

Become more Canadian to succeed, immigrants told

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By Gerald V. Paul

“Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) are more likely to successfully integrate into the local workforce if they focus on becoming more Canadian,” says the findings of a new study commissioned by the Progress Career Planning Institute (PCPI).

The findings were released at a conference held last Friday at the Metro Convention Center. The conference was a networking opportunity for IEPs.

And according to the Conference Board of Canada, companies lose anywhere from \$4 to \$6 billion annually by not hiring the thousands of internationally trained professionals who come to Canada.

The Board’s view is that diversity is a critical strategic and performance issue for public and private sector leaders.

PCPI Chair and President Silma Roddau told The Camera that his group is seeing more internationally trained professionals doing well in their fields.

“They are successful because they know how important it is to understand the Canadian culture and to effectively communicate.”

While most research studies focused on the experience of internationally educated professionals entering the Canadian workforce, the study “Winning Strategies for IEP’s Success in the Workplace: Employers and IEP’s Perspectives” goes beyond this phase by exploring the integration of Internationally Educated Professionals into the Canadian workforce.

The Study which surveyed 168 IEP’s and 20 Toronto Region employers from small, medium and large organizations in private and public and non-profit sectors found that learning to become “more Canadian” by improving language and communication skills; mentoring and coaching by employers to

help IEP's understand the workplace and Canadian culture and networking with other professionals within and outside the workforce to better understand the workplace were the keys to success.

Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney in his message to the conference commended the organisers for their continued efforts to help newcomers put their professional skills to use in the labour market. "By connecting newcomers with Canadian employers, this conference opens the door of opportunity."

Kenney noted that under the Pan-Canadian Framework for Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, all governments have committed to improve arrivals services for newcomers, and to provide them with skills assessments consistent and timely across Canada.

However, while Roddau praise Kenney for doing a good job and is appreciative for the funding for the Conference, she stressed "there is slow progress but good progress."

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