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REFUGEE
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NETWORK

STRIVING TOWARD BEST PRACTICE

Creating an Employment Strategy

Newcomers often find systemic barriers to finding meaningful employment and economic inclusion. Many bring entrepreneurial skills and experience in the trades. Canada can benefit greatly by leveraging their skills, taking advantage of their innovation and creativity, as well as from cross-cultural thinking. Newcomers can struggle with a lack of recognition of previous education, experience or training, and sometimes are denied jobs due to lack of Canadian experience. Then, there is the challenge of fluency in English that meets recognized benchmark goals and how to assist those who have little education or those who have no specific work experience. Sponsors have a responsibility to help the newcomers they sponsor create an employment strategy based on a variety of factors such as networking, connections to employment services, mentoring, and bridging programs to find that first job.

Key guidelines:

How to Start

- **Assess background** - skills, and desires around employment
- **Assess English language level** - ensure appropriate ESL class to meet need
- **Build an appropriate resume** - demonstrate experience and skills, innovative and creative positioning
- **Assess education credentials** - certification of licensed professionals in Canada

Action Plan

- **Settlement agencies** - link to settlement agency services, where appropriate
- **Employment agencies** – determine appropriate relationships
- **Networking** - utilize networking to identify job opportunities, word of mouth

- **Bridging programs** – Identify them and explore applicability
- **The Trades** – explore opportunities including apprenticeship programs
- **Mentoring** – seek both formal and informal Mentoring programs
- **Job Fairs** – Be aware of when and where they are offered

Connections

- **Jumpstart Refugee Talent** - <https://jumpstartrefugee.ca/>
- **Skilled Trades Ontario** - <https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/>
- **Settlement agencies in Ontario** - <https://services.settlement.org/en/>
- **Bridging programs** - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/adult-learning-ontario-bridge-training-program>
- **TRIEC Mentoring Partnership** - <https://www.mentoringpartnership.ca/>
- **ACCES Employment** - <https://acesemployment.ca/programs/programs-for-refugees>
- **Education certification** – International Credential Assessment Services – <https://www.icascanada.ca/>; World Education Services – <https://www.wes.org>

Reference:

- PRSN workshops on Employment Strategies, February 2017, February 2019, September 2021