



Good Employer Practices:

Attracting and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers
in Canada's Tourism Sector, Volume 3



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Steering Committee

The project's Steering Committee members provided valuable direction, input and feedback.

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Good Practice Employers

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1. Why Develop a Compendium of Good Practices?

As described in the first and second volumes of this compendium, the tourism sector has an undeniable impact on Canada's economy. Tourism sector contributions equal those of the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries combined. One in ten Canadian employees works in the tourism sector—for a total of more than 1.6 million people in Canada. And yet, Canadian tourism employers face real, ongoing and increasingly challenging human resource issues that must be addressed to ensure sustainability and continued competitiveness.

One strategy that is proving effective is to recruit internationally trained workers (ITWs). Tourism sector employers can satisfy their human resource requirements by tapping into this particular labour pool, but they must learn how to adapt their HR practices in order to be successful. Recruitment efforts that include ITWs can help tourism employers maintain a stable workforce, which in turn better positions those employers 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 the first¹ and second² volumes of its Good Employer Practices compendium, the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) has developed a third set of case studies that focus on small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Like the second, this third volume highlights the successful practices that Canadian tourism SMEs have implemented to recruit, integrate and retain internationally trained workers.

Who Is It For?

All three volumes of the compendium are designed to serve 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 third volume was created to offer additional 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?

The three volumes together present a collection of case studies that reflect the full diversity of the tourism sector—coast to coast to coast, and across the broad spectrum of activities. The aim is to build capacity in the tourism sector to attract and retain ITWs—an increasingly in-demand source of talent that will soon 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_Vol_1.ashx

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

2. Why Focus on Internationally Trained Workers?

Who Are Internationally Trained Workers?

Internationally trained workers can be described as individuals who have sought training and education 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 country³

DID YOU KNOW?

The food and beverage services industry is expected to face the most acute labour shortages in the tourism sector over the long term. 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 be in greatest demand.

Why Are ITWs Important for Tourism?⁴

Recruiting and retaining sufficient staff to ensure smooth business operations is increasingly challenging for tourism employers. Several key factors driving employers to actively include ITWs in their recruitment efforts are outlined below.

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 a 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 ITWs make up 22% of the overall Canadian workforce, 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 a business can provide.

³ *Employer's Roadmap to Hiring and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers*. Foreign Credential Referral Office (FCRO). Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2010.

⁴ *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 recognizes that many tourism employers across Canada already have good practices in place to attract and retain ITWs. 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 tourism 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:

- › several of the sector's main industry groups (food and beverage services; 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
Demonstrated 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.



Bridgehead, Ottawa, ON

Coffeeshouses Leverage Advanced Transferable Skills, Multilingual Abilities and Mentorship Capacities of ITWs

With an aim of being relevant to its local community, Bridgehead followed the logical strategy of hiring internationally trained workers (ITWs) to better reflect its diverse customer base. After a couple of years with this approach, however, the company realized that ITW employees' unique advanced transferable skills, international experience, multilingual abilities and work ethic could be leveraged not only to enhance service but also to mentor and develop younger employees. Bridgehead also emphasizes training and offers an early career path to all employees. As a result, the coffee company has few problems with recruitment and retention.

PROFILE

Size: 275 employees, of whom approximately 40 are ITWs.

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

Countries of origin: About 20 countries have been represented among staff, including Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ethiopia, Germany, Haiti, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Rwanda, Tanzania, Tunisia and the UK.

Occupations: Barista Team Leader, Cook, Baker, Dishwasher/Prep Cook.

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

Great Employer

Bridgehead is an Ottawa-based company of coffee houses that specialize in fair-trade organic and shade-grown coffees and teas from small-scale farmers. With 15 coffee houses and one roaster facility in the city, the company strives to be a positive demonstration of social and environmental sustainability for the coffee industry both in Canada and beyond. The company's core values reflect this mission, and include a commitment to community building, a healthy, open and inclusive work environment, and the provision of ongoing education and growth opportunities for employees.

In the general coffeehouse workforce in Canada, many staff are Generation Y (or Gen Y) and university students. Bridgehead's labour mix was similar, and early on, management recognized the benefits they could reap from employing ITWs who possess a more diverse experience profile—including a range of cultures, languages and education levels, as well as approaches and attitudes to work. Bridgehead has found that ITWs bring not only a knowledge of various languages and understanding of different cultures to the table, but also a level of maturity and advanced skills, which the company has leveraged to educate and mentor its younger employees.

While some of Bridgehead's ITW employees are newcomers who have training and would like to advance their careers in the food and beverage industry, many are newcomers to Canada who are pursuing recognition of their credentials so they can work in the occupation they held in their country of origin—such as barristers, engineers, nurses and doctors. Although on the surface, these individuals appear to be “overqualified” and not likely to stay long, Bridgehead's experience states otherwise. The company has found that these ITW employees stay just as long as—if not longer than—university student employees. Bridgehead recognizes that employees stay approximately six to 18 months, and management purposefully builds this fact into their planning.

Bridgehead's model of hiring well-educated ITWs has been a win-win situation for both parties. By offering newcomers a chance to obtain Canadian experience, gain Canadian references, develop and apply leadership and other marketable skills, and build a network, Bridgehead makes use of valuable, skilled employees who offer a range of experience and transferable skills. For example, in 2011 Bridgehead employed an ITW from Germany, trained in law in an English-language university, who worked with the company for one year. During that time, Bridgehead was able to utilize the employee's German language knowledge to translate employee training materials for future German-speaking employees, and leverage his advanced English writing skills to develop other company materials. Another ITW employee ran her own café before coming to Canada, and has been applying her advanced customer service skills to Bridgehead's benefit for the past three years.

Management has found that many of the company's Gen Y employees gain a different perspective and attitude to employment when working alongside someone who has struggled to find work and become established in a new country. Bridgehead also employs people with disabilities and retired workers, with similar ideals and ends in mind. The company has earned awards from several employment service organizations for its ongoing efforts to hire a diverse workforce.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"I worked in the coffee and restaurant business since I was young and have worked at Bridgehead for three and a half years now—it's become my second home. I really like the customers—lots of students from different cultures come in and many have become attached to me and come to me for advice. Bridgehead management are very understanding of family responsibilities and offer great flexibility—we're like a family here. There is always a manager available to help, and staff are very supportive of one another."

Aida Chahine, Barista, Team Leader

Great Practices

Bridgehead has implemented a range of practices that align with its mission to demonstrate social responsibility and its values of building community, developing employees and creating an inclusive workplace.

Recruitment and Staffing

As part of its commitment to community building, Bridgehead has intentionally designed its recruitment processes to attract a wide range of talent from the local community. The company has tapped into several supports and resources available to employers to recruit qualified talent and to identify a customer service attitude and essential and transferable skills when interviewing.

- › To ensure an effective and fair hiring process, Bridgehead uses CTHRC's National Occupational Standards for Food and Beverage Server when drafting job descriptions (see sidebar for more information).
- › Northern Lights Canada, an organization with 19 locations in central and eastern Ontario that provides employment services including vocational rehabilitation and corporate training, has hosted job fairs for Bridgehead. Through relationships cultivated with other immigrant-serving agencies around Ottawa—such as the Catholic Immigration Centre, Employment Ontario, the YMCA and

the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board—qualified candidates are regularly recommended to Bridgehead's HR Manager.

- › Bridgehead participated in CTHRC's Ready-to-Work program with great success. Of the 12 program participants placed with the coffee company, nine were hired on permanently. The HR Manager reports that program participants had excellent training in Retail Excellence, and were "tailor-made" for Bridgehead.
- › When assessing candidates, rather than looking for "Canadian experience", Bridgehead management looks for an attitude of customer service, authenticity, commitment to work, willingness to contribute to a team, and a commitment to the company's corporate values. In interviews, managers look to uncover skills such as an ability to connect, willingness to work, transferable skills from work done before, career aptitudes and interests, and an ability to complete tasks.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"Turnover is affected by many things. In my view, it has been reduced due to the adoption of a more non-hierarchical approach to the job, a flattening of the wage scale and the subsequent training programs we offer to enhance growth of personal and professional skills."

Kim Elmer, HR Manager

Integration and Development

Bridgehead is committed to providing ongoing education and growth for employees. This is demonstrated in the company's focus on training, a structured career path for all employees and continued opportunities for growth. Bridgehead believes these core practices differentiate the company from others and contribute to its good employee attraction and retention rates.

- › A company policy introduced five years ago of promoting from within—advancing in-house employees to management positions—has paid off in an unexpected way: a waiting list now exists of Bridgehead employees interested in training for management positions. As part of the company's stated commitment to new employees, once an entry-level employee has gotten to know the front line of the business, that individual is offered the opportunity to become a team leader. Following this, the employee can become a trainer, after which he or she may be qualified to apply for a manager position when one arises. Employees can progress through this entire career path in an average of eight to 12 months.
- › New hires experience 40 hours of orientation conducted by in-house mentors and trainers. Training includes topics such as customer service, managing cash, plating and serving, merchandising, handling difficult customers, and health

and safety. Advanced training includes cash management, reconciling, sales, inventory, order and product sales, delegating, giving and receiving feedback, troubleshooting, problem-solving, and managing a crisis. Of particular importance to employees whose first language is not English or who are new to the Canadian workplace, training also addresses expectations regarding communications with colleagues and customers. All skills are built gradually over a few weeks, so workers have time to practice and perfect a key task before moving on to the next one.

- › Bridgehead made use of subsidized training for eligible new ITW hires through Employment Ontario.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"We encourage employees to bring their culture to work. For example, at a recent team meeting one of the employees brought in homemade Lebanese food. All staff members love these kinds of contributions—it opens them up to new experiences and opens the minds of everyone touched by it."

Kim Elmer, HR Manager

ABOUT THE *emerit* OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are manuals that describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be considered competent in an occupation. Developed by tourism professionals themselves in collaboration with leading tourism organizations in the country, these standards have real-world applicability.

NOS are available for many tourism professions. Download occupational standards at: <http://emerit.ca>

Retention

In line with its goal of creating a healthy, open and inclusive work environment, Bridgehead invests in its management to equip them with the skills to manage a diverse workforce effectively.

- › Each of the bi-weekly management meetings includes a mini peer-learning segment. Many of these have focused on the Bridgehead business case for diversity; management shared best practices on how cultural diversity can play out in the workplace, how the presence of diversity has enhanced team performance, and why they should embrace diversity in their team. The ultimate aim of this learning is to increase managers' level of comfort with diversity and with openly communicating about and acknowledging differences.
- › Several managers have participated in the Leadership Ottawa Program, and others have earned certificates from the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University and the University of Guelph. Bridgehead covers the costs as part of employee professional development. Management attributes the company's solid retention rates to this and other factors, including its values-based approach, encouragement of employee autonomy, and engagement of new employees early on.



- › Bridgehead's non-hierarchical organizational structure enables staff to become team leaders early on, which allows them to build leadership skills and experience increased responsibilities.
- › If employees have a first language other than English or French, management invites them to use their language skills to translate training materials into their first language for future use by other employees.
- › Newly hired ITWs are "buddied up" with a colleague from the same cultural or linguistic background. Management has found that giving newcomers an opportunity to speak their own language in a new environment adds a level of comfort and helps facilitate adjustment and integration.
- › Bridgehead promotes from within. The entire coffeehouse management team has been developed and promoted internally, lately through Bridgehead's Management Apprentice Program. In addition, the coffee professionals—including Director of Coffee, Quality Assurance Trainer, and Roaster—have been cultivated, trained and promoted as part of an ongoing commitment to internal talent development and employee engagement. Offering promotional opportunities for staff who want to grow with the company contributes to retention and employee satisfaction. To this end, Bridgehead encourages and supports employee participation in company-sponsored barista competitions as well as national and international competitions as a way to advocate increased professionalism of staff and the industry.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"It's a good place to work for newcomers—they are treated the same as anyone else. You can learn a lot through working with the public, and can meet some very interesting people. Bridgehead doesn't require references and offers people a chance to prove themselves for a few months—it has worked out really well."

Aida Chahine, Barista Team Leader

As part of the company's emphasis on community-building and social responsibility, employees are encouraged to give back to their local community.

- › Employees can complete up to six hours of paid volunteer leave annually. This ranges from participation in church activities, environmental groups and arts organizations to poverty awareness groups and music festivals. The initiative's goal is to encourage employees to act on their beliefs locally as a commitment to community.
- › Each coffeehouse has a monthly community outreach budget. The budget is typically spent on coffee donations to support a range of community events. Bridgehead employees can suggest recipient community organizations, and company products have been donated to fundraising activities for a range of cultural organizations across Ottawa—for the visual arts community, theatre, the Writer's Festival and environmental groups such as the Ottawa Riverkeepers. Bridgehead believes that this promotes the company as both a good corporate citizen and a responsible employer among a diversity of communities.

EMPLOYER TIPS

If possible, start a new ITW hire off at a less busy location or store so training can be conducted thoroughly and without haste. Recognize, value and encourage contributions of employees bringing new languages and cultural knowledge to the workplace. This will not only help serve customers better, but also enrich the work environment for all employees.

Great Results

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

- › Better reflect, understand and meet the needs of the diverse clientele it serves.
- › Enrich the workplace culture for all employees.
- › Be positioned to skillfully train a diverse workforce in advance of predicted labour shortages.

Bridgehead chooses fair trade products, as the company recognizes the value of its varied suppliers. Similarly, the company continues to focus on valuing diversity and representing its customer base amongst its workforce. As for next steps, Bridgehead would like to more formally articulate its commitment to reaching out to and actively recruiting ITWs and members of other traditionally underrepresented groups.

Bridgehead utilizes employee-designed multilingual training materials, training mentors, on-site buddies and experience to build on as it continues to hire and integrate ITWs. The company is confident that as its local market population becomes increasingly diverse, its strategy will pay off in solid business benefits.



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
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



The Capital Hotel,
St. John's, NL

St. John's Hotel Unintentionally Discovers a New Source of Talent for its Labour Pool

Looking to hire new staff in specific roles, the Capital Hotel discovered—somewhat by chance—the advantages of hiring internationally trained workers (ITWs). The hotel's management has been pleasantly surprised at how easy the process has been, and pleased with the positive impacts that hiring ITWs has made on retention levels, staff morale and quality of work.

PROFILE

Size: Up to 65 full-time employees during peak season—currently four are ITWs.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women in their 20s to 50s.

Countries of origin: Countries currently represented among staff are China and Colombia; a former employee came from South Africa.

Occupations: Dishwasher, Housekeeping and Night Porter.

Immigration programs: Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Great Employer

Part of the Steele Hotel group, the Capital Hotel in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, is a modern hotel for business and leisure travellers. The Capital has 80 rooms and eight suites, as well as a lounge, fitness room, business centre and meeting facilities. Also part of the Capital Hotel is Jack's Restaurant—a fine dining establishment specializing in steak and seafood as well as numerous traditional Newfoundland dishes.

The Capital Hotel was looking to expand its workforce, particularly with additional housekeeping and night porter positions.

When a recent immigrant from Colombia approached the hotel seeking employment, little did management know that this was to open them to a labour supply the hotel had not yet pursued. The employee, who was hired in housekeeping and stayed on for 18 months until she returned to school, happened to be connected with the Association of New Canadians (ANC). The ANC is a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to the provision of settlement and integration services for immigrants and refugees to Canada. For over 30 years, the Association for New Canadians has provided settlement assistance as well as programs and services to support all aspects of newcomer integration in Newfoundland and Labrador. Once the woman from Colombia began work at the Capital, word spread among other newcomers linked with ANC and additional ITWs sought employment with the hotel—several of whom were successfully hired.

Based on this early success, management sought to include ITWs in the hotel's labour pool in a more formal manner. Given the small, busy management team and the hotel's commitment to an equitable approach, management set a few ground rules: ITW employees had to be qualified and able to do the work, have the capacity to go through the same integration and training process as all other employees, and would be paid in line with all other employees. With the ongoing support of the ANC, these conditions have been met repeatedly. The hotel's Assistant Manager reports that the relationship with ANC has been key to making hiring ITWs a success. ANC has made the entire candidate attraction and selection process "very easy", and has "never recommended a candidate who didn't work out", which has made the process less labour-intensive for the hotel's management. As a result, when a new job vacancy arises, ANC is the hotel's first call.

Due to the success of this initiative and the positive impacts that increased staff diversity has had on hotel operations, the Capital Hotel has also discovered that other suitable, untapped groups exist in the talent pool—for example, the hotel has hired persons with disabilities with great success.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"We are so relieved to have someone in the Night Porter position who is capable, dependable and has worked happily in the role for two years now. This position is critical to us, as the person has access to everything in the hotel overnight—and, unlike our previous experience trying to fill this position, now I don't lose a minute's sleep!"

Brenda Cardwell, Assistant Manager

Great Practices

The Capital Hotel has implemented several simple yet effective processes for recruiting, integrating and retaining its ITW employees.

Recruitment and Staffing

Based on its successful experiences hiring ITWs to date, the company now explicitly targets ITWs in its recruitment efforts.

- › When a vacancy arises, the Capital's Assistant Manager contacts ANC and describes the job requirements and profile of the employee she is looking for. ANC posts the job and matches the profile with its current clients, then sends résumés and sets up interviews with the Assistant Manager. A representative from ANC can also accompany candidates to interviews to assist with translation, if required.
- › The Capital Hotel offers a competitive pay scale and provides full benefits to all employees after three months of employment.

EMPLOYER TIPS

Consider the ITW labour pool—the benefits are significant.

If you are unable to contact references, you can gain insight into an employee's skills during the trial period.

Employees who speak English as a second language may take what you say literally. Encourage the use of plain English amongst staff, and take the time to explain any in-house jargon up front.

For plain-language resources, see <http://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/decouvrir-discover/outils-tools/oar-wt-eng.html>

Make use of any opportunity to improve an employee's skills. Volunteering can provide a great forum for practicing communication skills.

Integration and Development

Once the Capital Hotel has hired a new ITW employee, management and colleagues step in to welcome, train and provide ongoing feedback to the new staff member. These practices, which are already in place for all employees, have worked well.

- › Management has found that simply taking the time to introduce the new employee to his or her new colleagues helps the new employee adjust, and provides an opportunity to inform other employees about their new colleague.
- › After the employee has successfully completed the three-month trial period, the Assistant Manager meets with him or her to provide evaluative feedback on performance to date, what the employee can work on moving forward, and how the individual can grow in the organization.

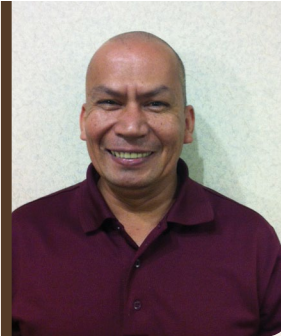
Retention

Management has found that simple actions can go a long way in making an employee feel engaged and included. At the Capital Hotel, management does its best to accommodate requests for time off to participate in cultural celebrations, encourage volunteering opportunities and celebrate milestones in the ITWs' lives in Canada. Examples include:

- › A housekeeping staff member was allowed time off to travel to Vancouver to celebrate Chinese New Year with family, even though it coincided with a busy period at the hotel.
- › When an ITW employee expressed an interest in volunteering in the community, the Assistant Manager arranged an opportunity through a family member involved in volunteer work at a local hospital. The Capital accommodated this employee's interests by offering shifts around her volunteer work. Management recognized that volunteering provided an opportunity for the employee to further integrate into the community and to hone her skills in communication and interacting with the public.
- › The Night Porter, who comes from Colombia, received his Canadian citizenship while an employee at the hotel. Management and staff arranged a party in his honour—all employees were excited to take part, and came in on their day off or stayed after work to celebrate. Management marked the occasion with balloons, a congratulatory speech followed by a warm round of applause. The employee was also delighted to be presented with a bottle of champagne.

THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"The Capital Hotel is a really good place to work—it is a busy hotel with friendly guests. Before coming to Canada I worked for 20 years in the hotel industry, and I had my own restaurant and bar. Management at the Capital Hotel offered me an opportunity to show my skills, and they have been very happy with me. My manager always takes the time to explain things very clearly, and my co-workers are also very helpful. The hotel has also provided paid training, and I have been taking an online course to improve my English language skills. I have worked here very happily for two years and really feel at home."



Eduardo Camacho, Night Porter

Great Results

Hotel management has found that hiring ITW employees has benefited the company all around—from an individual employee level to the organization as a whole.

- › The general effect on staff has been very positive—new ITW hires have become some of the most popular employees. Staff members have enjoyed learning about new cultures and experiencing the new dynamic that working in a culturally diverse workplace can bring, which has raised morale amongst all hotel employees.
- › ITW employees at the hotel have been very appreciative of the opportunity to apply their skills, and as a result have proven to be very loyal, willing and high-performing employees. Their polite and respectful manner has been appreciated throughout the organization and even adopted by many other employees in the company.
- › ITW hires have demonstrated great flexibility and adaptability. One Chinese employee who started as a dishwasher showed an interest and aptitude for other roles, and has now been trained in housekeeping. This "multi-skilling" and flexibility is a big asset to the small hotel.

- › ITW employees with higher education or work experience bring many transferable skills that can be applied in the tourism sector. For example, one ITW employee who has extensive experience in web design has been given an opportunity to use her skills to transform various print-based marketing brochures into a web-based format.
- › Hiring ITWs has enabled the hotel to significantly reduce employee turnover in certain positions that are critical to the company, thereby saving in recruitment and training costs. For example, previously, employees in the Night Porter position would stay for only two or three months. The current employee in that role, an internationally trained worker, has been in the position for over two years.

ABOUT THE LINC PROGRAM

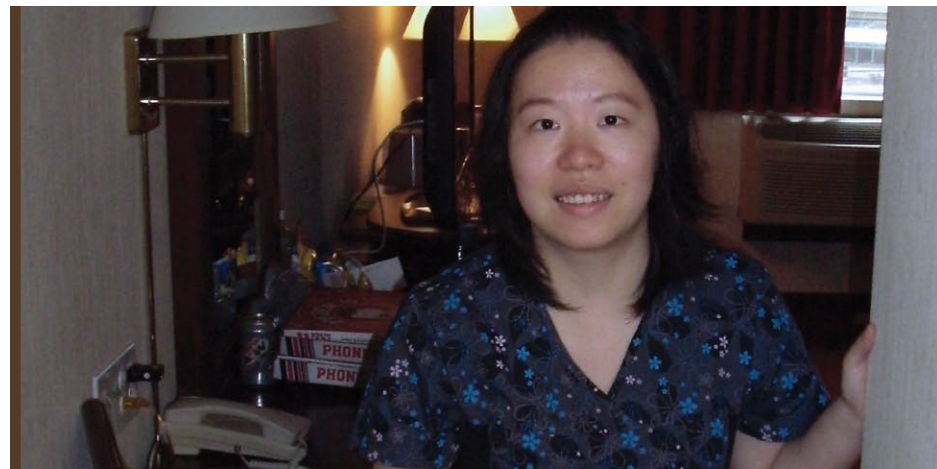
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is an ESL (English as a second language) program delivered in accordance with nationally established standards. The aim of the program is to assist adult learners in acquiring the language skills necessary to settle and integrate into Canadian society.

The Government of Canada, in cooperation with provincial governments, school boards, community colleges and immigrant-serving organizations, offers free language training across the country to adult permanent residents.

For more information, see <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/map/services.asp>

The Capital Hotel plans to continue considering ITW candidates as part of the wider labour pool to meet its labour needs. It also intends to persist in training and developing its current ITW staff for other roles by building upon the skills many have learned in other positions, where they have had a chance to get to know how the hotel is run as well as improve their language skills along the way.

Based on its experience to date, the Steele Hotel group is open to hiring ITWs at its sister hotels in Corner Brook and Gander. The larger hotel group recognizes that including ITWs amongst its employee base has enabled the Capital Hotel to continue to provide the best of Newfoundland hospitality to its guests.



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. Persons 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
Mentoring for Skilled Immigrants Toolkit	The Mentoring Toolkit highlights practices that may lead to a successful mentoring program and ways to generate discussion about how best to proceed. It includes best practices, identifies discussion points and provides options related to implementation.	http://alliescanada.ca/resources/toolkits/mentoring-for-skilled-immigrants/introduction/
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 that support employers.	http://www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/index.asp

Elmwood Spa

Canada's Favourite Urban Oasis

Elmwood Spa, Toronto, ON

International Experience Plus Canadian Certification Helps ITWs be "Ready-to-Work"

When the HR Recruiter at Elmwood Spa was contacted by ACCES Employment and asked to consider hiring graduates of the Ready-to-Work program, she didn't know what to expect. Two years later, she reflects that it has been an eye-opening—and rewarding—experience. With two managers hired successfully through the program and already promoted to more senior roles, the company felt inspired to bring on several more internationally trained workers (ITWs) through other employment support programs.

PROFILE

Size: Approximately 200 employees, four of whom are ITWs.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women in their late 20s and 30s.

Countries of origin: India.

Occupations: Duty Manager, Juice Bar Attendant, Line Manager—Guest Services, Senior Manager—Guest Services.

Immigration programs: Permanent resident status and Canadian citizens.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"ACCESS and OTEC are great organizations to work with—employers should consider working with similar organizations in their region. Working with them does work!"

Caterina Colabella-Bolarinho, HR Recruiter and Generalist

Great Employer

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2012, Elmwood Spa is an urban day spa in downtown Toronto. Housed in a landmark historic building with four floors of massage and aesthetic services, Elmwood offers two restaurants, a juice bar, 34 treatment rooms, and water therapies (swimming pool, whirlpool and steam rooms).

In 2010, Elmwood's HR Recruiter was contacted by a representative of ACCES Employment, who shared information about the Ready-to-Work (RTW) program (see sidebar for more information) and asked if Elmwood would consider recent program graduates for any future job vacancies. ACCES (Accessible Community Counselling and Employment Services) has been helping immigrants transition into the workforce since 1986, offering a range of free services for clients and employers in the Toronto area. Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC), an independent, not-for-profit training and human resources solutions organization (with equivalent organizations in each province or territory), delivers the RTW program to job-seekers new to Canada or to the tourism sector. Since 2005, OTEC has been working with ACCES to deliver RTW to ACCES clients.

At the time, Elmwood Spa was looking to hire skilled and experienced Duty Managers. Two RTW graduates were interviewed and both were subsequently hired. The addition of these two ITW employees was a positive experience. Thanks to their training on Canadian workplace norms through the program's use of *emerit* Canadian Workplace Essentials, the two employees adapted quickly to their new work environment. They soon also gained the respect of their peers due to their international hospitality experience and the extremely professional service they provided.

Based on this experience, Elmwood also connected with the Labour Education Centre (LEC)—a special project of the Labour Council of Toronto and York Region, providing education and training services to employed and unemployed union members. As part of its free service offering, LEC provided Elmwood with pre-screened candidates, job postings and ongoing support. As a result, two additional ITWs were hired for the positions of Guest Services and Juice Bar Attendant.

The company has been acclaimed for the standard of service it offers its clientele. Awards and recognition include the following:

- › Voted in the Top 10 Favourite Day Spas Category in the Prestigious Spa Finder Readers' Choice Awards 2010—the only Canadian spa in the list.
- › Won GOLD in the Toronto Sun's Readers' Choice Survey for Best Spa/Aesthetics in 2009.
- › Selected as NOW Magazine's 2009 Best of Toronto Readers' Pick Winner for Best Beauty Spa.
- › Chosen as WestJet Up! Magazine's 2009 Value Award Winner.
- › Selected as one of the top five salons and spas across Canada by FLARE magazine in 2008.

Great Practices

Through its partnerships with ACCES and LEC, Elmwood was able to streamline and reduce in-house effort involved in attracting and selecting employees and in building new ITW hires' skills. Furthermore, the company found that employing ITWs did not require significant adaptation of its current HR practices.

ABOUT THE READY-TO-WORK PROGRAM

Ready-to-Work (RTW) delivers a structured transition into the tourism workforce through classroom and workplace training based on *emerit* National Occupational Standards.

The program provides participants with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, experience and qualifications required for long-term, stable employment in tourism—the world's fastest growing industry.

See http://cthr.ca/en/programs_services/ready_to_work for more details.

Recruitment and Staffing

Partnering with immigrant-serving agencies has made Elmwood's recruiting process more efficient. The company also ensures that talented people from all backgrounds are made aware of its welcoming work culture and equitable approach through company marketing and recruitment materials.

- › When working with ACCESS and LEC, Elmwood sends them the job requirements and candidate profiles, and soon receives a selection of pre-screened, qualified candidates for interview.
- › On its website, Elmwood highlights its welcoming and equitable approach in an attempt to reach out to all types of workers, including ITWs. The company notes that it "recruits and selects the best-qualified candidates in accordance with our equal opportunity employment approach." Elmwood also indicates that, "Our values include respect, truth, accountability, teamwork, diversity, continuous improvement and balance, and our principles ensure that our focus remains on meeting the needs of our guests in a consistent and deliberate manner."
- › Elmwood has found that its internationally trained workers appreciate the benefits that are available to all employees, including:
 - Generous discounts for services, products and meals
 - Health benefits for full-time, permanent employees (after six months of employment)
 - Tuition reimbursement
 - Orientation on the company and departments
 - Opportunities for ongoing training from wellness and beauty experts
 - Incentive programs



THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"I came to Canada with a lot of knowledge of international hospitality from working in Europe for 11 years for several global hotel chains. Participating in the Ready-to-Work program gave me a good understanding of Canadian work culture, and helped me learn many things that made a huge difference in finding a job in the sector in Canada. These included learning how to write a résumé to best present my qualifications to a Canadian employer and how to prepare for an interview, as well as enabling me to gain certifications such as Tourism Essentials and Service Excellence. I had read that it can take several years for a newcomer to Canada to find a position at the level they worked at in their home country—in my case it took four months."

Vinay Singh, Senior Manager, Guest Services

Integration and Development

At Elmwood Spa, all employees receive the same orientation as well as job-specific training as required. Employee benefits are highly supportive of employee development. Specifically, ITWs are supported through the following measures:

- › Orientation covers the company history and information on the different departments, followed by departmental training, which takes anywhere from one to six weeks.
- › Guest Services Representatives may need to obtain their certification, such as Smart Serve and this is provided to staff at no charge, as well as some basic customer service training.
- › Other training and certification required for various positions is encouraged and supported by management. For example, to meet the specific requirements of his job, a Juice Bar Attendant needed to obtain his Food Handler and Smart Serve certification. The employee participated in an online program that took about an hour to complete. The Labour Education Centre was able to assist the employee with the cost of this training.



Retention

To help retain staff, Elmwood managers make a point of encouraging ongoing communication with employees, and supporting their employees' personal interests as well as community work and volunteering. Managers also have an open-door policy; employees can talk to management at any time and seek support and guidance.

- › Elmwood was very excited that InSPAration, the Elmwood Spa Glee Club, was selected to compete in Season 2 of Global TV's Canada Sings in spring 2012. Elmwood's 13-member team was proud of how its own diversity represented the company and the city of Toronto as a whole. The team was honoured to compete to raise funds for the YWCA Elm Centre charity; Elmwood enjoys a historical connection to the charity, as the spa itself resides in the original 1940s YWCA facility. Management supported staff in this exceptional endeavour by granting the necessary time off to prepare and rehearse. Staff also dressed in Elmwood T-shirts and supported their team during the final audition.

Great Results

The management at Elmwood highlight the benefits gained through employing ITWs:

- › The diverse make-up of Elmwood's workforce enables the company to better reflect and understand the needs of its diverse Toronto clientele.
- › Partnering with immigrant-serving agencies such as ACCESS Employment and the Labour Education Centre reduces the amount of time spent on attracting and selecting employees. In many cases, Elmwood can find the right candidate with ACCESS or LEC that it cannot find through its own recruiting efforts.
- › Knowing that candidates are graduates of the RTW program and bring a unique mix of experience as well as an up-to-date understanding of the Canadian business and hospitality environment makes it easier to select and integrate them as new employees.
- › Both employees hired through RTW have been very successful in the company. One employee initially hired as a Duty Manager was promoted to Line Manager, Guest Services within a year; the other has been promoted twice since being employed as a Duty Manager—first to Line Manager, Guest Services and then to Senior Manager, Guest Services.

Since the spa's experience with ITWs has been so positive, management is happy to consider other ITW candidates. And working with agencies such as ACCESS and LEC makes the recruiting process even easier.



EMPLOYER TIPS

If an employee speaks English as a second language, taking the time to ensure understanding will pay off in the long run.

Making the effort to understand and trust an ITW's prior experience and qualifications is well worth the time and can lead to hiring outstanding employees with a unique mix of skills.

Treat employees fairly and involve them equally when showing them how a job should be done. Having an immediate supervisor who clarifies job expectations and communicates these expectations to the entire department helps everyone work towards the same goals.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
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
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
Discover Tourism	This website contains information for people new to Canada or the tourism workforce who want to discover tourism work opportunities and how the sector can work for them.	http://discovertourism.ca/en



Thandi's Restaurant,
Saint John, NB

Experienced International Staff Help Create an Authentic Multicultural Dining Experience

Thandi's—an Asian fusion restaurant in Saint John—sought to ensure it could offer customers a truly authentic dining experience. With Indian cuisine as a key menu component and a multicultural ethos central to its vision, Thandi's hired chefs and servers from a range of cultural backgrounds. The knowledge of regional cuisine and international flair these employees bring to the restaurant have not only enabled management to meet its goal of offering high-quality traditional dishes but also attracted a broader clientele to the establishment.

PROFILE

Size: 26 employees, of whom currently five are ITWs.

Demographics: ITWs are men and women ranging in age from their 20s to 40s.

Countries of origin: Countries currently represented among staff are Guatemala, India, Pakistan and Vietnam.

Occupations: Chef, Server.

Immigration programs: Canadian citizens, permanent residents and refugees.

Great Employer

Thandi's, a family-owned business, opened its doors in uptown Saint John, NB in May 2006. It quickly gained popularity and has earned a solid reputation for its fusion of flavours offered on its extensive menu, which includes a variety of steaks, seafood, chicken and authentic Indian curries.

Owners Holly and Ken Singh have many years of restaurant experience. Ken, originally from India, comes from a small village in the Punjab region known as Thandian. His passion for cooking is evident in the recipes he has refined for his patrons. His experience in Indian cooking allows Thandi's to offer made-to-order curry dishes that customers can request to their liking. Thandi's is part of a trio of dining establishments that also includes Holly's Restaurant, a family-style establishment known for homestyle, flavourful food, and House of Chan, which specializes in take-out Chinese food.

Since its establishment, Thandi's has successfully hired—and retained—several internationally trained workers (ITWs).

Two of the restaurant's current chefs were working elsewhere in New Brunswick when they learned about job opportunities at Thandi's. Both were fully trained as chefs in India before coming to Canada, and one also had additional international experience working as a chef in Germany. Another employee, currently a trainee chef, was hired through the Saint John YMCA-YWCA Employment Training Program for newcomers. This individual from Pakistan had no formal qualifications as a chef but had vast experience in preparing traditional food. His successful performance in Thandi's two-week job-shadowing component of the training program led to an offer of full-time employment with the restaurant. In addition, two ITW food and beverage servers—one from Guatemala and one from Vietnam—are long-standing Canadian citizens with prior experience in the industry, and were hired locally.

Retention of these staff members has been very high; two of the chefs have worked at Thandi's for over five years.

Management maintains that hiring ITWs has broadened the restaurant's range of clientele. For example, in recent years the local University of New Brunswick has welcomed a large contingent of students from Saudi Arabia. Thandi's management has heard from the many students who have become regular customers that the multicultural atmosphere and international cuisine Thandi's offers make them feel very welcome. In addition, the Multicultural Society at the University has engaged Thandi's to organize functions for several of their cultural theme nights. At these events, attendees come dressed in their traditional clothes and enjoy dishes from a range of cultures.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

"We have nurtured and cared for our new ITW hires and we make sure they are treated well by all staff. As a multicultural fusion restaurant, it is part of our culture to be welcoming of, and to learn from, people from different cultures—this is the message we reinforce with all staff."

Holly Singh, Owner

Over the past few years, Thandi's has earned various awards and recognition, including:

- › Ranked fourth out of 146 restaurants in Saint John on Trip Advisor.
- › Selected as a finalist for the 2010 Best Restaurant of the Year by the Saint John's Business Improvement Area.
- › Chosen as a finalist for the Saint John Board of Trade Outstanding Business Achievement Awards.

Great Practices

Thandi's has found that specifically targeting ITWs in its hiring process, taking the time to welcome new hires as "part of the family", and being vocal about promoting a welcoming, inclusive environment have helped the restaurant engage and retain its staff.

Recruitment and Staffing

Thandi's intentionally casts a wide net to attract a diverse range of talent to help it meet its business goals. Management has tapped into supports offered by a local immigrant-serving agency to employ and train qualified talent, and has been able to leverage in-house language abilities to check references from overseas.

- › A number of ITWs were hired through vacancies advertised in local Saint John newspapers, as well as in the Globe and Mail.
- › One person was hired after management was approached by an employment counsellor from the Saint John YMCA-YWCA Employment Training Program for newcomers. As part of this program, participants receive three months of in-classroom training on skills and language abilities required in the Canadian workplace. A provincial grant was available to cover the salary for this employee for the first three months.
- › Several ITW employees who moved to Saint John to work for the Thandi's were provided with on-site accommodations for a number of months.

- › A co-owner of the company speaks the language of two of the ITW hires, and was able to check their references in India.
- › Senior chefs at the restaurant are salaried employees, so receive a consistent salary, even during quieter periods. In addition, benefits offered to all staff after three months include health and dental care.

ABOUT "HOLLY'S DREAM"

After the restaurant's positive experience with ITWs over the past few years, the owner of Thandi's approached the Saint John YMCA-YWCA with an idea she had about partnering with them to pilot a new training program. Informally dubbed "Holly's Dream", the program will build on the success of the YMCA's existing Employment Program by offering hospitality-specific training and work experience to newcomers to the city, starting in January 2013. Due to newcomers' high level of interest in working in the sector, as well as the demand for qualified staff from local employers, this program will be mutually beneficial to both employers and newcomers.

- › For the first program, six newcomers will attend YMCA classes in the morning to improve their English language skills and to obtain hospitality-specific certification in food safety, customer service, first aid and CPR. In the afternoon, they will be trained at Thandi's to gain hands-on experience in the culinary arts.
- › Thandi's and several other hospitality businesses in the city have committed to hiring these individuals after the program is complete. Funding has been provided by the province to subsidize salaries for the first three months of their employment.
- › Program participants will be trained to meet the specific needs of employers in roles such as kitchen worker, server, housekeeping, etc.
- › The three-month program has been scheduled so that by April 2013, the six employees will be equipped with the training and practical experience to start work with participating employers in time for the busy season.

Integration and Training

Thandi's has supported several of its ITW hires in bringing their families to Canada. Management feels that a willingness to be welcoming, as well as supporting employee development, has resulted in a loyal and committed workforce.

- › Thandi's accountant assisted one of the chefs to extend his work permit to stay in Canada. Two chefs were also supported when applying to bring their families to Canada. The application process requires employees to demonstrate that they earn enough money to support their family members. To facilitate this, Thandi's ensured that the appropriate costs for the accommodations they provided were clearly reflected in the individual's earnings.
- › Management and staff members have also helped new ITW hires integrate into life in Saint John by helping them get to know the city, driving them to appointments, assisting with driver training, and including them in staff functions.

Regarding the development of staff:

- › Management supports several of Thandi's new ITW hires to improve their English language skills by scheduling their work hours around language classes at the YMCA.
- › One employee hired through the YMCA is currently being trained in-house by Thandi's chefs on culinary arts and kitchen operations. He is progressing well and plans to pursue further training and certification. To do this, he will take six weeks of in-classroom training at the New Brunswick Community College and apprentice under a Thandi's chef. The hours he has already worked at Thandi's will count towards the required hours of training. Funding has been arranged through a grant given to the YMCA.
- › Two of the ITW chefs were already fully trained and apprenticed before coming to work in Canada. Thandi's supported them in completing the Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association's National Food Safety Training Program, which is required for all chefs.



THE ITW PERSPECTIVE

"I started training as a chef in India in 1993 and then completed my apprenticeship in 2004 before I came to Canada. I've been working at Thandi's for more than five years. I really like working here, as Indian food is my speciality. When I started it was very helpful that the co-owner, Kenny, knew my home language—this made me feel very comfortable and helped me get settled in. I appreciate that my co-workers are nice and polite, and that my manager is always available to help me find solutions to any challenges that come up. I always feel very welcome here."

Guljar Amand, Chef

Retention

Management attributes the restaurant's good retention rates to treating employees fairly and making them feel appreciated. A couple of ITW employees have worked at the restaurant for over five years; amongst the three sister restaurants, a number of individuals have been working there for over 20 years.

- › Employees' birthdays are celebrated in several ways. In the past, management arranged for staff and their families to have a kayak outing with guides, and arranged a guided tour through the Fundy Trail with a barbeque and games to follow.
- › Several staff events are held throughout the year to acknowledge all employees' contributions and hard work. Two staff parties are held annually with employees from all three sister restaurants, during which each establishment is closed so everyone has the opportunity to attend. During the summer, management rents a campsite and invites staff to join in a barbeque and stay overnight with their families.
- › As a multicultural restaurant, Thandi's reinforces the message that the company culture is to be welcoming of, and open to learning from, people from all cultural backgrounds.

Employees are encouraged to make a positive contribution to their local community and become involved in a range of cultural events. Management feels that promoting such initiatives has not only given staff members an opportunity to learn about people from other cultures, but also provided them with greater understanding and empathy for others in their community.

EMPLOYER TIPS

Reach out to local immigrant-serving agencies—they have access to a pool of qualified candidates who are eager to work in the sector. Take the time to be available and accessible to your new hires. Being on hand in the early days to answer questions and offer support in resolving challenges goes a long way in developing an engaged employee.

- › The restaurant capitalizes on the range of international sources for its cuisine by hosting theme nights, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. During these evenings, food and music from the theme region are enjoyed by customers, and a portion of the proceeds are donated to a local charity. Past beneficiaries include Saint John Foundations, the Multicultural Society, Romero House/Second Stage, the Empty Stocking Fund and the Fight Against Cancer.
- › In line with the company values of being welcoming and inclusive, several Saint John-born staff members have taken it upon themselves to make it a tradition to invite ITW staff members to their homes to join in their Christmas celebrations.
- › At the end-of-year party, instead of exchanging gifts, staff and management alike donate used household items and clothing to local families in need.

Great Results

The company has reaped a range of benefits from employing ITW staff over the past few years.

- › With its experienced, regionally trained chefs and ITW servers, Thandi's can offer patrons a taste of different parts of the world through authentic, traditional dishes served with an international flair.
- › Through the strong work ethic and flexibility of these employees, the restaurant can be run smoothly. When work needs to be done, employees are willing to change their schedules to contribute as needed.
- › By encouraging a welcoming international atmosphere and cuisine, Thandi's has expanded its customer base to include a more diverse clientele.
- › In such a multicultural team, all staff members learn about a range of different cultural traditions and customs. Many Saint John-born staff members have even been inspired to plan a trip to the countries of some of their new co-workers to experience their culture firsthand.

In the coming years, Thandi's owners aim to make the "Holly's Dream" pilot training program as successful as possible so that it may continue and expand. Management hopes that this program will not only provide them with ready-to-work staff members looking to build a career with the restaurant, but that it will also enable them to enrich their offering of Asian fusion cuisine through the authentic culinary knowledge these individuals can share.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Resource	Description	Where you can find it
emerit Training and Certification	Products are based on <i>emerit</i> 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.	https://emerit.ca/
Hire Immigrants	Tools, programs, webinars and videos for hiring and integrating new immigrant employees.	http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/
Attracting, Retaining and Integrating Skilled Immigrants: An Analysis of Canada's Leading Employers	Winners and short-listed candidates of the Best Employers for New Canadians (an annual competition managed by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers) share their various practices in attracting, retaining and integrating skilled immigrants.	Local resources: http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/resources-tools/local-resources/ http://alliescanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/AttractingRetainingIntegrating11.pdf

Overview of Good Practices

The practices demonstrated in this third volume of the compendium can help tourism employers establish a stable work environment that not only engages and retains ITW staff but also benefits the entire workforce—and the tourism sector—as a whole.

Good Practice Employer	Industry Group	Recruitment and Staffing	Integration and Development	Retention
Bridgehead Coffeehouses, Ottawa, ON	Food and beverage services	<p>Uses <i>emerit</i> National Occupational Standards when drafting job descriptions.</p> <p>Leverages relationships with immigrant-serving agencies to source qualified candidates.</p> <p>Hires several “tailor made” employees through CTHRC’s Ready-to-Work program.</p> <p>Looks for transferable skills as well as attitudes that align with the company’s values when assessing candidates.</p>	<p>Offers 40-hour orientation program to all new hires, phased in over several weeks—includes hospitality and management-related training and expectations regarding communication.</p> <p>Offers early career path to all employees and promotes from within.</p>	<p>Includes diversity in regular peer-learning segment of bi-weekly management meetings.</p> <p>Supports managers in pursuing advanced leadership training.</p> <p>Leverages employees’ language skills and, as possible, “buddies” new hires with same-language co-worker.</p> <p>Encourages employee autonomy and volunteerism as part of company culture.</p>
Capital Hotel, St. John’s, NL	Accommodations	<p>Sources pre-screened candidates through a local immigrant-serving agency, which also takes care of posting job openings and setting up interviews.</p>	<p>Management takes the time to introduce new employees to all co-workers to ease integration into the workplace.</p> <p>Provides face-to-face evaluative feedback on performance to date and areas for improvement after the trial period.</p>	<p>As possible, accommodates employee requests for time off to celebrate cultural holidays.</p> <p>Encourages and facilitates volunteering, which helps integration into the community and provides opportunities to improve language skills.</p>

Elmwood Spa, Toronto, ON	Recreation and entertainment	<p>Hires graduates of CTHRC's Ready-to-Work program—two of these recent hires were promoted within a year.</p> <p>Sources candidates through two local employment service organizations, which match, pre-screen and set up interviews on the employer's behalf.</p> <p>Includes explicit statements on its website that highlight the employer's support of equal opportunity employment and diversity.</p>	<p>Offers orientation of up to six weeks for new hires, depending on the position.</p> <p>Covers the costs for staff members to obtain certain certifications required for their positions.</p> <p>Taps into funding offered by local employment service organizations to enable staff to obtain required certification.</p>	<p>Managers have an open-door policy, and encourage employees to seek ongoing support and guidance when needed.</p> <p>Supports employees' personal interests and encourages community work and volunteering.</p>
Thandi's Restaurant, Saint John, NB	Food and beverage services	<p>Advertises vacancies in local and national publications.</p> <p>Sources staff through local immigrant-serving agency, which provides pre-employment and ongoing language training, and salary support for the first three months.</p> <p>Supports new hires to ease job transition—provided accommodations for an ITW who moved to the city for the job.</p> <p>Leverages in-house language capabilities, as possible, to check references overseas.</p>	<p>Assists ITWs with the process of extending work permits and bringing family members to Canada.</p> <p>Helps newcomer hires integrate into life in the city.</p> <p>Schedules work hours around language classes.</p> <p>Supports further learning and certification of employees.</p> <p>Trains in-house with job shadowing.</p>	<p>Recognizes employee birthdays.</p> <p>Organizes several all-staff events annually.</p> <p>Reinforces company value to embrace, leverage and learn from different cultures.</p> <p>Encourages staff to give back to the community, including through fundraising, cultural theme nights and donations to local charities.</p>

4. Good Practice Impacts, Elements and Learnings

Impacts of Good Practices

Implementing good practices in attracting and retaining internationally trained workers can be highly effective for tourism businesses. Based on this compendium's research, key impacts include:

Employers can 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

Employees can experience greater workplace engagement and learning in a more diverse workplace.

Employers can serve a broader customer base by making use of ITWs' multilingual abilities and knowledge of other cultures.

ITWs can use their multilingual abilities to facilitate relationship-building with vendors overseas and help in the recruitment of employees from the same background.

Employers can leverage the range of transferable skills ITWs bring from previous jobs and careers.

Elements of Good Practice

The good practices presented in this compendium share several common elements. These are highlighted here for future reference and consideration by tourism employers.

Partnering

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

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

Accessing governmental supports

Make use of federal and provincial government support programs available to employers, such as:

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

Educating

Build skills—of both new employees and management—to improve overall staff effectiveness:

- › employees can be trained using in-house methods such as orientation 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

Set the tone for a positive work environment through management staff and business owners—this has a major impact on employee retention. Simple methods 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
- › adjusting schedules, as possible, to accommodate cultural holidays, education and training, volunteering and other personal interests

Lessons Learned

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

Challenge	Lesson Learned
Cultural and communication-style differences among 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.
Checking references sometimes challenging	Tap into the knowledge and language skills of current ITW employees, who may be able to provide insights into the university or college attended, or assist in reference-checking or interviewing. In addition, many employers find that a three-month trial period is effective in determining an employee's suitability for employment at their establishment.

5. Tips for Implementation

The good practices outlined in this volume of the compendium 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. Additional recommended resources are the first⁵ and second⁶ volumes of the Good Employer Practices compendium, which offer a range of 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.

⁵ Available at http://employersofchoice.ca/en/success_stories/~media/Files/EOC/compendium/CTHRC_Good_Employer_Practices_ENG_Vol_1.ashx

⁶ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Employer publicly acknowledges the importance of diversity. › It has been independently confirmed that the practices are in place and effective. 	Fair and equitable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 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 glimpse 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 the 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

Provincial nominee programs allow provinces and territories to select individuals for permanent residence 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 residence 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. Consult the website of your provincial immigration ministry for more information.

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

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/apply-who.asp> for more information.

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>