integration and on-the-job training support
 - › free ESL/FSL training

Accessing governmental supports

Federal and provincial governments offer several supports to employers, such as:

- › assistance and advice on recruiting ITWs
- › grants for hiring and training
- › guides on how to utilize various immigration programs

Educating

Building the skills of both new employees and management can pay off in several ways:

- › employees can be trained using in-house methods such as an orientation program and job shadowing, or by ongoing external industry training and certification through the CTHRC-developed *emerit* program, delivered online or through local provincial/territorial HROs
- › supervisors and management can benefit from cost-effective and flexible *emerit* training offerings—on topics such as communication skills and managing a diverse workforce—delivered online or through local provincial/territorial HROs

Ensuring active management involvement

Management and business owners play a key role in setting the tone for a positive work environment, which has a major impact on employee retention. Simple methods to do this include:

- › taking the time to meet new employees, and helping them with training and settling in
- › recognizing and showing interest in each employee's background and unique skills
- › promoting open and ongoing communication with individual employees regarding their performance and development

Lessons Learned

Employers did face several challenges in implementing these practices, but successfully learned how to address them.

Challenge	Lesson learned
Seasonal international recruits require accommodations and transportation	For fairness, house all employees in the same facility. This also makes transportation easier; a bus or shuttle can be scheduled to pick up employees at a single location several times a day, or a car provided.
Cultural and communication style differences between staff members	Management should be attentive to employees and resolve any issues immediately. Training on managing a diverse workforce is available at low cost through local HROs.
Employees from same culture speak own language in groups in workplace	Educate all employees on issues of language and impacts on feeling of inclusion for co-workers, as part of creating a respectful workplace for all.
Some language barriers	On-the-job language training is available, often at no or low cost, through many local immigrant-serving agencies across the country.
Hard to find ITWs for management positions	Allow sufficient time and plan ahead to develop high potential staff. Many training programs are available at low cost through CTHRC's <i>emerit</i> program. In addition, look for hidden talent among current ITW employees; many have transferable skills or experience they may not have included in their résumés.

5. Tips for Implementation

The good practices outlined in this document serve to inspire tourism business owners to adapt their HR processes to be able to better attract and retain ITW talent.

In deciding how to benefit from the practices outlined, consider:

- › Are the success factors in place in your organization?
- › What do you need to do to be ready to adopt these practices?
- › How might you adapt these practices to your particular location or business context?
- › Whose support or guidance would be helpful?
- › How will you monitor the results?

Included in this compendium is a *Moving Forward to Implementation Worksheet* designed to help tourism business owners highlight which practice(s), or elements thereof, might meet their needs and can be adapted for particular circumstances.

In completing the worksheet, it may be useful to review the *Overview of Good Practices*, the *Good Practice Impacts, Elements and Learnings*, as well as the *Useful Resources* sections included with each case study. Another recommended resource is the first *Good Employer Practices Compendium*⁷, with its 12 case studies that describe how tourism businesses across Canada have applied their diversity practices to successfully recruit, integrate and retain ITWs.

The CTHRC will continue to support tourism employers with their human resource development activities, and invites you to check its website regularly for updates on new tools and resources being developed in support of a globally competitive and sustainable Canadian tourism sector.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2006, almost 25% of the people who worked in tourism were born outside of Canada and over 20% had a mother tongue other than English or French. Having a multilingual employee base can contribute to the quality of service Canadian tourism employers provide to their clientele.



⁷ Available at http://employersofchoice.ca/en/success_stories/~/_media/Files/EOC/compendium/CTHRC_Good_Employer_Practices_ENG.ashx.

Moving Forward to Implementation Worksheet

	Ways to enhance your practices	Resources you need
Recruitment and Staffing		
Integration and Development		
Retention		

ANNEX A:

Research Methodology

How Were Good Employer Practices Selected?

To be considered a good practice, an initiative should have met all or most of these criteria.

Recognized

- › Employer publicly acknowledges the importance of diversity.
- › It has been independently confirmed that the practices are in place and effective.

Fair and equitable

- › Practices address the needs of both the employer and workers at all levels.
- › Employer demonstrates fair and ethical treatment of workers including pay, training, advancement and equality in the workplace.
- › ITW employees are satisfied with their employment relationship.
- › Practices break down employment barriers for ITWs.

Strategic

- › Employer's good practices have been explicitly introduced to help it meet its business objectives.
- › Employer has developed and embraced a focus on diversity (either formal or informal) that is supported by the organization's leader(s).
- › Employer strategically targets ITWs for recruitment and retention for more than just entry-level positions.
- › Employer's practices address more than one stage of HR management life cycle.
- › Employer engages and informs all employees of the initiative and its business rationale, to promote their support and involvement.

Demonstrates ROI

- › Employer has developed a system to monitor and manage the results of diversity practices.
- › Employer can clearly articulate the positive impact of employing ITWs on its organization and business, such as improving service, quality, productivity or talent.
- › Evidence (quantitative or qualitative) exists that the good practice produces positive and tangible outcomes including the hiring and retention of ITWs, employee engagement, and some type of definitive positive impact.

Engaged with the community

- › Employer works within a broader community context, collaborating with other organizations to leverage resources in order to support integration of newcomers into the community and workplace.
- › Employer acts as a champion, creating a welcoming organization and thereby contributing to a broader welcoming community.

Sustainable and transferable

- › Practices have been effectively incorporated into the organization.
- › All or parts of the practice are replicable, portable and/or transferable to other organizations or localities with modification.
- › Practices have the potential to create lasting change, such as developing an ongoing pipeline of talent or a more inclusive workplace.

How Was the Research Conducted?

The research involved participating in a 30- to 45-minute telephone interview with a Graybridge Malkam consultant to share information on:

- › the organization's line of business and profile
- › challenges/opportunities that encouraged the organization to focus on ITWs
- › practices used for hiring/retaining ITWs, across all stages of the HR cycle
- › results and outcomes; recognition (if any)
- › what is seen as a key component to success
- › challenges or difficulties encountered when implementing these practices
- › lessons learned and next steps
- › any involvement in welcoming ITWs or new immigrants to the broader community
- › tips/advice organizations would give to other employers considering a similar practice

Information gathered during each interview was supplemented with content from the employer's website and other publicly available media.

Employers were also asked to put the researchers in touch with one of their ITW employees to gain a snapshot of his or her experience of being employed in the tourism sector in Canada.



ANNEX B:

News on Programs and Regulations—2012 Snapshot

Both the federal and provincial/territorial governments recognize the criticality of pending labour shortages, and the important role the tourism sector plays in economic growth. This is demonstrated by the announcement of a Federal Tourism Strategy by the Canadian government in 2011. Related policies and programs are evolving as a result. Employers should keep up to date on trends and opportunities in this area.

Provincial Nominee Programs Under Review

Provincial nominee programs allow provinces and territories to select individuals for permanent resident status in Canada. Each province determines its own criteria for selection based on its demographic and labour market needs and priorities. Once selected by a province, immigrants receive expedited permanent resident status as long as they meet federal health and security requirements. The federal government has been encouraging the growth of this program; it is estimated that about 40,000 immigrants were admitted to Canada via this program in 2011—five times more than the 8,000 welcomed in 2005. Nonetheless, a review is pending and employers would be wise to follow any changes. Consult the website of your provincial immigration ministry for more information.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/provincial/apply-who.asp>

Updates to Temporary Foreign Worker Program

In August 2011, Citizenship and Immigration Canada launched an 18-month pilot project in British Columbia that allows spouses, common-law partners and dependent children of most temporary foreign workers (TFWs) to receive open work permits that would authorize them to accept any job with any employer.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada also introduced new rules for the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program in 2011. Under these rules, TFWs can spend a maximum of four years in Canada, and then must leave for four years before re-applying for another four-year term. Previously, a permit issued for two years was renewable several times if the employer could prove the worker was needed. In addition, greater emphasis is now placed on employer compliance and enforcement mechanisms in the revised legislation. See <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/changes.asp> for more information.

New Provincial Supports for Immigrant Entrepreneurs

In 2011, through a partnership with the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council and the Government of Nova Scotia, credit unions began offering an Immigrant Small Business Loan Financing Program that aims to help immigrants who are interested in starting, expanding or buying a small business. Businesses with a liquor license (such as restaurants and cafes) are eligible if the majority of revenue (more than 50 percent) is from sources other than alcohol. See <http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/> for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

In October 2011, the Federal Tourism Strategy was officially launched.

The Strategy will help position Canada to take advantage of tourism growth opportunities, to increase tourism revenues, to create jobs in all regions of Canada, and to support an internationally competitive tourism sector.

It identifies four priorities:

- › increasing awareness of Canada as a premier tourist destination
- › facilitating ease of access and movement for travellers while ensuring the safety and integrity of Canada's borders
- › encouraging product development and investments in Canadian tourism assets and products
- › fostering an adequate supply of skills and labour to enhance visitor experiences through quality service and hospitality

See <http://www.tourism.gc.ca>