

4. Creating an inclusive climate

What about internationally trained professionals?

One of the major barriers for internationally trained professionals such as engineers, physicians, lawyers, and others, has been navigating the path to accreditation – a path that can be painfully long, complex and expensive.

Two new Ontario government initiatives are designed to make that path easier to follow.

1. In December of 2006, the Ontario government passed legislation called the **Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006**. It requires regulated professions in Ontario to “ensure their licensing process is fair, clear and open” and to ensure that credentials are assessed faster.
2. **Global Experience Ontario**: This is a new one-stop access and resource centre for internationally trained professionals. Here, newcomers can seek guidance on requirements for professional qualifications, licensing and registration processes and training. For newcomers who choose not to pursue certification, they can also learn about alternative professions that will utilize their existing skills.
www.ontarioimmigration.ca/english/geo.asp

There are a number of things that employers can do to assist internationally trained professionals:

- **Provide interim jobs in a related field:** As professionals take the steps necessary to gain accreditation and certification, most still need interim jobs to pay their bills. Most would prefer to work in their field in a position not requiring certification. You may wish to put the skills of a professional to work and offer the opportunity for job shadowing with a certified professional.
- **Welcome internships and co-op placements:** Internationally trained professionals returning to school may require an internship or co-op placement. This is a good way for a company to determine an individual’s skills and see how they fit with the organization.
- **Provide a “survival job”:** Newcomers often accept what they refer to as survival jobs to carry them through until they are able to gain employment in their chosen field or profession. We’ve all heard stories about engineers who deliver pizzas to make ends meet. You may be able to offer a job that puts some of the education and experience achieved by a foreign professional to work for your organization, in exchange for assisting the individual as they improve language skills and grow accustomed to Canadian culture.



World Leaders

Trojan Technologies

Trojan Technologies is a world leader in the development of ultraviolet water treatment solutions. To remain leading edge Trojan needs the brightest and best in very specialized fields – people like Domenico Santoro.

Domenico, who hails from Italy, is a world-class expert in computational fluid dynamics. He was recruited by Trojan and the company supported his application to come to Canada as a skilled worker.

Trojan recruits locally, across Canada and from around the world.

“What we care about is finding people with great skills”, says Kathy Davis, Vice President of Corporate Services.

Trojan has welcomed over a dozen internationally trained individuals through a WIL Employment Connections voluntary work experience placement program, and many have become full-time associates.

Increasingly, Trojan is recruiting from London’s immigrant population, and even, as in the case of Domenico, bringing in skilled international talent from around the world.

Language issues can sometimes be an issue. Many highly skilled newcomers understand English very well, but may have difficulty articulating their thoughts.

Domenico Santoro, Specialist in Computational Fluid Dynamics and Marvin DeVries, President of Trojan Technologies

“These are issues we work through,” says Davis, “and the company encourages and supports language training.”

Trojan uses a legal firm to assist with the paperwork involved in recruiting a foreign worker, and makes use of a “welcome plan” of benefits offered by their insurance carrier specifically for international recruits. But even with lots of supports in getting settled, it is still a big period of adjustment for an employee such as Domenico.

“One of the hardest things for me was trying to balance all the work it takes to get settled – getting a driver’s license, a car, utilities, health insurance, preparing to pay Canadian taxes, while also being in the first days of a job where I am trying very hard to prove myself to my new employer.”

For Trojan, with business ventures around the world, international workers have proven tremendously helpful.

“Doing business in China, for instance, is very different than in Canada,” says Davis. “Our associates of Chinese background have been very helpful at making us aware of what we need to know about the culture to succeed in that business environment.”