

1. The business case for diversity

What is the business case for diversity?

Here are five ways that diversity will make your business stronger, especially when it is achieved by hiring internationally trained global talent.

1. Global talent can help solve your skill shortage. Your company needs highly motivated, skilled workers. The greater your pool of workers, the better your chance of finding that next great employee.
2. It makes good business sense to have a workforce that is representative of your customer base and your community.
3. Global talent brings fresh ideas and new approaches. Employers are often pleasantly surprised to discover that newcomers bring innovative ideas and a broad range of experiences that put their company ahead of the pack.
4. Global talent allows you to compete globally. The language skills of newcomers and their understanding of international markets and cultures can open doors.
5. Newcomers can be very loyal employees. Pay them fairly, offer opportunities for advancement and they will bring great commitment to their work. Your retention rate could improve, saving money on recruiting and training costs.

Hiring immigrants is certainly a 'nice' thing to do – creating opportunities for people hoping to build a better life. You will also meet some very interesting people with life stories that will amaze you. But the business case is strong enough to convince most employers that there is no better time than now to diversify their workforce.

Best Practices

3M Canada tracks employees who speak second or third languages and calls on them when needed. If a person who speaks Hindi phones to place an order from half way around the world, an employee who also speaks Hindi may assist in making the client feel welcome.

Trudell Medical, which now ships to 90 countries, has had great success recruiting global talent. They estimate over 50% of their workforce are newcomers, including some who work in customer service, talking to clients around the world.

How London Region Employers Describe Their Global Talent

- ✓ Skilled and well educated
- ✓ Dedicated
- ✓ Hard working
- ✓ Appreciative of opportunities offered
- ✓ Positive attitude
- ✓ More flexible in the shifts they work
- ✓ Willing to put their foreign language abilities and global knowledge to work



EK3 Chief Financial Officer, Paula Kaye, and Joseph Eze, Quality Assurance Manager

Recruiting the best EK3

Borrowing a slogan from a large grocery chain, an EK3 manager jokes, “We search the world for the best.”

EK3 is making its mark nationally and around the world, creating and selling the technology that allows digital merchandising, also known as narrowcasting. The innovative technology is most visible these days on overhead screens at Tim Hortons that entice you with video of irresistible temptations.

EK3 employees (about 45 of them) are from around the world – Nigeria, Saudia Arabia, Russia, China, Israel and others – although many of the international workers have actually come to EK3 through The University of Western Ontario. A partnership with UWO has created an EK3 Innovation Lab at the Thompson Engineering Building at Western.

With its roots in engineering, and research and development, EK3 requires highly skilled workers

with expertise in very specific areas. Along with some home-grown talent, many of those professionals are global talent.

“I don’t think it’s overstating it to say the diversity here makes us richer,” says EK3 Chief Financial Officer, Paula Kaye, who also manages the company’s Human Resources function. “Our culture is one of creativity and collaboration. People have to get along well and share ideas. That’s where innovation and growth come from.”

“There’s also a sense of family here. Many of our workers have young families. We celebrate new babies, birthdays and although we’re getting a bit big for it now, backyard barbeques are not unheard of.”

EK3 has not actually needed to recruit from out-of-country. Particularly with Western as a partner, there is a lot of international talent right here in the London region!