



Screening out Bias While Screening in Immigrant Candidates

It's human nature to gravitate toward what is known. But when it comes to screening in immigrant candidates, we must avoid bias in our decision-making process. For example, many employers look for Canadian experience, which is discriminatory. Or they may choose to interview someone based on their familiarity with the candidate's former employer or educational institution, which is unfair to other candidates. To limit personal bias and ensure an impartial résumé screening process, consider doing the following:

Restrict information.

- Have someone cover names and anything else that might indicate where a candidate is from.

Evaluate prior experience.

- Review prior experience intentionally and research a candidate's previous employers if interested.
- Ask for work examples to determine whether a candidate has the required competencies.
- Add a testing component to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their skills.

Focus on content.

- Focus on the content of CVs and cover letters, not the format, which varies across cultures.
- Allow that low readability and spelling or grammatical errors aren't always an indication of poor oral communication skills.
- Assess language proficiency according to the requirements and levels of the position.
- Remember that online application templates, like those on Indeed, can often distort a CV.

Leverage existing diversity.

- Assemble a panel made up of staff members whose perspectives differ from yours.
- If your company lacks cultural diversity, consider other aspects of diversity such as gender or age.

Welcome overqualification.

- Be mindful that candidates may compromise their career momentum to work in Canada.
- Investigate the candidate's degree of overqualification and determine if your organization can provide a pathway for professional growth to retain the talent.

Understand employment gaps and frequent job changes.

- Consider how the immigration process and settling into a new country might affect a candidate's career trajectory.
- Appreciate the education and experience a candidate obtained abroad.

Want to learn more?

- Check out [Finding Talent](#), a free course on screening-in immigrant candidates by the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) Learning.
- Read the [Employer's Guide to Integrating Immigrants into the Workplace](#), a free guide from Hire Immigrants Ottawa.
- Discover more tips on recruiting immigrants in [Find Immigrant Talent](#), a resource from the Immigrant Employment Council of BC.