

3. Building an international workforce

Isn't it just a matter of hiring the best person available?

That approach sounds right, but unless you are sure your process is bias-free you may run into problems:

- As workforce shortages increase, finding qualified candidates will become more difficult.
- If your workforce is not welcoming to a diversity of workers, you may have difficulty meeting workforce demands to remain competitive.
- You may be passing over some of the most qualified candidates because your hiring practices may intentionally or unintentionally be geared to favour Canadian born applicants.

Evaluating current practices and implementing a new and more inclusive approach to recruiting will pay dividends. It will not only help achieve diversity, but it will stimulate the removal of systemic barriers that are keeping great people from becoming a part of your workforce.

Employers Facing Skills Shortage

1. In ranking the challenges facing the economy and labour market, private sector managers rank the shortage of skilled labour #3, behind high personal and corporate taxes.
2. Skill shortages out-rank concerns about productivity performance and innovation.
3. Competition from other employers for qualified workers and difficulties increasing compensation to attract and retain workers were commonly identified as "serious problems".

— *Some findings from the Canada Labour and Business Centre – Survey of Business, Labour and Public Sector Leaders 2005*

- ▲ As many as 140,000 newcomers arrive in Ontario each year. In the past two years, more than half were university educated. Within five years, newcomers will account for all of the province's net labour force growth.

— *Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration*