

15th Annual

IEPTM



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CONFERENCE

A UNIQUE FORUM FOR
Internationally Educated Professionals

2018 CONFERENCE REPORT

PUBLISHED BY



WORKING TOGETHER FOR PROGRESS
www.pcpi.ca

LEVERAGING GLOBAL SKILLS TO CREATE A MORE COMPETITIVE CANADA



PROGRESS CAREER PLANNING INSTITUTE



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Presents

THE IEP CONFERENCE REPORT

IEP Conference Report

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PREAMBLE

This report offers a comprehensive account of the information and opinions shared by keynote speakers, thought leaders and delegates who attended the 15th annual [Internationally Educated Professionals \("IEP"\) Conference](#) held March 22 - 23, 2018 at the *Metro Toronto Convention Centre*.

The Conference report author and sector hub scribes have taken utmost care to detail the proceedings as accurately as possible. Opinions and advice shared by various speakers and panel members, as well as from the delegates themselves are completely unabridged. Furthermore, event host *Progress Career Planning Institute ("PCPI")*, the sponsors, exhibitors, scribes, and report author accept no liability whatsoever for any errors that may be contained herein.

LEVERAGING GLOBAL SKILLS TO CREATE A MORE COMPETITIVE CANADA



ABOUT PCPI AND THE IEP CONFERENCE

The IEP Conference is produced by *Progress Career Planning Institute*, a not for profit, business focused workforce development organization that builds communities by empowering people to pursue their potential.

Based in Toronto East and with representation across the GTA, *Progress Career Planning Institute* is a highly respected hub of key stakeholders invested in employment and labour market optimization. For over 20 years, PCPI has successfully served tens of thousands of clients in achieving their career dreams, as well as spearheaded the collaboration of government, private sector, academic and community partners to support its diverse programming.

For the first time in its 15 years of producing this event, and in response to many attendees seeking more contact with employers, PCPI extended the Conference to two days. The new format incorporated a distinctive *Hiring Expo and Exhibitor Marketplace* on Day 2, complementing the traditional professional sector information hubs, keynote presentations, career development workshops, and IEP thought leader panel discussions offered on opening day. PCPI again benefited from longstanding financial and in-kind partnerships with governments, professional associations, regulatory bodies, academia, private sector employers, media, and dozens of volunteers – many who have supported the Conference since its inception in 2003. PCPI believes that settling IEPs quickly into meaningful employment related to their skills, experience, and potential contributes directly to Canada's economic and social well-being.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

DAY 1

PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

Two inspiring, informative keynotes on the significance of soft skills; and the value of diversity and inclusion strategies to Canada's business community.

STRAIGHT GOODS PANEL

Immigrants navigating successful careers within private, public and social profit sectors shared 'lived experience' advice to delegates on job search and life management strategies.

SIX PROFESSIONAL SECTORS

Delegates accessed a wealth of profession-specific employment information and labour market trends from thought leaders and regulatory experts in *Engineering; Finance and Accounting; Healthcare and Related Professions; Information Technology; Sales, Marketing and Communications* and new for 2018 *Entrepreneurship*.

SKILL BUILDING SESSIONS AND KNOWLEDGE PODS

Free workshops facilitated by PCPI staff, *LinkedIn Canada* representatives, and various employment services providers on networking, résumé critique, and self-marketing.



**ENGINEERING
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
FINANCE
HEALTHCARE
INFORMATION TECH
SALES & MARKETING**

DAY 2

HIRING EXPO AND EXHIBITOR MARKETPLACE

Day 2 offered IEPs opportunity to meet prospective employers as well as consult with professionals in accreditation, education and training, employment counselling, and settlement services.

IEP DIRECTORY: AN EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE GUIDE

This specialty magazine produced by PCPI and provided free to delegates compiles wide-ranging career and employment resources for IEPs and newcomers, conveniently organized by professional sector. Organizations and individuals alike value this resource well beyond the Conference.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Twelve hundred sixty-six delegates representing multiple professions attended the 15th annual *IEP Conference and Hiring Expo*, held at the *Metro Toronto Convention Centre* on March 22nd and 23, 2018.

For the first time in its history, the event was extended to two days affording attendees more interactive skill building, networking and information sharing sessions (attracting 734 individuals on day one); followed by a Hiring Expo and Exhibitor Marketplace on day two (with 532 individuals participating). Career services professionals volunteered to evaluate delegates' résumés (a popular feature), while over 45 exhibitors offered educational, assessment, settlement, language, and professional development assistance. When not consulting with employers or other exhibitors in the Marketplace, attendees could participate in their choice of knowledge 'pod' on a variety of job readiness topics.

IEP thought leaders representing academic, certification/accreditation, and employer organizations contributed their combined efforts on the sector panel discussions, which also included Entrepreneurism for the first time.

Attendees were inspired by stimulating, motivational plenary presentations from business leaders sharing the latest in labour market, soft skills and diversity and inclusion research. And the 'Straight Goods' interview segment featured three IEPs offering advice from their varied experiences navigating careers in independent business, social, and public sectors. Speakers frequently remained afterwards to engage one on one with delegates, fielding questions and offering career development advice.

DELEGATE PROFILE

From the 1308 delegates who pre-registered for the Conference online, the following demographic information is noteworthy (compared to the 2017 event):

- **More registrants identifying as from South America; Middle East representation fell slightly; while Asian participants still dominated**
- **Top 10 countries of origin, in descending order: India; Islamic Rep. of Iran; Nigeria; Pakistan; Peoples Republic of China; Bangladesh; Philippines; Brazil/Columbia (tie); Turkey; and Venezuela/ Nepal (tie)**
- **Younger attendees this year, and more women: 8% increase in those aged 19-29, and 3% more in the 30-39 year old category. Women attendees increased by 3%, while men dropped 3%**
- **More new to Canada registrants (less than 1 year in the country), up 16% over 2017; all other age categories dropped by 2-3%**
- **Those with work permits, permanent residents and refugees showed 3-4% increases in attendance, while Canadian citizens dropped 6%**
- **With the exception of Finance & Accounting (registration up 4% over 2017), all other sector hub attendance was down 2 - 5 %. This may be due in part to the introduction of the Entrepreneurship hub, which attracted 5% of all those registered**

EMPLOYER, DELEGATE AND EXHIBITOR FEEDBACK

The online [Labour Force and Hiring Practices Survey](#) was revised in 2018 and experienced a significant increase in participation by Conference employers, speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors.

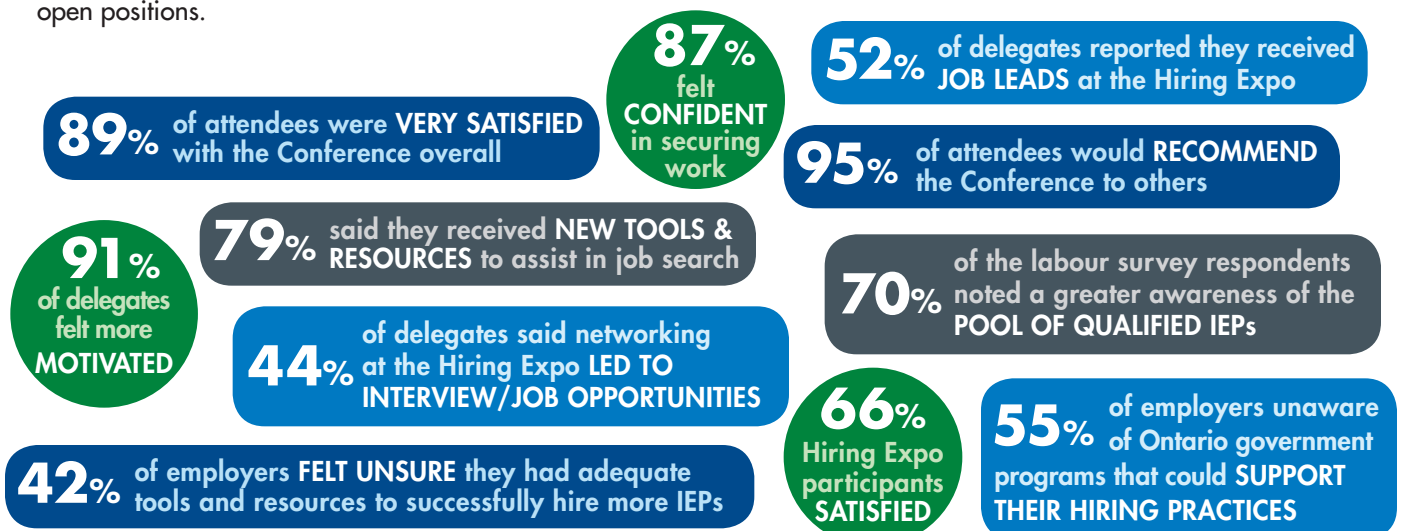
Key findings from this include:

- Challenges facing IEPs entering the Canadian workforce were almost equally identified as English language competency; academic qualifications/equivalency; and “lack of related experience”. Cultural competency, and employers’ “lack of trust in newcomers right away” were also cited
- Bridging programs and English language training were named as the most common strategies to help IEPs succeed in the workplace
- As a result of their Conference participation, over 70% of survey respondents indicated a greater awareness of the pool of qualified IEPs ready and able to work
- 42% of employers felt unsure or didn’t believe they had adequate tools and resources to successfully hire more IEPs; and 55% were unaware of Ontario government programs to support their company’s hiring practices (70% of employers were open to receiving information on same, however)

Delegate Evaluations indicated that 89% of attendees were very satisfied or satisfied with the **Conference (Day 1)** overall, and 95% would recommend it to others, likely suggesting an endorsement of the enhanced format. Overall, 91% of attendees reported being motivated to take specific action steps regarding their job search; 79% said they’d received new tools and resources to assist them with setting goals to acquiring an appropriate job; and 87% indicated they felt more confident in securing meaningful work.

Regarding the **Day 2 Hiring Expo**, 66% of participants reported being satisfied overall with the event, and 74% of delegates were satisfied with the content and presentation of the knowledge pods or seminars. 85% said their confidence level in securing meaningful work was enhanced; and 78% shared they would recommend the event to others.

Specifically, delegates appreciated greater access to hiring employers at the Expo (52% reported they had received job leads, while 44% said networking led to an interview/job opportunity). For future Hiring Expos, however, IEPs will expect a greater number of employers represented, especially those “brand name” organizations seeking to hire candidates for open positions.



IEP CONFERENCE

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PERTAINING TO DELEGATES

- Desire for delegates to remain connected with the benefits of the Conference above and beyond the two days – consider ‘soft launching’ a Community Engagement Program (by subscription only) at a highly discounted annual rate, as an incentive for those joining during the Conference.
- 37% of delegates attending were between 40 to 59 years of age, a segment which traditionally experiences greater difficulty in securing employment – and consequently, more challenging in achieving successful outcomes for clients and service providers. However, delegates in the 19 to 39 age bracket represented 58% of total attendees, an increase over previous years. Therefore it may prove worthwhile to pursue government funding to include Conference programming that specifically addresses the needs of younger IEPs (e.g., 21 to 35 years of age, or youth in the pre-professional stage of their careers).
- Refugees who identified as IEPs comprised a small percentage of attendees – likely premature for them to benefit from the sessions due to English language comprehension.
- Surprising that many delegates had not received either basic career services, or individualized attention as evidenced by long line-ups at résumé review stations - If that trend continues, registrants should submit their résumés at least a week prior to the Expo for pre-screening, if they want to be considered for introduction to employers (a value-add to exhibitors).
- Revise the delegate evaluations to gather additional information on the status of their job search and associated supports, access to coaching services, etc. Ask delegates, “Are you receiving information and assistance this conference provides too soon, just in time, or too late to help you with your job search/career management?” Responses might indicate gaps in content, accessibility to (including qualifying for) appropriate career services and providers, etc. which could impact choices in location and programming for future IEP Conferences and related PCPI-hosted events.



FOR SPONSORS / EXHIBITORS

- Sponsors expressed wanting additional exposure/access to their target (delegate) audiences, above and beyond the Marketplace and Expo. Consider packages that include bundling exhibitor benefits with a speaking role on the sector hubs (ideally, each sector hub should have a sponsor to optimize revenue generation and offset costs).
- Delegates wanted/expected more employers at the Hiring Expo (as distinguished from a Career Fair): if intention is to focus on hiring, Conference organizers must start immediately to prospect and secure exhibitor organizations in all sectors (the budgeting and decision making cycle is typically 6 -12 months, in large corporations especially). Utilize the Conference Report (and components of it) as the foundation of the approach. Reach out to Michael Bach, CEO of the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion on his offer to provide introductions to prospective Hiring Expo employer exhibitors for 2019.
- 2018 Hiring Expo exhibitors reported above average satisfaction with the event, especially volume and traffic flow/stream of attendees. Conduct a sample poll of the larger participating exhibitors to test their interest in paying a slightly higher booth or sponsorship fee for additional benefits /exposure (TBD).
- Appeal to professional recruiters (individuals and companies) who specialize in recruitment - both retained and contingency – of IEPs for the six sectors: how can they be engaged to participate in the Hiring Expo (beyond a booth)?

OVERALL STATE OF EMPLOYMENT

- 45% of Employers (via the Labour Force & Hiring Practices Survey) reported awareness of government sponsored subsidies (e.g. COJG) for hiring IEPs, yet uptake remains low – need to streamline the ‘paperwork’, and improve promotion of government programs to employers (other than through service providers): government ‘bureaucracy’ and paperwork associated with applying for employer subsidies (for hiring IEPs) is a barrier to participation.

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

CONFERENCE PROGRAMMING

- Almost no 'push back' from delegates regarding \$5 fee for Hiring Expo – so maintain the charge and consider raising to \$10 in 2019, especially if greater volume and brand name employers participate (more attractive draw and demonstrated value), as well as free workshops (more variety) and pre-event résumé review. Aligned with the enhanced value proposition should be a mechanism for measuring and analyzing results (e.g., number of résumés accepted, candidates registered, interviews booked).
- Desire for more access and networking time with panellists and keynote speakers – suggest featuring a few key individuals representing each sector hub at the Hiring Expo in some networking capacity (like a 'Chat Around' boxed lunch event, sponsored, that illustrates a basic networking process in which IEPs can actively participate/experience).
- Evaluations and surveys (delegates and employer/sponsor audiences) harvest valuable data for funders and PCPI event organizers: consider collaborating with a university or think-tank already committed to studying the IEP audience-base, and commission a research project (funded by an external sponsor), the findings which can be announced at an employer luncheon at the Conference.
- Delegate data indicates that most attendees identify as a professional (possessing a minimum undergraduate degree or equivalent) in at least one or more of the sector hub categories: therefore, Conference organizers should continue offering programming specifically targeted to IEPs versus the broader Newcomer population.
- Sector Hub Facilitation and Design – 90-minute format appeared sufficient in terms of relaying and capturing key information, entertaining delegate questions, and optional networking. A segment on managing the stages of grief, and overall mental health management (associated with immigration and employment) delivered in the Healthcare Sector hub was well received: similar content on this theme might be considered for inclusion in the other sectors.

EVENT PLANNING

- Metro Toronto Convention Centre location and its easy connection to subway/GO Train transportation continues to prove the most accessible venue for delegates attending from across the GTHA. However, consideration should be given to holding the Conference in an 'under served' area (like the Region of Peel), given the cluster of delegates attending from there.
- Retention of delegates to end of Day 1 facilitated by strong, relevant programming and engaging keynote speakers – recommend maintaining prize draws to incentivize attendees to remain until end of day.
- Logistics and program scheduling on Day 1 resulted in better than usual 'flow' and attendance at plenary as well as skill-building sessions (no distraction of the Exhibitor Marketplace, offered on Day 2 only). Attendees also seemed to take the Day 1 programming as serious preparation for optimizing their experience (with employers especially) at the Hiring Expo. Consistent messaging from the Conference emcee as well as hub facilitators helped reinforce this with delegates.
- Conference Report – consider segmenting the online version by professional sector hub, to facilitate downloading of the information by delegates from the IEP website – or proactively emailing the file to attendees as a post-event benefit (and to begin building long-term engagement).



OVERALL STATE OF EMPLOYMENT

- Some employers perceive that their obligation to "accommodate" newcomers/IEPs in the workplace is one-sided; and that there needs to be a better balance achieved between what employees are offering (skills, experience, talent), and the total package of benefits (financial compensation, religious and cultural observations, etc.) employers offer.
- Onus is on government to recognize inter-sectionalism issues and adapt programming/services to facilitate participation (e.g., women).

DELEGATE PROFILES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

CONFERENCE DATA

DELEGATE REPRESENTATION BY CONTINENT

GENDER

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

YEARS IN CANADA

AGE RANGE

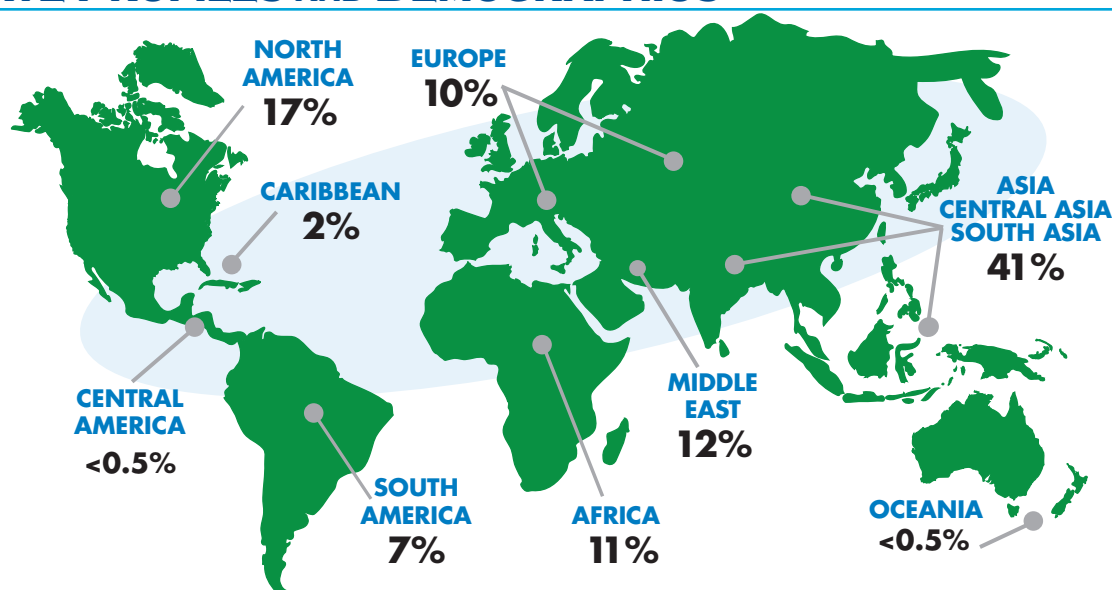
STATUS IN CANADA

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

SECTOR HUB CHOICES

CONFERENCE SOURCE

DELEGATE PROFILES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

**NORTH AMERICA**

Canada	217
Mexico	5
United State	3

CARIBBEAN

Barbados	1
Cuba	1
Dominican Rep	1
Grenada	1
Haiti	4
Jamaica	10
St. Lucia	1
Trinidad & Tobago	3

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador	6
Guatemala	1

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina	3
Bolivia	2
Brazil	26
Colombia	25
Ecuador	3
Guyana	6
Peru	4
Venezuela	21

EUROPE

Albania	6
Armenia	1
Azerbaijan	1
Belgium	1
Bulgaria	1
Belarus	2
England	11
France	2
Germany	7

Georgia	1
Greece	4
Hungary	2
Iceland	1
Ireland	4
Italy	1
Kazakhstan	1
Lithuania	1
Macedonia	2
Moldova	2
Netherlands	1
Poland	5
Romania	6
Russia	17
Slovakia	1
Spain	3
Sweden	1
Switzerland	1
Turkey	26
Ukraine	18

AFRICA

Burundi	1
Cameroon	3
Chad	1
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	2
Egypt	15
Eritrea	5
Ethiopia	20
Ghana	3
Ivory Coast	1
Kenya	5
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	3
Morocco	4
Mauritius	1
Namibia	1
Nigeria	54
Somalia	1
South Africa	2
South Sudan	1
Sudan	10

Tanzania	1
Uganda	4
Zimbabwe	2

MIDDLE EAST

Afghanistan	7
Iraq	14
Iran, Islamic Republic of	85
Israel	3
Jordan	6
Kuwait	1
Lebanon	6
Palestine	7
Syrian Arab Republic	20
United Arab Emirates	1

ASIA/CENTRAL ASIA/SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh	46
China, People's Republic of	47
Hong Kong	10
Indonesia	7
India	282
Japan	3
Malaysia	2
Mongolia	1
Nepal	17
Pakistan	54
Philippines	28
Singapore	1
South Korea (Republic of Korea)	5
Sri Lanka	14
Thailand	4
Taiwan	2
Uzbekistan	3
Vietnam	6
Yemen	5

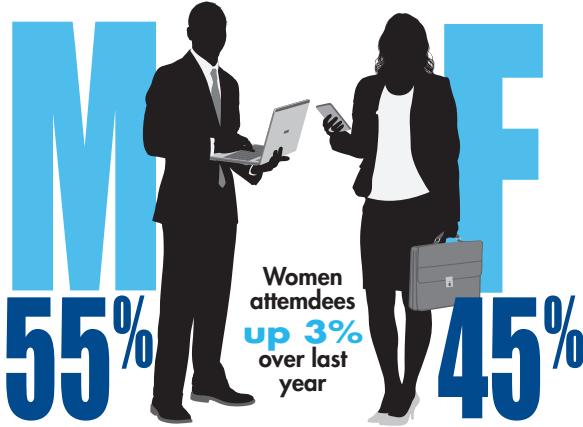
OCEANIA

American Samoa	1
Australia	1
New Zealand	1

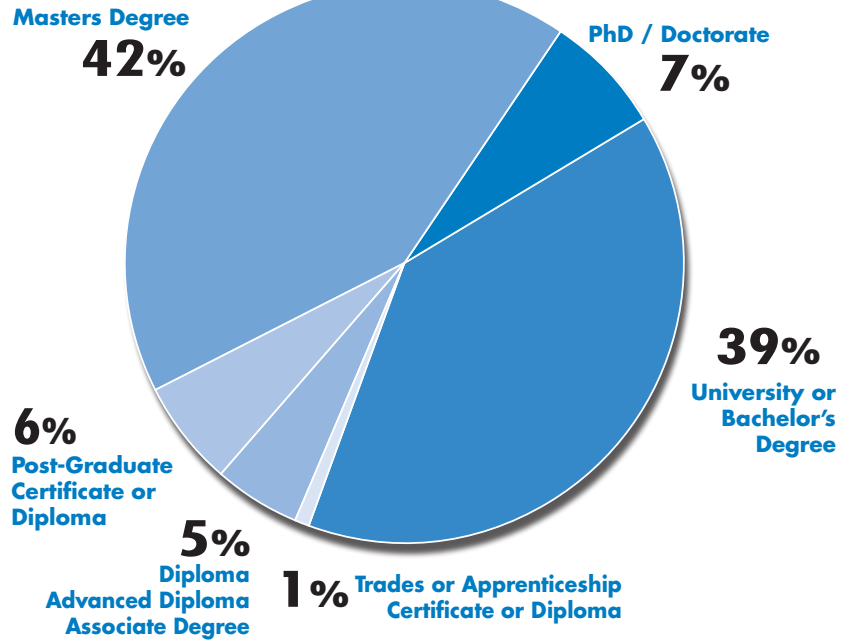
The data represented above reflects information collected of the 1,308 registrants who completed our online survey.

IEP CONFERENCE

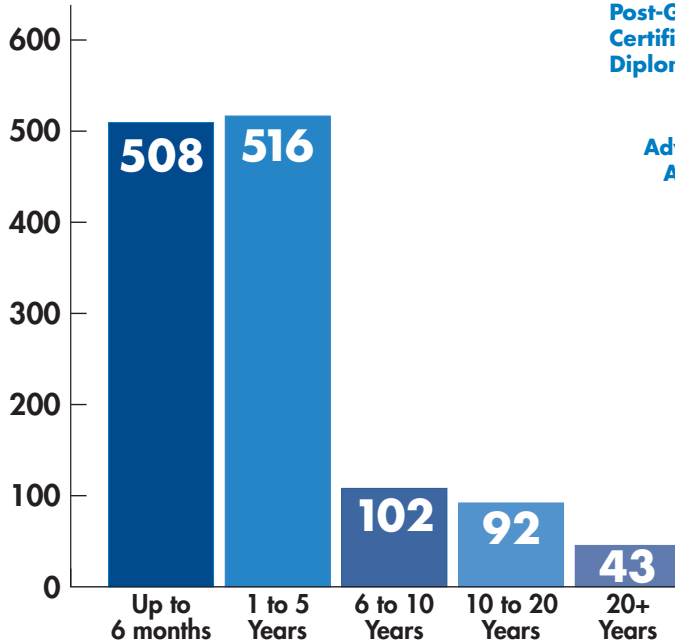
GENDER



HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

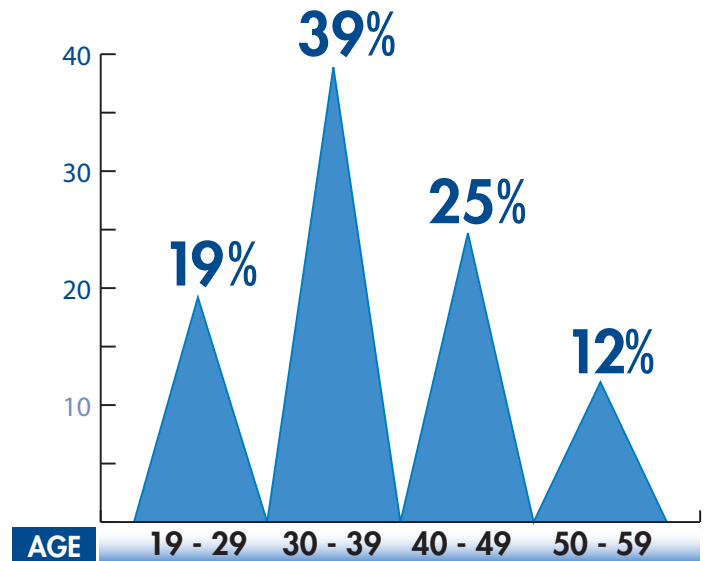


YEARS IN CANADA

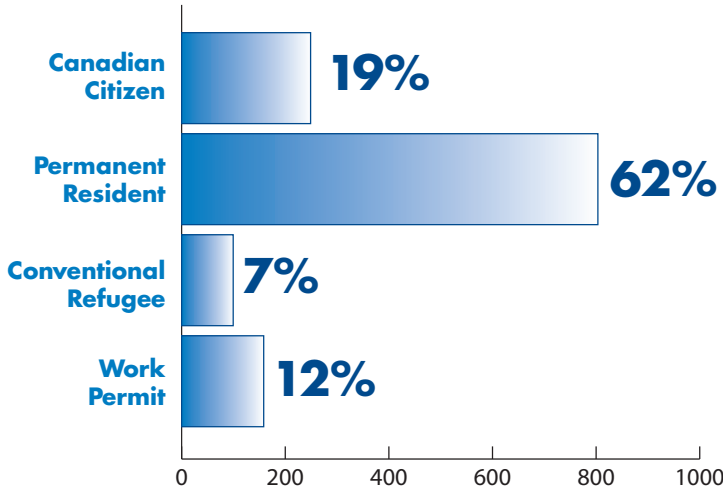


↑ 8% More millennials are registering; those aged 19-29 jumped by 8% and those aged 29-39 rose 3% **↑ 3%**

AGE RANGE



STATUS IN CANADA



The data represented above reflects information collected of the 1,308 registrants who completed our online survey.

5%

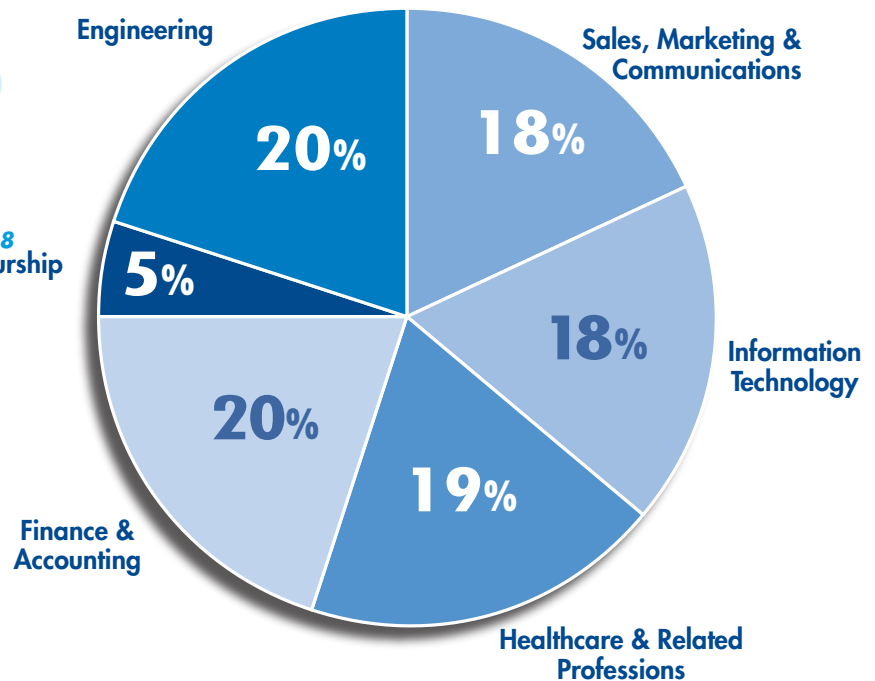
The *new* Entrepreneurship sector hub **attracted 5%** of the total conference attendees

NEW in 2018
Entrepreneurship

Day 2 - Hiring Expo

66% of participants reported being satisfied overall with the event, and **74%** of delegates were satisfied with content, presentation of the knowledge pods or seminars. Of the attending, **85%** said their confidence level in securing meaningful work was enhanced and **78%** shared they would recommend the event to others.

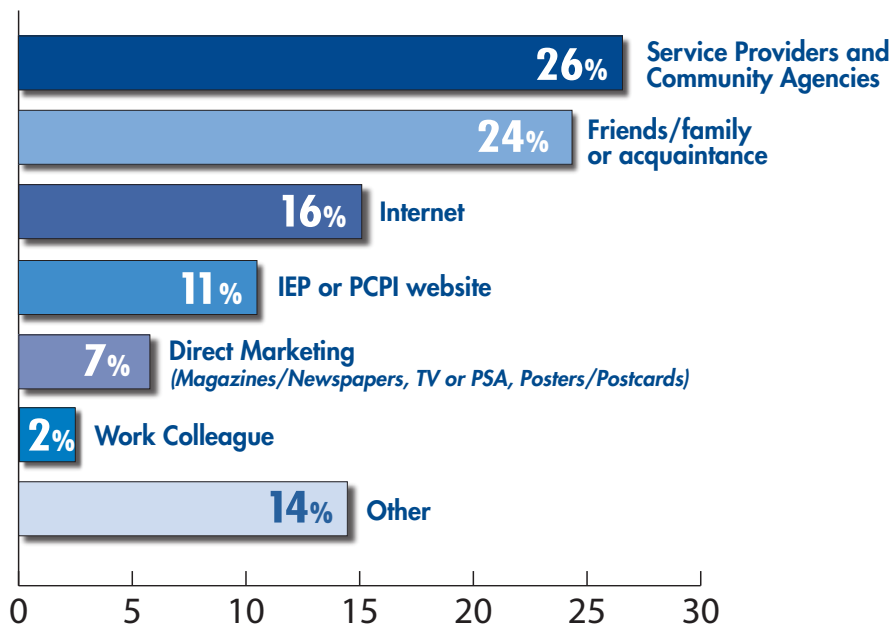
REGISTRANTS' SECTOR HUB CHOICES



↑ **2%**

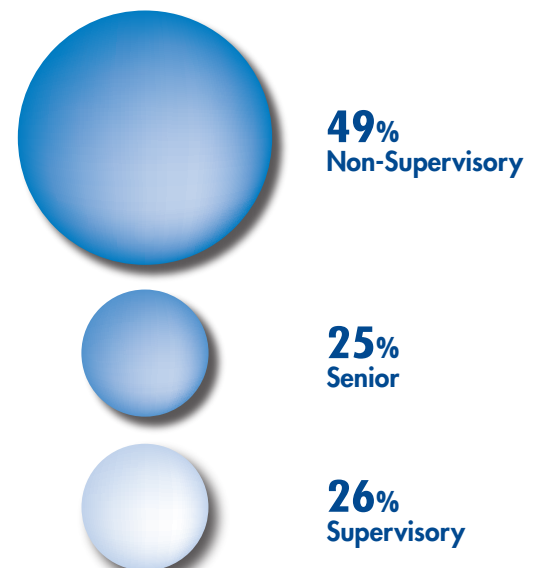
South America and European registrants **increased by 2%** while registrants from the Middle East **declined by 3%**

REGISTRANTS' CONFERENCE SOURCE



REGISTRANTS' OCCUPATION LEVEL

Of the online registrants, **51%** indicated they had the capacity to work at a **Senior** or **Supervisory** level.



The data represented above reflects information collected of the 1,308 registrants who completed our online survey.

IEP CONFERENCE

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Delegates were ushered into the morning plenary sessions by a Drum and Dance ceremony, performed by **Steve Teekens** and **Jay Lomax** of **Nipissing and Dakota Tipi First Nations**. Given that the drum is familiar to many cultures and naturally “connects all human beings”, its rhythmic sounds provided a fitting launch to an event emphasizing the benefits of networking and soft skills for career success.

PCPI President Silma Roddau welcomed the delegates, thanked the performers, and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to deliver the conference on land known as *Tkaronto*, home to the Huron – Wendat, Iroquois-Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

Roddau remarked on the evolution of the Conference since its inception in 2002/2003, acknowledging the trailblazers, led by former **PCPI President Rhonda Singer**, who identified an unmet need to provide Internationally Educated Professionals (regarded as “foreign trained” at that time) with unique help navigating the employment ‘system’. This was envisioned as simultaneously bringing together all the various stakeholders in a conference-like setting for “dialogue and interaction that promoted learning, networking, skill development, and inspiration/motivation”. Roddau noted that the ultimate goal then, as it is today, is to offer IEPs a tailored program to stimulate “new thoughts of career success and realizing opportunities”, reinforced this year with the addition of a combined *Hiring Expo and Marketplace* on Day 2.

In acknowledging the delegates’ complex decision to come to Canada, Roddau invoked one of the Conference’s core values: demonstrating an abiding respect for the courage, determination, risk-taking, pain and joy that is central to the IEP experience. *“Arriving where the culture and language is different, you’ve likely lost established networks – but you’ve made the step, and you should be proud of yourself.”* She encouraged delegates to engage with the many IEPs showcased throughout the conference, who were eager to share their advice and guidance in successfully transitioning to professional success in Canada. Roddau concluded by thanking the Conference’s many sponsors, exhibitors and volunteers, then handed the mike over to emcee **Christopher Alexander**, Past Chair of PCPI.

Alexander reinforced the theme of preparing IEPs for tomorrow’s workplace, as well as facilitating the integration of their cultural riches, new skills and unique perspectives – *“giving our City a competitive edge in the global market.”*

Erin McGinn, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Workforce Policy and Innovation Division, then brought greetings on behalf of the Province. Congratulating delegates for making the journey to Canada, she also acknowledged the value of IEPs in supporting Ontario’s economic competitiveness and prosperity.



Drum and Dance ceremony, performed by **Jay Lomax** and **Steve Teekens** of **Nipissing and Dakota Tipi First Nations**.



Silma Roddau
PCPI President

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS



Last year Ontario welcomed just over 98,000 immigrants, complementing the 13 million residents of a multicultural province representing more than 200 countries and 250 different languages.

his diversity, McGinn noted, is a “strength to support and celebrate, especially the new perspectives and ideas that fuel innovation and boost the economy. Events like these bring people together to talk about our progress in supporting IEPs, and also more that we can do to overcome challenges to develop better pathways to successful employment.”

“...we as a government need to pay attention, to resolve the disconnect by retraining and upgrading so people can contribute as quickly as possible.”

Erin McGinn

ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF
ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT,
WORKFORCE POLICY AND INNOVATION DIVISION

A report on the Province’s highly skilled workforce indicated that 80% of recent immigrants to Ontario have post secondary education, yet far fewer are working in jobs commensurate with their skill sets. This points to a priority where “we as a government need to pay attention, to resolve the disconnect by retraining and upgrading so people can contribute as quickly as possible.”



McGinn also mentioned Ontario’s investments and returns in its labour force, including:

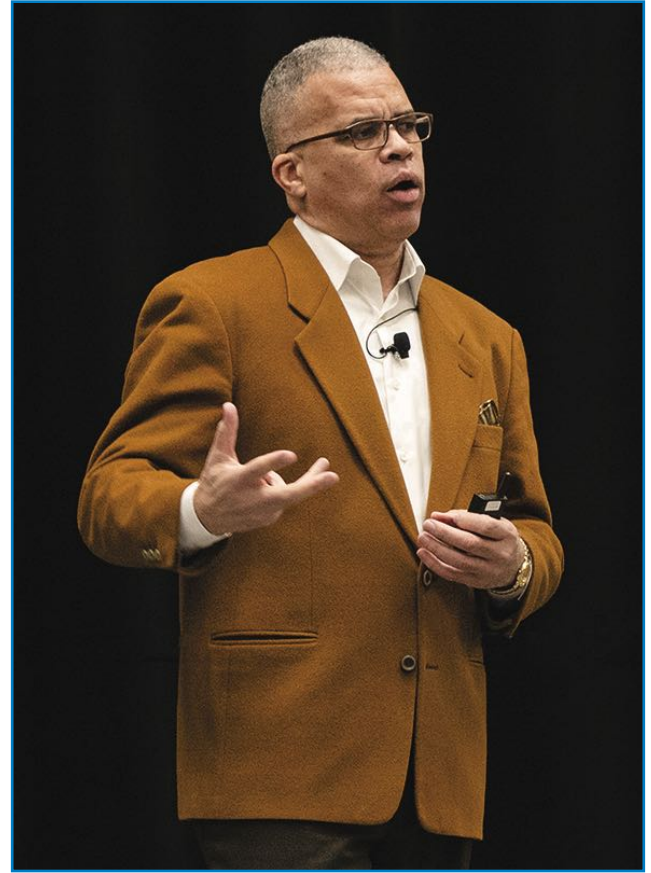
- *Employment Ontario (EO)*, where \$1B is spent annually in programming, serving 62 thousand employers and 1 million job seekers
- *Ontario’s Lifelong Learning and Skills Plan* – focused on adult learners and supports, foundational skills, bridge training and facilitating pathways to career destinations
- *Bridging Participant Assistance Program Bursaries* - up to \$5000 for direct education costs to attend these programs at post secondary institutions
- Over 4200 participants achieved employment last year in their field or related field; and over 300 attained licensure in regulated occupations or skilled trades

With Ontario working in partnership with those seeking to “bring the economy to life”, McGinn concluded that the IEP Conference is accomplishing this by assembling the key partners/sponsors (workers, educators, employers, learners and job seekers). Leveraging the experience and talent “in this room”, she noted, ensures Ontario’s prosperity through translating career dreams into practical action plans and rewarding employment.

MORNING KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Richard H. Pinnock, MBA,

Volunteer - Peel-Halton Local Employment Planning Council



As the Conference's morning keynote speaker, **Richard Pinnock** used his energetic and commanding presence to challenge the audience to be "engaged and alive", ideally to model the behaviours that employers expect from applicants. Drawing from both his corporate background (with organizations like *Deloitte*, *Royal Canadian Mint*, and *Walmart Canada*) and his volunteer activities with *Peel-Halton Local Employment Planning Council* or "*LEPC*", Pinnock focused on identifying ways to "translate and activate" soft skills within the Canadian context.

He noted that when IEPs understand the rules regarding these oft-mentioned keys to career success, then they could start the dialogue and practise to improve their capability.

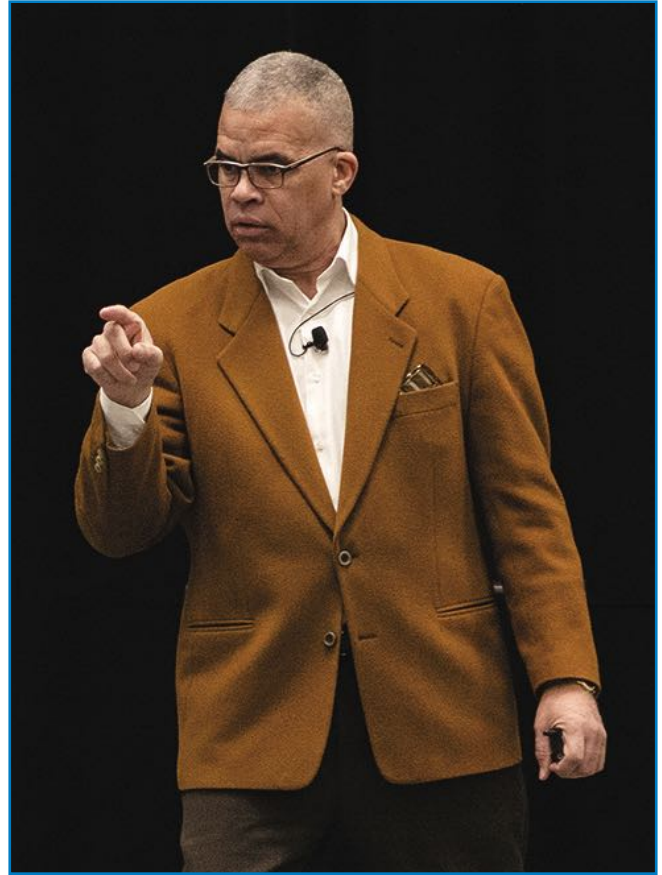
Pinnock used some startling statistics to illustrate the correlation of soft skills mastery and achieving senior-level positions. With Toronto on the cusp of visible minorities representing over 52% of its labour force, he said, representation of minorities in senior management (VP and above) across Canada is merely 4.7%; and only 5% of that 4.7% is female (or .002 %).

The opportunity 'counterbalance' to this lies in 3 principles:

1. Canada is becoming more diverse;
2. Engaging diverse talent is critical to the country's success; and
3. This creates unprecedented opportunities and challenges for all stakeholders (especially employers, government, and agencies)

For over a decade, Pinnock has conducted research (Mastering Softskills.com) concerning what will differentiate candidates from others in a hiring economy - and the overwhelming data points to soft skills, and how you present/sell yourself as uniquely qualified. Given global workforce mobility; the phenomenal growth and pace of change worldwide; and Toronto being the #1 destination for educated people seeking to fulfill their career dreams, applicant competition is especially high-staked and intense.

MASTERING SOFT SKILLS



Of note for job candidates are possession of these top characteristics:

1. Fit with company and business outcomes;
2. Interview performance (activating soft skills vs. memorizing); and translating your skills into a new environment
3. Technical and soft skills combination (i.e., job entry point accessed through hard skills, but advancing in the organization depends on soft skills)

Pinnock illustrated the third characteristic with an example of a native born Canadian (recognized as a 'contributor' in his company, and with perhaps high school and/or community college credits), whose soft skills are equally weighted with that of an IEP with three technical degrees. Advancement to supervisory positions in the Canadian workplace, therefore, depends on demonstration of soft skills. And based on this evidence, Pinnock concluded, IEPs are better off investing in mastering soft skills "than acquiring a fourth degree".

Adding more clarity to the term, he defined soft skills as "personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously". Although wide ranging in interpretation, for employers this winnows down some 30+ key skills into seven categories: Teamwork; Line management; Adaptability; Communication; Motivation; Values; & Professional appearance.

Pinnock wrapped up his remarks by challenging IEPs to develop an **Action Plan**, with advice on

- Managing stress (breathe during interviews),
- Brand management (visualize yourself as representing a brand, e.g. Mercedes: manage it and be consistent in how you look and sound)
- Confidence projection: smile (a relaxation technique); manage your conscious and unconscious biases
- Behavioural interviewing
- Mastering soft skills networking (e.g. *LinkedIn*; delegates you meet today)
- Mastering soft skills mentoring (find someone you admire to help you, or via *Mentorcity.com*)

STRAIGHT GOODS PANEL

The Conference's traditional interviewing of IEPs sharing their career journeys was modified this year to focus on providing specific advice to delegates for developing and managing a job acquisition strategy, as well as exploring new sectors to leverage international experience and skills.

In introducing the panel, Moderator Heather Turnbull commented that all three contributors were "at the top of their game" mastering soft skills as well as achieving successful careers in corporate/entrepreneurship, social profit and public/government sector positions. As a point of clarification, she defined the term 'straight goods' as "core information that helps listeners make a positive choice".

The following captures the straight goods observations of three immigrants journeying to Canada from Sri Lanka, Jamaica, and Mexico and ultimately establishing successful careers in the GTHA.

Devasundari (Devi) Arasanayagam – Manager, Community & Labour Market, City of Toronto

From her position in the public sector, serving on the IEP Conference Advisory Committee and volunteering with *Fort York Food Bank*, Devi's perspective on IEPs' job search is both strategic and pragmatic.

Things are changing for the better: Government is taking risks and looking at employment differently, engaging with all stakeholders at the table and being part of "one common ecosystem". E.g., *City of Toronto* and *Province of Ontario* are implementing some of the federal government's successful strategies in integrating immigrants - looking at what's working already, rather than reinventing the wheel.

From an individual level, what's key is the power of social capital and the sum of all your relationships – formal, informal, institutional - required to move ahead. Fortunately in the GTA you can find organizations to help you build that capital like professional immigrant networks, the *Mentoring Partnership*, and an initiative from the *City of Toronto* that promotes civic engagement. "Social capital is ultimately built on relationships generated through trust, follow up, and your genuine curiosity about someone else," she noted.

"Your own identity has to go through a transformation": Job success is about how you engage and communicate. Have a curious mind; be genuinely interested in people; and do the hard work of labour market intelligence research. Look for in demand jobs where you can apply your transferrable skills (e.g., insurance industry is hiring healthcare workers).

Inter-sectionality: Immigrants and their experiences are not all the same, including women (facing domestic burdens) and racialized immigrants ("who are worse off"). Your needs around networking must cater to and be individualized to who you are as a person. Issues of discrimination really pile on: life will be tough, but use this to strengthen yourself. The onus is on government to recognize inter-sectionality issues and adapt programming and services to facilitate participation (e.g., women).

Clive Hall - President, Lane Furniture Inc. (Canada), and ANS Property Management Services

Early in his career, Clive Hall made the decision to work for himself and since then has relied on "wonderful Canadians" to help him achieve success. He advised delegates that whether or not they were pursuing self-employment, it was key to "tell everybody around you what it is you want to do, and ask for help. This is Canada: someone will help you."

Turning adversity into triumph has characterized Hall's career as an entrepreneur. Following the collapse of his furniture company through a massive robbery, he revived the business through earning a relationship with Canada's Mennonite community. To gain their trust and respect, Hall worked on their farms for free accruing valuable lessons from their distinctive business practices. Eventually he was able to invest in their farms and manufacture furniture 50% cheaper than competitors – resulting in a contract with *Carnival Cruise Lines and Hotels*, and possibly Middle East opportunities.

STRAIGHT GOODS PANEL



Hall also reinforced the role soft skills play in goal achievement, particularly in securing business advice from accomplished entrepreneurs. While personal characteristics like persistence (never taking no for an answer), resilience, and persuasiveness are all part of the “journey of selling yourself every day”, he cited self-knowledge as being core to entrepreneurial achievement. “Know who you are and never change that. What is inside you, the true person you are – that will be your business. Stick to it.”

Harmy Mendoza - *Executive Director, Woman Abuse Council of Toronto (WomanACT)*

Citing coming to Canada as the “best decision I made in my life”, Mendoza spoke of the possibilities for IEPs in the “social profit” sector, especially in a competitive job market. She noted that charities in Canada not only support healthy communities, they comprise 10% of the labour force. Together the charitable/social profit sector represents 8.1% of the total GDP – greater than retail and approximating the natural resources sector. For IEPs especially this represents significant volunteer and career opportunities.

As Executive Director of *WomanACT* (an organization providing services and informing policies impacting the lives of women who’ve experienced violence), Mendoza offered delegates the following advice based on her own career journey:

1. Undertake a personal strategic planning process, setting goals with time thresholds of 10, 5 and 1 years. Record it formally, and break it into small action plans, with regular evaluation and self-reflection. “Despite setbacks and failures, it proved to be a powerful learning tool for me.”
2. Build your networks (long and short term) - surround yourself with those who share similar career goals, and those who can offer sector information vital to your career progress
3. Get your credentials evaluated: it’s important to know the regulations applied to your profession, and to develop a realistic plan to upgrading; and
4. Tailor your résumé to the specific job posting for which you’re applying. Consider in your job search plan accepting a position lower than your ultimate goal, but don’t get stuck: focus on ‘what’s next for me’ in your process; and maintain ethical behaviour, punctuality, and authenticity (be true to yourself) – hard work will pay off!

STRAIGHT GOODS PANEL



Harmy Mendoza



Clive Hall



Devi Arasanayagam

The moderator's ultimate question for the panel related to a quote from Ratna Omnidvar, Ontario's independent Senator who considers "resilience, renewal, optimism and imagination" as the characteristics requisite for immigrant success. Of all these characteristics, which do you think is the most important for IEPs and their career success, and why?

Q. *Resilience, renewal, optimism and imagination...
Of all these characteristics, which do you think is the most important for IEPs and their career success, and why?*

Clive Hall

Optimism/optimization is crucial to adjusting to your situation and circumstance. You never know exactly what will happen to you every single day, but if you can see an opportunity where others don't, or find that one person in the room with an idea - that could be your next venture. Often it's right there within your community. I've never had a brilliant idea or invented anything: it's all come from me networking with people, and discussing how we can use our mutual experience to change or optimize something. If you truly want to get involved in entrepreneurial ventures, collaborate with those you see and take advantage of the talent and abilities at hand.

Devi Arasanayagam

Resilience, because especially as newcomers, you're packing your whole life into a suitcase and starting over, creating a new life and relationships. Without maintaining physical and mental health and wellbeing, it's difficult to realize the other characteristics.

Harmy Mendoza

Resilience, since you really need the ability to recover, 'bounce back' and learn from difficult situations, grow and keep on track with your goals.

STRAIGHT GOODS PANEL



Straight Goods panelists, Clive Hall, Harmy Mendoza and Devi Arasanayagam took the time to engaged with the delegates following the discussion. Their words resonated with the audience members who sought them out for more detailed conversations about their own career journeys

IEP CONFERENCE

SKILL BUILDING SESSIONS

Held concurrently with Professional Sector Hubs Presentations

Following the Straight Goods plenary event delegates had the option of joining a 90-minute professional sector discussion hub; or participating in one of two free 45-minute skill building sessions: ***What Makes you Memorable***, or ***The Importance of Having a LinkedIn Profile***.



Sheryll Smith (top) and Chanelle Linton (right) of PCPI delivered 45-minute presentations on Day 1 of the Conference. The topics were: ***What Makes You Memorable*** and the ***5 best practices and 5 top skills employers are looking for.***



Jake Hirsch-Allen of ***LinkedIn Canada*** gave the delegates a step-by-step tutorial on creating an effective profile on their online site.



LinkedIn™

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATIONS

Regulatory & Licensing Thought Leaders | Employer Representatives

For the sector hub presentations, conference organizers chose this year to combine in one session, regulatory and licensing thought leaders with employer representatives.

Hub facilitators guided interactive sessions in *Engineering; Information Technology; Sales, Marketing and Communications; Finance and Accounting; and Healthcare and Related Professions*, offering delegates industry-specific information on licensing, regulatory guidelines, professional development, networking and job search. In response to delegate requests, *Entrepreneurship* was added to the roster as a sixth hub, attracting interest from over 250 delegates.

In most instances delegates had opportunity to ask speakers questions as well as chat informally with them afterwards. Continuing with a Conference tradition, wherever possible organizers recruited IEPs to serve as thought leaders, providing chances for them to share with the audience personal examples and valuable insights from their own career journeys.

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ENGINEERING AND RELATED PROFESSIONS

Facilitator:

Darya Duma, BEng, P.Eng., PMP,
PRINCE2® Practitioner,
PSP Owner/Senior Consultant at 4DPM

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATION

REGULATORY & LICENSING THOUGHT LEADERS | EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

PANEL MEMBERS

Mehemed Delibasic, M.Sc., P. Eng.
Manager, Transportation Planning
WSP Canada Inc.

Pauline Gavilanez, CHRL
Director, Human Resources
DMC Mining Services

Dr. Ali Hoss, PhD, P. Eng., CEM, CMVP
Business Manager - Energy Performance Program
Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)

Rene McKeown, CHRP, RPR, ICMP
Director, Human Resources
The Municipal Infrastructure Group (TMIG)

Réjeanne Aimée, BEng, MBA, P. Eng.
Senior Consultant
KPMG

Chris Metaxas, P. Eng.,
Principal
Executive Director of Engineering,
Mooney Metaxas Engineering Inc.

David J. Fortin, BEng, MBA, P. Eng.
CEO
DataRealm Inc.

ENGINEERING AND RELATED PROFESSIONS

INDUSTRY—SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



ENGINEERING Sector Hub Panel

(L-R) : Facilitator, Darya Duma 4DPM (standing); Mehemed Delibasic, WSP Canada Inc. | Pauline Gavilanez, DMC Mining Services | Dr. Ali Hoss, Independent Electricity Operator (IESO) | Rene McKeown, The Municipal Infrastructure Group (TMIG) | Réjeanne Aimée, KPMG | Chris Metaxas, Mooney Metaxas Engineering Inc. | David J. Fortin, DataRealm Inc.

ENGINEERING | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

- Mehemed:** I am an engineer trained in England who came here at the end of the 1990s. I am a professional engineer, currently working with [WSP Canada](#) in Transportation Department and Planning and I have 19 years engineering experience since I arrived.
- Pauline:** I lead Human Resources for a mining company ([DMC Mining](#)), but prior to this I worked for an engineering consulting firm for about 12 years.
- Ali:** I work for the [Independent Electricity System in Ontario](#). I came to Canada 10 years ago and have worked on conservation of energy issues in the province of Ontario.
- Rene:** I am a Human Resources professional for [The Municipal Infrastructure Group](#), which is a small consulting engineering firm in Vaughan. I've been working in Human Resources for almost 20 years and have been hiring engineers throughout my entire career.
- Réjeanne:** I am a professional here in Ontario and currently I work with [KPMG Engineering Consulting](#). I attended the *University of Western Ontario*. You will detect an accent and it is because I was raised outside Canada, so I do have some experience with living the whole international transition to Canada. I hope that today I will be able to help at least some of you move forward.
- Chris:** I am a Consulting Engineer in Civil Engineering. I've worked through larger design firms, before moving on to contracting, and ultimately starting a small consulting engineering firm in civil construction. ([Mooney Metaxas Engineering Inc.](#))
- David:** I'm from Windsor, Ontario and I've had an engineering consulting firm there for the last 17 years. I've been in the electrical engineering business for about 27 years. I started in the automotive industry in Controls and IT and started my own company after that. ([DataRealm Inc.](#))

ENGINEERING AND RELATED PROFESSIONS

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Facilitator's Introduction and Opening Remarks

Darya: I am an engineer and I graduated in 1985. Right now I am a Project Manager professional and I have my own company so after all this time I am now an independent consultant.

In the past we have usually had a P. Eng. panel specifically talking about licensing issues. This year there will be a presentation from OSPE about the resources available for you to start the licensing process. Today we will talk about whether you need a license for some of these employment opportunities and the perspective of employers and companies.

TOPICS AND RESPONSES

Topic 1:

Please identify the major trends impacting the engineering sector today and the implications in the labour market for finding work. Where should one be focusing one's attention in terms of emerging themes for the labour force? What are you currently looking for when hiring?

Pauline: In the last few years, I am seeing more crossovers between industries. For example, the mining industry has not been doing very well in the last while, and now that it has started to pick up, we have to look at transferable or crossover skills. We are looking at engineers and employees who have skills that are not just in one area. With IEPs we look at the transferable skills that they are bringing with them. The way in which we acquire employees is different. It is about LinkedIn, about access to employees, showcasing all of your other skills and not just the exact place where you worked.

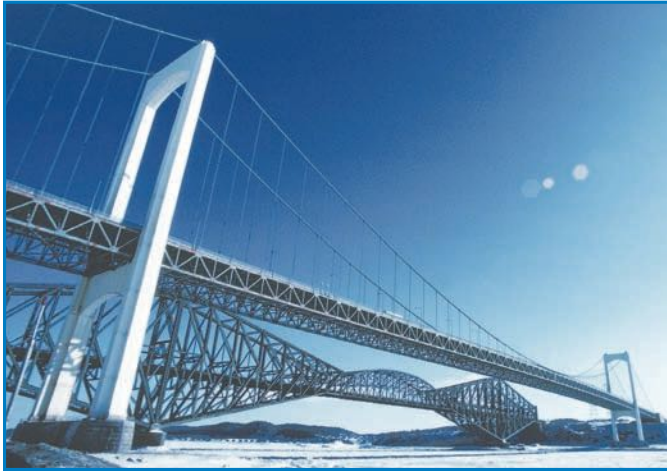
Darya: Showcasing your flexibility, and your other interests beside the specific discipline in which you are educated, will get you into an environment that might not necessarily be what you traditionally consider as a potential career. I see that in Project Management as well that there are a lot of skills, such as management skills and presentations skills, which a person from a transportation background can bring over to the mining industry. Especially if you have been involved in projects like subway extensions, it reflects the same type of language and environment.

Rene: One of the trends we see is the fact that the candidate pool is made up of more immigrants than Canadian-educated engineers. It matters for you in terms of communicating your abilities when you do your online résumé and using persuasion skills to show the interviewer or hiring manager that you are capable of doing that job. There is a lot of competition out there and there are lots of jobs too as the government is providing more money towards infrastructure, thus increasing opportunities in civil engineering. Another major trend is technology which uses skills like Civil 3D or AUTO-CAD. Those technologies change every one to two years, so keeping up to date with those skill sets through institutions such as *Seneca* or *Humber College* would be the most updated application for a relevant job position.

David: The trends we see based on the data we collect are mostly technology trends. There is an increase in complexity systems, which increases system interoperability. Everything has software electronics now, even in homes. In Windsor, we do not have enough electrical engineers in general: I would say that it is a very safe labour market - I can almost not even get people. It is also cheaper to live in Windsor as compared to Toronto.

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Ali: Speaking for the energy sector in Ontario, I would suggest you read two documents – *The Long Term Energy Plan* and *The Employment and Action Plan*. The future of the Ontario labour market and the North American market is moving towards a more environmentally friendly society. That affects all different aspects of various businesses in different parts of North America. In 2016, more than 800,000 people were employed in energy sectors and the government committed \$2.2 billion to employment and training to the energy sector including construction, utilities, technology, energy technology or a current trend to implement block change technology. So I would suggest that you look at the *Long Term Energy Plan* and see how that affects the labour market and the energy market in Ontario and specifically in Canada. Follow the market, the labour market, and see how government policy affects industries and be looking for opportunities. You must be selective in the industry you want to work in and be very smart. You are not just going after submitting résumés and waiting for people to call you and give you a red carpet welcome. It is very hard, and you have to be very, very smart.

Topic 2:

For those of you who are Internationally Educated Professionals, what was the breakthrough moment for you? What did it take for you to get in that door and start building a career?

Mehemed: Don't give up on looking for the job, look for the experience you bring and use it to try to get the job. It may take some time, but there are many opportunities now. Everyone has a different situation; some people have a family and they have to get a job as soon as possible or go back to school. The job market in Toronto is good, so don't give up. Try to get involved and do the networking in the different types of industry you come from. We all live now in this world of globalization, so if you look at the market these days, it is lucky for intermediate engineers, especially mechanical and civil engineering. You arrive here with backgrounds and some experience and realize we are all working in software, and so it is pretty much the same in most of the world. You need to benefit from that by showing the potential employer that you did similar work using different software. Do not be afraid to sell what you have. Also, things change constantly and most of the consulting companies are established worldwide, so there are also job opportunities if you have already worked for these companies.

Réjeanne: I graduated in Mechanical Engineering from *University of Western Ontario*, but I decided to do the Industrial Internship Program which allowed me to work with a company for 12 to 16 months. I had to appear for an interview for the internship position at *DuPont Canada* and that was the first time I realized just how important engineering connections and engineering experience is. I was successful in my interview but then I got called

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in for the second round of interviews. The other candidates who had engineering summer work experience on their résumé had already been hired in the first round. It is critical that you get some form of engineering experience on your résumé, and you can do that in Canada only by networking. That means that you must become a socialite which is not what engineers generally do. Talk to different people and form relationships in a way that you can pick up the phone and directly talk with them.

Ali: I did my Masters in the UK and I worked for *Shell Oil – Energy Optimization*. I came to Canada and started to do my PhD. The “ah-ha” moment for me was when I realized that your experience and knowledge are actually for you. From the employer’s perspective, they need to know how you can “solve the problem”. When you talk to people, socialize, interview, volunteer – you must show that you know what you are doing, you understand the challenges, and express what you think about how to ‘solve that problem’. Creativity is very important. When I was about to finish my PhD, I was looking for a job, and thought I would have to start as a junior - I didn’t want to do that. I started chasing my supervisor who had connections at the *University of Toronto*, and realized that they were trying to solve a problem for *London Hydro* in terms of the energy distribution network. I spent hours coming up with a solution and presented it to my supervisor and suggested that I would work for three months without being compensated for it. I realized that if I solve the problem I would be hired. If not, it would be goodbye. So I solved the problem. You have to be courageous! Get out of your comfort zone. You have to talk to people, you have to be confident and you have to be very specific about what you want to be in your life. Otherwise you are going to have to work for other companies and get frustrated by your work, or you are going to end up changing in your industry completely.

Topic 3:

I am a physicist (PhD) and have lots of skills matching Engineering.

I have spent the last two years on renewable energies. Does my age (I am over 50) matter?

Ali: That is your challenge to make age matter or not. There are a lot of young engineers and scientists who do not have experience. That is your leverage. Fifty is not a problem if you don’t have a language barrier. I have a friend who came to Canada at the age of 47 and made his career with Hydrogenics. He started sending out weekly messages talking about his experience, about trends in the industry, instead of just sending a résumé. It may sound ridiculous and stupid, but he got a job after a year and a half. He is now working in BC. It is a matter of how you optimize your skills and knowledge and apply them to what is going on in the market. As long as you add a solution, it is a very open market. If you add value that results in dollars, everyone would hire you.

Darya: Attitude has a lot more importance than age. If you can absorb a ‘young attitude’, that may affect a lot of your hiring prospects. Some of us, who are wise beyond our years, can come in with the weight of wisdom on our shoulders. We want to maintain that we are thoughtful but also that we are energetic and can keep pace with those under 30s. We need to show that we understand how to use the latest gadgets and update ourselves.



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Topic 4:

What particular skills are required for a mechanical engineer to work in a consulting firm? I am a Maintenance and Reliability Engineer - Mechanical. How can I target my career as a consultant in an engineering firm?

Chris: Everyone here is very intelligent and brings lots of experience to the table. When you apply for jobs you need to show how your skills are applicable to that specific job. When you write a cover letter, you want to show your experience and how it applies to the job. When it comes to consulting, what you are showing is your project management skill which includes time management, people management and other soft skills. These can be gained by working in a team environment. You want to outline why your specific skills would work for that job. In a recent job posting, one of the top candidates who applied for a civil engineering position shared experience that was not in civil engineering at all. She wrote a great two-paragraph cover letter that said she recognized that her experience was not directly related to our industry, however, she had worked in a fast-paced environment with a big team, and those skills could apply to working in an engineering consulting firm very well.

Mehemed: I have a consulting background in civil engineering but it is important to realize that you need to learn the market. The market in mechanical engineering has changed in Canada, particularly in the car industry, but there are opportunities for new jobs in the GTA for structural engineers as there is lots of construction work. These are great opportunities for mechanical engineers to get into consulting but they have to try to adjust to the market, follow it and learn. Try to get involved - and this is for any engineering - in associations. In the Toronto area there are mechanical engineering associations that organize a lot of opportunities for networking, many opportunities to get involved. Find out what is going on. Mechanical engineers in the last ten years have had a shift in movement from the car industry to big infrastructure project opportunities. We are still looking for mechanical engineers because of all the construction projects.

Topic 5:

As an industrial engineer, I am thinking about moving into the Safety Sector. Is that something that is of value and can you suggest a path to become a certified Safety Supervisor or Safety Professional?

Pauline: We see engineers go into the safety sector and there are two ways to get that experience. First option is that you get into the courses that will give you the necessary educational background to get the designation that you will need to work in the industry or start taking courses while continuing to work in the industry. The second route would be to highlight any health and safety background experience you already have in your current engineering experience. You can refer to that in your résumé to get in the industry. In the end, you will probably require some additional courses on Health and Safety.

Rene: You will need to obtain the courses required to get your CRSP and you may also need to work for other Health and Safety professionals. You can perhaps get involved with an association, whether it is IAPA or another Health and Safety association and which can also be added to your résumé.

Darya: I think it is the IHS Association that runs courses. There are lots of half day courses as well as full programmes that you can take. They are really not expensive.

Rene: It is not that you are getting out of your field and giving up on industrial engineering. If anything it actually strengthens your experience from a Health and Safety perspective and you would bring completely different views of it. Someone who is trained to be a Health and Safety professional would not have the same view as you would, being an industrial engineer. I think it enhances your work.

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Topic 6:

Where can I go to obtain the Professional Recognition preparation for the licensing process?

Réjeanne:

I am a Board Member of the *Ontario Society of Professional Engineers*, an organization that advocates for engineering in Ontario. We have courses where we prepare you for the PPE exam. That is the exam that you take in order to get your Professional Engineers accreditation. You can go through us or you can go to the *PEO* which is the *Professional Engineers of Ontario*. They are responsible for the regulation of the engineering profession.

Topic 7:

Dr. Ali, you mentioned being smart. How do I do that rather than just submitting résumés, at the same time as being creative and perhaps moving out of my particular discipline?

Ali:

To be smart is to follow the news. For example, the government has promised to invest \$900M in research development in the energy industry. You need to see how your experience and university education will get you into that sort of category — *Research and Development Fund*. You can go to *LinkedIn* and find out how those people or companies are connected with you. People can see what you are doing, they can see interesting articles that you are posting, and they can connect with you and find something in common with you. Being smart means being specific, and being in the right place at the right time. Go to gatherings, visit networking opportunities specifically in Toronto organizations, join associations, and attend general meetings. You can start the hunting process and create a rapport with your peers, your colleagues, and others in your industry - try to create a relationship. Relationship management is a very important part of finding a job. Eventually, someone on this panel will be looking to hire someone. Think about how you are going to differentiate yourself from all the other people. This can be done when you make a connection.

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Topic 8:

I have 12 years work experience in the power sector working as a Project Coordinator. How important is PMP certification? To the HR folks on the panel, do you consider the PMP designation valuable?

Darya: Though I'm biased, I'm fine with PMP, or any similar credential. I am always encouraging employers to say "PMP or equivalent" because there are two others, one of which is *Goldseal from Canada*, in the construction sector. I think that certification process - project management - is valued more and more. They would much rather hire somebody who already has it instead of having to send them to courses and have to pay for those courses and certification.

Topic 9:

What about someone who does not yet have their P. Eng.? They are an Internationally Educated Professional who has their Engineering degree; they do not have their P. Eng., but they do have their PMP. How would you view that?

Rene: It depends on the position I'm filling. If I am looking to hire a designer to work on a number of projects, it would not matter if you had your P. Eng. If you want to become a Project Manager and get involved with business development, P. Eng. is helpful. If you are looking at establishing yourself in Canada and you started out in an engineering role, PMP is probably not going to be the thing that sells you. What will sell you is your résumé which means your actual technical capabilities and the experience you have.

Pauline: The mining industry's perspective is slightly different. We have engineers who are technical professionals, designers and drafters who work in the office and try to design our projects because of the work we do, which is we sink shafts. In cases for individuals who do not have P. Eng.'s, we rely on PMPs or any other type of technical experience. If an employee has P. Eng. and PMP they could work as a technical specialist.

Mehemed: When you get an interview, it is not necessary that you have your P. Eng., but it is important for the employer to know that you have started the P. Eng. Certification process with PEO and that you will have it.

Topic 10:

A degree in Computer Engineering - is it worth it to go through the P. Eng. and Licensing and maybe back to study? Contrary advice was to move into programming. Do you have an opinion on that?

David: In our industry a P. Eng. isn't important, except in some safety certifications. More important skill set is programming, troubleshooting and keeping up-to-date.

Topic 11:

What percentage of women account for electrical engineers and chemical engineers in Canada? Do you have any statistics on that? Do you think there are opportunities?

Réjeanne: You must figure out why you became an engineer. Most engineers do it because there is something that they wanted to invent, to do, some form of continuous improvement that they wanted to make in society. You need to figure out what that is. Women have different skills from men but they are equally capable of doing a lot of this work. It is about finding out exactly what you want to do, looking at society, looking at politics in society, where the government is spending money and attaching yourself to those initiatives so you can get employed and you can contribute in the way that you would like.

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Topic 12:

What is the future of the construction equipment manufacturing industry in Canada, especially in Ontario?

David: I am a little pessimistic, at least in the short term. Our company is very close to Detroit and there is so much activity in the US, it is just astounding. It is kind of disappointing to not see the same kind of activity in Ontario.

Chris: We are not specifically manufacturing equipment now. A lot of the heavy civil equipment is moving towards computerization and GPS control. It is the integration technology of taking traditional equipment and making it automated. A lot of mining equipment is now run by robotic control - office and heavy civil, and road construction is moving in the same direction. There are a lot of 3-D printing technologies being developed. If you have an opportunity, start educating yourselves in that and transferring your skills. It is something to consider.

Topic 13:

How can I get my credentials assessment for my degree? How does that process work?

What is my degree worth here in Canada?

Mehemed: In Engineering, it is still important to get licensed as a Professional Engineer. When transcripts from most universities are submitted, the PEO confirms that they already have experience so that they can look for an assessment based on work experience. The least preferred option is to have your academic credentials assessed to get licensed as a P. Eng.

Topic 14:

How do I break the barrier of being called for interviews, and perhaps a second interview, but not getting hired over and over again?

Réjeanne: In my experience, everyone who has gotten hired got it through networking. Do not be discouraged - everyone needs to apply for jobs - there is no substitute for that. Everyone that has actually gotten a job was because they knew someone who worked at that company and their résumés were passed through that channel. You need to get out there; you need to figure out what you want to do; you need to join associations. Think about what hobbies you personally like to do: joining a choir, joining a sports team, things completely unrelated to engineering. Get involved in the society- let people know what you're about, what you are looking for. Have an elevator pitch so you are not spending too much time with any one person and get your information out there so that you can find out about opportunities first. I only recommend people that I actually know and that knowing is more than a LinkedIn connection. This is taking networking to a completely different level where you establish relationships with people so they will feel confident in your ability to do a job. If your area of interest is in renewable technology, and if there is a specific area of renewable technology in which you would like to get involved - for example Solar Cells – work with an idea, research it, put some projects together, volunteer, set up informational meetings, use LinkedIn to post your thoughts or recommendations. That is the way to get onto people's radar. That shows people you are a person that may have value to hire in their organization.

Ali: There are hundreds of people who are well qualified and experienced. It is about what impression they make on me. It is a matter of when I am talking to someone do I feel comfortable enough to spend 8 hours a day with this person? Be yourself, be genuine, crack jokes without losing professionalism – the human elements are important.

Mehemed: Each situation is different. If you are called for an interview, you already have a 50% chance of getting the job. Going to that interview is the most important thing for your networking. That interview means you have an opportunity to learn to communicate, to answer questions and to learn about the company, about the team,

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about the project. So whether you get the job or not, you have already won by showing up at the interview. You have the opportunity to connect with the two or three people with whom you exchanged your business cards. Use those cards to connect immediately with them and you will have a stronger connection with them than someone else who just tried to connect without having met them. You never lose if you do not get that job at that time because the interview is a great opportunity to learn. Check your technical expertise, your background, and how you fit with the team.

Topic 15:

As a follow up question, we have been talking a lot about volunteering for professional associations. I would like to ask each panel member what you think is one association that you go to in terms of networking and attending. What is your favourite professional association?

- David:** *Control System Integrator Association.* That is where I go for business advice and about careers. There are no opportunities to volunteer there.
- Chris:** *Consulting Engineers of Ontario (CEO).* They have different technical committees for which you can volunteer, networking events, and you sit on boards.
- Réjeanne:** All the engineering associations, so *CEO* and *PEO* (that's who regulates the profession); and then there is *OSPE*, who advocates for the profession. I know that *OSPE* in particular has many different committees. The *PEO* also has a variety of chapters where they have specific subject matter topics, for example drinking water. They also do tours of their facilities as well. This is a very good opportunity to get information.
- Ali:** *Association of Energy Engineers (AEE)*—they grant certifications which are required by the Ontario government.
- Mehemed:** The largest is the *International Transportation Institute*. We have a Canadian section called *Canadian IT*. The *Toronto IT* is very active and is the biggest in Canada. The second largest is the *Ontario Traffic Conference*; it has many workshops and activities.
- Darya:** *Project Management Institute (PMI)* has chapters all across the GTA, and the Southern Ontario chapter it is one of the biggest in the world and actually has two chapters - one downtown and one in North York. Lakeshore chapter is very diverse. It does tend to be more software engineering and IT focused, but it has a huge number of new immigrants. Durham chapter is focused on renewable energies. *OSPE* has networking events. And there's the *Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering*. This is kind of a subset of *Project Management* but they also have a fairly active chapter in Toronto, where you can run into the big consulting companies like *SNC Lavalin*, *Tridont*, etc.

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Topic 16:

Dr. Ali, as a Mechanical Engineer from coal and gas power sector, how easy/realistic is it to move into the renewables sector?

Ali: The oil industry in Canada is very specific. If you want to switch over to renewables from the oil industry, you have project management experience so you would be able to move that over to renewable energy projects for sure. At the same time there is a niche market in engineering sales, so most often engineers are in their books, doing mathematics. Sales people have no idea of engineering concepts and just want to sell something. If you are an engineer working in the oil industry, and you have experience in the oil industry specifically, or procurement, you can use that experience and add value. We do not have wind in Ontario, and solar panels are not that great in Ontario because of our location. So I would suggest that you go after micro green technology companies focusing on solution generation. I would use that sort of sales experience to get a job as a sales engineer, talk to customers and understand their issues and problems.

Topic 17:

From the mining sector perspective, how valuable is oil and gas experience?

Pauline: From our perspective, it is mostly about underground. If someone has any underground experience, or has experience in designing underground, which would include experience in oil and gas similar to designing pipelines, that would be something that we transfer over but you would have to be able to make the connection.

Topic 18:

I'm a Structural Engineer with 5 years of experience as a construction inspector.

I would like to know if this position is available in the consultant companies and should I be a P. Eng. to work in this field?

Chris: The quick answer is no, you do not need your P. Eng. to start. One of the things that is stressed when you are entering the job market is that you are going to be doing a lot of work that may not be matching what your experience is. For example, you go through a lot of education and I spent two summers at a construction site doing these inspections on these structures underground. It gave me experience, connections, and networking to a lot of my current clients now 15 years later. What I'm getting at is that it is a stepping stone - having five years of experience is excellent. You have to be flexible and open to a lot of these tasks that might come up. Once you are working in the company, there are definitely opportunities to grow and gain experience to contribute to your P. Eng. Many managers and people who are running the department would recognize that and start assisting you so that you grow into the ultimate goal of being a P. Eng. in Project Management.

Rene: We are looking to fill the design positions where you do not necessarily need your P. Eng., but are working towards your P. Eng.

Topic 19:

I have a question that comes up very often. How important is Canadian experience when you are interviewing for jobs and submitting your résumé? What is your perspective and what is your company's perspective?

Réjeanne: Canadian experience is extremely important. It may have something to do with employers being able to confirm the quality and type of experience is similar as if it took place in Canada, instead of internationally. Everyone I know who has international experience but no Canadian experience, has had some issues in getting jobs.

Rene: It really depends on the position. If you are going to be a CAD person or a designer or engineer, then Canadian experience is not a qualifier. If it is for a manager or a senior level position where you may need to have

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connections with municipalities, politicians, or approval agencies, then companies prefer those who already have the exposure with those. We do hire from OSPE events. I work with the *CHR Toronto Procurement* team, so we hire people from the *Toronto Social Services* and from *Peel Family Services* who are working on 16-week temporary positions with us to gauge their experience. I do not see it as a problem. Do not give up; connect with people and work with the agencies.

Pauline:

It is critical to get that experience or to work towards it. If you are not able to get into the Canadian labour market in a position in Canada in your field, there are opportunities for you to join one of those programmes about learning to do business in Canada. Programs such as *Doing Business in Canada* help develop exposure to Canadian workplace skills. From our view that would give that candidate a better opportunity.

Topic 20:

I trained as an Engineering Geologist with 4 years of experience in geotechnical engineering.

What process do I have to go through to get the P. Eng., and how many years is it going to take?

Réjeanne:

If your education is recognized from a reputable school, it takes four years of work experience to get your P. Eng. You can take the exam at any point, but you have to have four years of work experience if your educational credentials are recognized. If your credentials are not recognized, then the process is a little bit more intensive.

Mehemed:

OSPE just initiated a six-week programme that will help engineers to get Canadian experience. This new, federal government-funded programme will help engineers get some Canadian experience, or help them to take steps in that direction.

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Topic 21:

*What are some of the advantages of working in the engineering field in Windsor?
Can you please describe the engineering market there?*

David: The main jobs in Windsor are mechanical and electrical because of the auto industry. It's a smaller community, so networking is simpler - you get to know people more easily.

Topic 22:

*As an Aviation Engineer, I worked as a Quality Assurance Engineer for 22 years.
What body in Canada would recognize my qualifications? Is there opportunity for me?*

Réjeanne: The American Society of Quality Engineers should be able to help you. They do have chapters in Canada. They post jobs regularly and they have a few certification programs that the Quality Engineering / Quality Assurance community can be taken advantage of.

Topic 23:

I used to work in Management Consulting for 17 years. What recommendations can you provide me in terms of licensing: do I need a P. Eng. or other certifications that would be valuable?

Réjeanne: It is valuable to have a P. Eng. to do any kind of consulting because the value proposition is that much better for the company's clients. Also, make sure that consultancy is at least registered or a member of the CEO - the Consulting Engineers of Ontario.

Topic 24:

My field of study covered Geology and Project Coordination. What's the best way to get into a Project Coordinator position?

Pauline: It depends on what your experience is and where your interests lie.

Topic 25:

Do you hire Project Coordinators? What kind of skills do you look for beyond technical expertise?

Pauline: We look for the transferable skill: time management, managing multiple people, courses they have taken which confirm and show their experience, and their certification to manage a project or a process.

Rene: A Project Coordinator is the Project Lead, so being able to coordinate all different tasks, engineering staff, and assist the project manager is important.

Mehemed: We do not hire specifically by title. Our process is that you start as project engineer, and after four or five years of experience, you get to the next level. You get to the position through experience – by becoming a Project Engineer, then a Project Coordinator and then a Project Manager.

Topic 26:

*I graduated and immediately left my country. I have no experience in my field.
What advice do you have to help me get into the market?*

Réjeanne: You need to get out there by volunteering, and by doing things that can increase your skills, to show on your résumé. You need to demonstrate how you can be of value to the company and you do that by applying your skills to the things that interest you through research, going to different events, meeting people, chatting with people and basically showing how you engage in what matters to you.

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Topic 27:

I have five years of experience in Civil Engineering, and a Masters from the UK in Project Management, specializing in scheduling. Should I target construction companies, consultants, or the City of Toronto?

Chris: A lot of work is moving towards a design build, P3 models, and different delivery models. I do not think there is a wrong answer between those three. Most of the time consulting firms work directly with contractors and government, as a partnership between the three, to deliver a project. More importantly answer how you see yourself fitting in a team and what are your interests.

Topic 28:

How important are the software tools? Which ones are important?

Mehemed: Software tools have wide applications including in Consulting and Civil Engineering. For most of us as an immigrant it is easier to step into Consulting Engineering than into the public sector.

Topic 29:

Is AUTO-CAD still sought after in the employment industry?

Pauline: From our perspective P3, P6, P7, and AUTO-CAD - they are all important.

Topic 30:

What is the future like for the academic? If you decide to go into teaching engineering in college or university, what is that path like? That is a question particularly for females - any comment on that?

Réjeanne: Everyone that I know in the academic field started with some sort of academic education in Canada or in Ontario. Once you get in, do your Masters and Ph.D. because it helps you get associated with that particular university. Generally you start applying for jobs pretty much within the contacts that you have made.

Tips & Trends in ENGINEERING

Rene: Communicate your abilities when you do your online résumé, and use persuasion to show the interviewer or hiring manager that you are capable of doing that job.

Mehemed: Don't give up on looking for the job; focus on the experience you bring and use it to try to get the job. It may take some time - but there are many opportunities now.

The job market in Toronto is good, so don't give up. Try to get involved and do the networking in the different types of industries you come from. Do not be afraid to sell what you have. Whether you get the job or not, you have already won by showing up at the interview. You never lose if you do not get that job at that time because the interview is a great opportunity to learn.

Ali: When you talk to people, socialize, interview, volunteer, you must show that you know what you are doing, you understand the challenges - and express what you think about how to 'solve that problem'. Creativity is very important. Be yourself, be genuine, crack jokes - the human elements are important.

Chris: When you apply for jobs - whether mechanical or civil or electrical - show how your skills are applicable to that specific job.

Réjeanne: You need to get out there; figure out what you want to do; join associations; think about what hobbies you personally like to do; join a choir or a sports team - things completely unrelated to engineering. Get your information out there so that you can discover about opportunities first.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Facilitator:

Maureen Ford

Program Manager, Talent Innovation
Information and Communications
Technology Council (ICTC)

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATION

REGULATORY & LICENSING THOUGHT LEADERS | EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

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SmartONE Solutions Inc.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

INDUSTRY—SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Sector Hub Panel

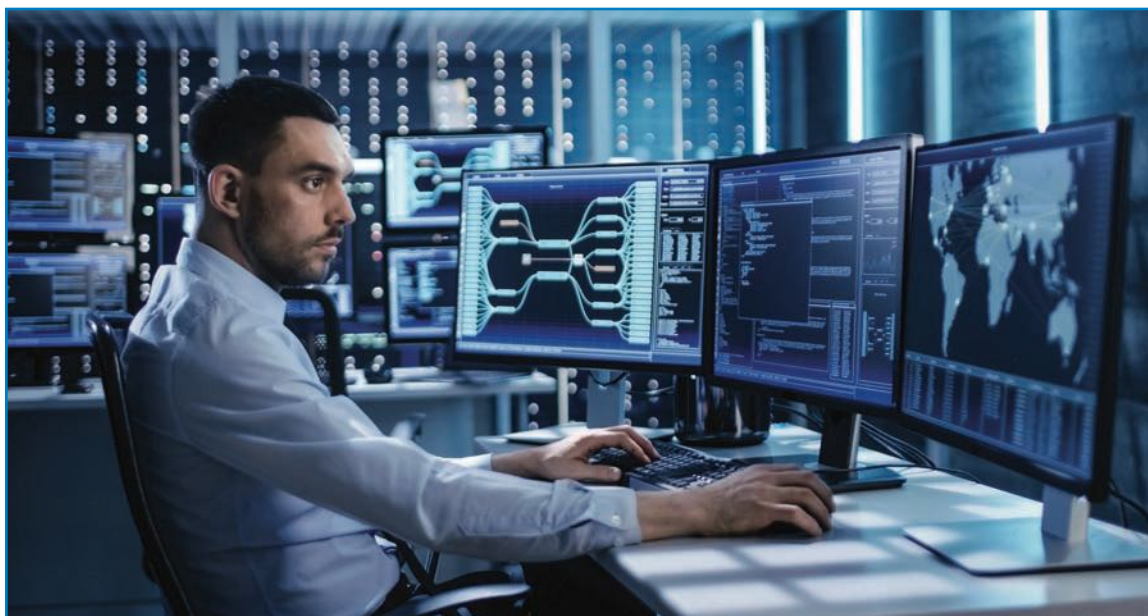
(L-R) : Facilitator, Maureen Ford, ICTC | Robert Tortian, ACCES Employment | Monica Anne Brennan, Bridging Programs - York University
Chris Hamoen, Account HQ | Ted Maulucci, SmartONE Solutions Inc. | Ron Lokaisingh, Odyessey Services | Pritam Shrestha, Humber College
Kevin Kamal, World Education Services (WES)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

- Robert:** I deal with internationally trained professionals. I mentor job seekers in order to find jobs that match their skills and experience.
- Monica:** I am involved in IT, HR and Business sectors. We offer high level IT courses for which fees are partially subsidised. Our goal is to connect professionals with companies who are looking for skilled employees.
- Chris:** I am actively involved in mentoring and coaching new Canadians in the technology sector. There is an eco system of technology companies who exist in Toronto to make the Customer Relationship Management experience better.
- Ted:** I am dedicated to the development of next generation smart communities. We are a leading company connecting condos technologically.
- Ron:** We connect companies with their clients. We help entrepreneurs and small businesses grow their companies. I am trying to get this talent into the workforce.
- Pritam:** I help IT professionals with training. I conduct mock interviews and job search support.
- Kevin:** I have been working with employers, international IT candidates and encouraging continuing education for the past 18 years.

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TOPICS AND RESPONSES

Topic 1:

What are the major trends and how does it impact the labour force?

- Chris:** Our talent is mainly intermediate. We have lots of junior candidates.
- Ted:** We don't have enough talent. At the *University of Toronto*, candidates have questions regarding where to apply for jobs. The demand is there.
- Ron:** Over the last year, we hired 3 IT Analysts. Resources are out there, but people are not advertising themselves. We went through about 300 people to hire 3. Do not apply for jobs that you are not skilled for.

Topic 2:

What are the job openings, skills shortages & long term career opportunities in this sector?

- Monica:** The employment rate is about 2.7%. If you want to work in IT, banking industry is an option. You may even get an opportunity in a smaller company. Pick the sector that best suits your skills. Make sure to sell your hard skills, but not forgetting your soft skills. Employers want to know that you are capable of working with people.
- Robert:** Technology is moving fast. About 250,000 people are retiring and we're looking to fill with new talent. Since there's not enough to fill all positions, we are looking internationally.
- Pritam:** We are accessing newcomers for vacancies. We provide the training necessary to ensure they continue their career in their field in Canada. Due to attrition, the new job vacancies are up by about 55%.
- Maureen:** Bridge training programs are very important and so are soft skills. One must show a potential employer what one can bring to the table. One needs to be able to present their skills at an interview. When you may be presented with difficult questions, always assess it and show how you can share your talent. I'd love to see more women in the IT sector. Female perspective is important. I started out as a programmer. I believe in equal pay for equal work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

Topic 3:

What are the core and complementary attributes and competencies (soft and hard skills)?

Kevin: If you are working with a program where you are looking for employment, soft skills are important. *DISC Assessment* is available on line. Download it and do this assessment as it will help you figure out your strengths and weaknesses. It is a great pre-employment guide.

Topic 4:

How are qualifications verified or validated?

Kevin: We require transcripts to come directly from the source, for example, from universities of the different countries. We can look for sample documents from India, for instance, and match with the current ones.

Chris: I concentrate on coaching new Canadians. Focus on education. Mainly in the interview, you are asked specific questions, including technology-based questions as opposed to focusing on education. There is a big push on for hiring qualified young people. You can put yourself in the shoes of the employer. They want someone who can hit the ground running.

Robert: Go to *TD Bank* and take a quick course at the bank.

Ron: Trends last between five to seven years. Look at the skills you have and how you can apply them. Do lots of research to get an idea of what's adaptive. Take some online courses. Companies are more impressed by people who are constantly upgrading.

Maureen: The key question is if you have 70% of what is outlined on an application. If you fulfil 70% of the job requirements go ahead and apply for the job. No one matches the job 100%. As stated, make sure you have most of the key things required. When you look at requirements outlined on a job application, do a check of what you have or don't have. Employers do like you to share your story, so that they learn more about the applicant. Create a new network and also a LinkedIn profile as employers do browse *LinkedIn*. To give an example, the *GIS (Geographic Information Systems)* skills set is critically needed to be a successful GIS professional and Toronto is the most vibrant in that sector. The Bridge Training programs are partly funded by the Government and one can apply for a bursary.

Topic 5:

What are the predominant hiring practices of organizations in this sector?

Kevin: I feel *LinkedIn* is gaining prominence. I have been trying to hire a manager since last September. I checked on *LinkedIn* but was still unsuccessful. My point is to ensure your application is targeted to the particular job. You must customize your résumé.

Pritam: Recruiters often hire employees, and newcomers could be employed through recruiters. *LinkedIn* is a great way to find a job. Employers advertise on LinkedIn frequently. When you are going for an interview, be sure to demonstrate your skills and what you have done in the past. Look at the key words in the advertisement and make sure they're covered in your résumé.

Ted: Employees always worry if they've customised their résumé correctly. Make sure to sell yourself properly. Make sure you don't put certain things on your résumé.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

- Chris:** Focus on creating relationships and selling yourself correctly. It may lead you to even become a project manager. Also, we focus on networks to find recruits.
- Ron:** If you belong to a psychology group on LinkedIn, you will get a lot of good feedback. Join a sales program on *LinkedIn* and learn some things from there. Most important, make sure to be on time for an interview. Always bring your résumé and dress appropriately. You must offer what you can do for an employer. If you meet with somebody and create an impression, you will be remembered.
- Monica:** Understand that the terminology used here may differ from the country from which you came, so edit information correctly.

Topic 6:

What are the top 3 key supports that the panel members recommend?

- Robert:** Jobs are not just going to be available; rather it is your job to search. It is a huge change for anyone coming from their homeland to Canada. Be sure to network, avail yourself of Bridge Programs and connect with new Canadians, especially the motivated people. It is also important to understand the labour market.
- Monica:** Look into part time programs to develop new skills. Employers do like those who are interested in upgrading their education. Keep active by meeting new people.
- Chris:** When applying for jobs, organize a group chat. This can help a lot. Be proactive, follow up and take the next steps. Get feedback on your skills set. You can use some of the leading software development platforms such as *GitHub* and *Codepen*.
- Ron:** It is very important to take action. Knowledge is potential power. Learn from your mistakes. Find a mentor. Network with people you would like to emulate.
- Pritam:** Many newcomers are hesitant to leave a voice message. As a job seeker, please leave a clear message. Also ensure that you have voicemail on your personal phone.
- Kevin:** Have a written goal and look at your progress to be positive about your accomplishments. Use any support systems at your disposal.

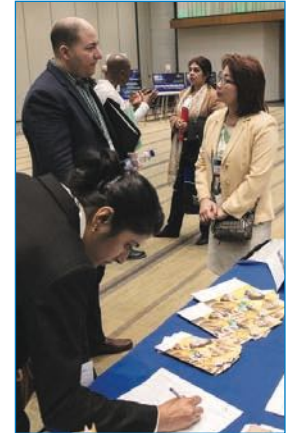
Tips & Trends in INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Ron:**
- Do not apply for jobs that you are not skilled for.
 - Companies are more impressed by people who are constantly upgrading.
 - If you meet with somebody and create an impression, you will be remembered.
- Maureen:** When presented with difficult questions, always assess it and show how you can share your talent.
- Chris:** Focus on education.
- Kevin:** You must customize your résumé.
- Pritam:** Look at the key words in the advertisement and make sure they're covered in your résumé.
- Robert:** Jobs are not just going to be available; rather it is your job to search.

DAY 2 - HIRING EXPO

Leveraging Global Skills to Create a More Competitive Canada

IEP CONFERENCE



SALES MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Facilitator

Wendy Woods, MBA
Founder & Principal,
Watershed Training Solutions

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Senior Marketing Manager, Multicultural Marketing
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SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS Sector Hub Panel

(L-R) : Facilitator, Wendy Woods, MBA | *Watershed Training Solutions*; Shashank Tiwari, *RIWI Corp*

Abhijeet Ray, *Ethnicity Multicultural Marketing & Advertising* | Diana Petrini, *venturebee* | Leo Liu, *Kruger Products* | Lina Duque, *Lina Duque Consulting*
Winnie Biala Mittal, *Telus*

SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

- Shashank:** I have 15 years B2B account experience. I came to Canada in 2016 and I had attended the *IEP Conference*. I feel I have learned a lot and therefore I want to give back.
- Abhijeet:** I have almost 30 years of experience in advertising. I came to Canada in 2010 and worked in PR. I am currently heading media and PR in a multicultural communications company.
- Diana:** I came to Canada in 1980 and I completed all of my education here. I saw that my father, a physician, and mother, an engineer, had to start all over again and struggled to find their place in Canada. I have 22 years of sales experience and I am a certified coach. I am an entrepreneur as well, and help people build their businesses.
- Leo:** I work for *Kruger Products*, which is the largest manufacturer of paper products such as *Scotties®* and *Cashmere®*. I am an IEP and I graduated with a Masters in Statistics in 2011. I worked in the U.S. at *Unilever* as Assistant Brand Manager and moved to Toronto in 2013 to work at a consumers' product company. I have 7 years of experience in CPG and I hope to add value by sharing my experiences and failures.
- Lina:** I am also an IEP and I came to Canada in 1999. I know how to land a full-time job and I worked in a law firm on Bay St. in marketing. I studied my undergrad in Lebanon, graduated with an MBA and worked at consulting firms in social media. I worked on social media strategies and enhancing them. I believe networking is enhanced by social media.
- Winnie:** I am an IEP and I came to Canada for my undergrad and then went back to Hong Kong. I worked in marketing, and came back to Canada in 2006 and started my journey. When I came here I switched from CPG to banking, to *Walmart* and now *Telus*.

SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

TOPICS AND RESPONSES

Topic 1:

What are the new and emerging trends in the field, current job openings and long-term career opportunities?

- Shashank:** There are lots of opportunities in digital B2B sales, and newer technology such as working remote. We require experience to align with these technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning.
- Diana:** A good place to start is digital literacy as it is the new literacy. You can bring your education from home and leverage social media, conferencing. You have options to lead and participate remotely, and work from home.
- Leo:** There is a shift from traditional media to new media, which are the digital and social media such as FB, Instagram and Chinese platforms. This shift creates new opportunities as manufacturers hire digital marketing managers for advertising and companies need to understand digital marketing. Multicultural and digital marketing includes tracking trends based on demographics of consumers who come from many different countries. Focus on your strengths to offer advertisers. You have the knowledge - you know your home country the best.
- Lina:** Digital literacy is the new literacy for marketing. Thus, it is important to be social media literate and also you have to be engaged in it.
- Winnie:** In marketing the key is measurement. You must know how you measure the success of social, digital, and multicultural marketing. So be up-to-date, understand how to combine with new platforms and how to measure. You need to be creative.
- Abhijeet:** You must find out what is it that employers are looking for. List what you have done and what you bring to the table. The chemistry between you and your employer needs to be right. Be friendly and approachable.

Topic 2:

Where do you get social media expertise and how do you leverage it?

- Leo:** The best way to learn is to use social media yourself and see what others post. *The Canadian Marketing Association* offers a lot of good panel discussions. You may even attend courses in social media, digital marketing and interact with industry experts.
- Wendy:** Ask the people you connect with how they found their job. Learn from them and expand your network.
- Lina:** I have never taken a course in social media. I learn by doing and so I use social media such as Twitter and Facebook. You also need to be on LinkedIn. When you send a LinkedIn invitation, add a personal note such as, "Nice to meet you at the IEP Conference." That will ensure that the person will not ignore your request. You can get certified online with the Hootsuite university platform. Use a social media tool to brand yourself for sales, marketing, and digital marketing. About 5 years ago, I had engaged with people around the time a book came out called "Lean In". I followed a VP online and asked him questions about his "Lean-In moment". The VP responded which led to back-and-forth messages between us which then resulted in consulting work. Online conversations open doors for you.
- Abhijeet:** If you do not know how to use social media, you can learn. Some colleges such as *George Brown* and *Sheridan* offer courses that are relatively inexpensive. Look into the continuing education programs. The certificate courses are useful and they help you with applying skills right away. The courses cost between \$100 to \$300 each. They are also very useful as you can network.

SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



Diana: Continuing education for a sales career shows your sales knowledge. The verticals that are growing are finance, health and technology. Experience and knowledge in these areas increases your leverage. You can increase your knowledge through seminars and books. The current challenge is that the clients' buyers are savvy and you need to offer insight and solutions in return.

Shashank: Obtain certification for internet marketing and sales. Getting certified adds value.

Topic 3:

How do I get Canadian experience? What are unique and creative ways?

Winnie: Take the opportunity to volunteer, intern, or job shadow for free for a few months to get experience and work alongside people in the Canadian workforce. University students must position themselves to what they want to learn. You may think that it is downgrading yourself, but you need to be humble and patient as it can be hard to swallow. I too took a back step and learned and now am thankful for doing that.

Lina: Volunteer on a community board to get experience or an internship opportunity. Also, psych yourself up to take a back step.

Diana: Canada is super diverse and some companies will pay you on commission. Go on sites and search for commission-based roles, choose the vertical you like and you can work there as long as you can. The companies also spend on your sales education. You must get to know your culture through your Chamber of Commerce. They help you to connect and build a network. They also help you with talent-based roles in your native country that need a rep in Canada. You leverage the experience you have and fast track the process.

Leo: You need to have commitment and the right attitude to get Canadian experience. Those who are hired have tried hard and they succeed not always because they're so good. You must keep on changing your approach until it works. Ask yourself: Have I tried hard enough?

Abhijeet: Employers require Canadian workplace experience which is not necessarily job experience. They would like to know the way you collaborate with people. You need to understand the culture and try to bridge the gaps.

SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

Topic 4:

What is an information meeting?

- Winnie:** An information meeting is a meeting with someone in the field to learn about the nature of the work or the company. It is not a job search meeting. The purpose is to gain information, understand the nature of the job, and structure of the company or department. Then figure how you can position yourself to their structure and the experience you can bring to their organization. Preface the request for a meeting with the fact you are not contacting them for a job. Explore the journey, path and experiences of the person you connect with.
- Abhijeet:** When you send a lot of résumés, usually nothing happens. I was waiting at the reception of a company while my wife was in an interview. The CEO walked in and invited me to come in to his office. This event turned into an accidental information meeting at a multicultural ad agency. That is how I got my job. Remember: you're at your best when you're not tense, but are enjoying yourself.
- Shashank:** When I came from India, I was trained through information meetings. I reached out on LinkedIn while in India and learned valuable information about Canada and industries, so when I arrived I was ready. I applied for a job on a website, met the CRO, gave a presentation and was hired for the same role that HR had previously rejected me. When in a meeting, know what you can deliver.
- Diana:** It is useful to have a personal business card with one or two good things documented about yourself. Indicate what's unique about you. Network and get out there to know people. Empower the people you speak to. You can let them know that you saw their profile and want to follow in their footsteps. Have a conversation and ask for referrals: "Is there anyone else I could talk to?" Connecting online is tough. Pay for the Inbox upgrade on LinkedIn. You can get their attention by introducing your name, career interest and purpose of connecting. Be authentic and do not be overly structured. If the person does not respond, send a card with a \$5 *Tim Card*®. Use a happy card that is handwritten and mention: "I inboxed you on LinkedIn." Also, when you meet with the person be sure to include a call to action: "Can I call you in 2 months?" Don't close the door.
- Lina:** Always ask for referrals. When requesting a meeting ask if they have time for a chat on the phone or to go for a quick coffee. You can make a list of top 10 companies you'd like information on, search for people who work there, and then ask those people for time. You can send a simple note and be up front and transparent. Let them know that their experience inspires you. Know what you want to achieve from the meeting.
- Leo:** I had crafted a list of questions as follows:
1. What are the major components of your job on a daily basis?
 2. What do you enjoy the most about your job?
 3. What do you like the least about your job?
 4. How do you see this job changing in the next 10 years?
 5. If you could go back on this career path, what would you do differently?
 6. Who would you recommend the most for me to speak to?
 7. Establish a connection: How can I add value to your company? Could I contact you for any questions?

SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

INDUSTRY—SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

Topic 5:

What is one last piece of advice for delegates?

- Abhijeet:** I am a serial immigrant to different countries. You have to create opportunities, and make use of accidental opportunities to make things happen. Be creative about how to make a meeting happen with an interesting person.
- Shashank:** Differentiate yourself. Quantify your success with numbers in terms of money earned or products sold.
- Leo:** I think most people fail from lack of commitment and not lack of ability. Send résumés, but if you don't land a job, change your approach. Keep changing your approach until you make it.
- Winnie:** Be humble, and come to terms that Canada is a different country with different standards. Be open minded and adapt. It might take time and you may need to step back. But it is a good choice when you look back.
- Lina:** Don't be afraid to promote yourself. Advocate and post on social media so that people perceive you to be an expert. Also, make online connections offline.
- Diana:** To have a successful sales career your first job is to get a job. So put the time in and spend 6-8 hours per day job hunting. Be humble and take a step back to catapult forward. At the end line you will be ahead. Create a sales funnel for yourself. Organize and prioritize your time.

Tips & Trends in SALES, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

- Lina:**
- Digital literacy is the new literacy for marketing.
 - Online conversations open doors for you.
- Winnie:** You must know how you measure the success of social, digital, and multicultural marketing.
- Abhijeet:** The chemistry between you and your employer needs to be right. Be friendly and approachable. Remember you're at your best when you're not tense, but are enjoying yourself.
- Shashank:** Quantify your success with numbers in terms of money earned or products sold.
- Diana:**
- Continuing education for a sales career shows your sales knowledge. The verticals that are growing are finance, health and technology. Experience and knowledge in these areas increases your leverage.
 - Have a conversation and ask for referrals: "Is there anyone else I could talk to?"
- Leo:**
- You must keep on changing your approach until it works. Ask yourself: Have I tried hard enough?
 - Keep changing your approach until you make it.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Facilitator:

Ronit Goldenberg, BA

Business Information Specialist, Entrepreneurship Champion, Former Manager at *Enterprise City, City of Toronto*

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATION

REGULATORY & LICENSING THOUGHT LEADERS | EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

PANEL MEMBERS

Brent Lowe

Author and Scale-Up Coach , *The Scale Coach for Founder CEOs*

Ramesh Nilakantan

Managing Director, *Monsoon Communications*

Dr Usha Srinivasan

VP, Venture Programs, *MaRS Discovery District*

Keri Damen, MBA (IMBA)

Managing Director, *University of Toronto Entrepreneurship*

Gerard Kaledjian

Founder, *New Horizons Media*



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



ENTREPRENEURSHIP Sector Hub Panel

(L-R) : Facilitator, Ronit Goldenberg, *City of Toronto* | Brent Lowe, *Founder CEOs* | Ramesh Nilakantan, *Monsoon Communications*
Dr. Usha Srinivasan, *MaRS Discovery District* | Keri Damen, *University of Toronto Entrepreneurship* | Gerard Keledjian, *New Horizons Media*

Facilitator's Introduction and Opening Remarks

Ronit shared that the session was not intended to transform participants into entrepreneurs, but rather to offer tools and information to explore doing it themselves, focused around the following topics:

- Canadian environment and culture for entrepreneurs
- Developing a business idea and putting it to use
- Options for financing a business
- Words of motivation

ENTREPRENEURSHIP | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

- Brent:** Author, coach, advisor and owner of three businesses by the age of 24. He is currently owner of *The Scale Coach for Founder CEOs*.
- Ramesh:** Owner of the advertising company *Monsoon Communications Inc.* He has taken his business from India, to Dubai, to Canada and has been able to establish himself as a business owner.
- Usha:** Vice-President for Venture Programs at *MaRS*. She has been an educator, researcher, and scientist and has had a successful career across various countries including India, Iran, UAE, USA and Canada.
- Keri:** Managing Director at *University of Toronto Entrepreneurship* where she works on end-to-end business processes and collaborates for strategic initiatives. Her previous position was as Director – *MaRS*.
- Gerard:** Owner of his video production company *New Horizons Media*. He works closely with not-for-profits to launch their social messages. He is also producer of the web-based show “*New Canadians*”.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

TOPICS AND RESPONSES

Topic 1:

Describe the Canadian environment and culture for entrepreneurs/entrepreneurship.

- Ronit:** The power of entrepreneurship is to innovate, create jobs and drive the economy. More and more individuals go towards entrepreneurship to create their own jobs. People are creative and one needs to find out one's own creativity. According to a *Globe and Mail* report from 2016, immigrant entrepreneurs are highly innovative as they bring in new products to the Canadian economy. She also stated that the Centre for Innovation – Calgary suggests that the culture for entrepreneurship is good.
- Usha:** I am aware how hard it is as a new Canadian to find something that both interests and satisfies you. Ontario is a melting pot of culture. The kind of programming MaRS has developed is greater than as compared to other provinces. MaRS supports technology-based business. The government also supports non-technology based businesses and students can receive help from University programs.
- Keri:** There were not many programs to support new businesses 10 years ago. Now, there has been an explosion in the ecosystem to support new businesses, so the time for entrepreneurship is now. The university culture has also changed from teaching about business to increasing training in business. Entrepreneurship is everywhere, and the ecosystem map can help understand and navigate through it.
- Brent:** The culture for entrepreneurship is definitely there as there is continuous addition of businesses in the market and systems to support the business.
- Gerard:** The way people used to view entrepreneurship has changed in the past few years. Previously, for newcomers the mentality was to become an entrepreneur if they could not find a job. This attitude has changed. Many new immigrants now turn to entrepreneurship to explore their interests and abilities.
- Ramesh:** I was always an employee and I became an entrepreneur when I came to Canada. I feel it is simpler to start a company here because it does not have the bureaucratic processes of my home country. I feel the systems are designed to support the entrepreneur.

Topic 2:

How do you develop a business idea and put it to use?

- Ronit:** Though each of these panellists knows how to start a business, they are also aware that not every idea is going to be successful: one needs to assess the idea, evaluate the business concept, its viability, the market, customers, competition, and pricing.
- Keri:** There is a certificate program in entrepreneurship at *University of Toronto* which is open for all. The central point is not only to have an idea to start the business but also be more committed in the process of growing the business and finding the right market-fit. It is important to not personalize the idea so much that it takes the focus from delivering a great product or service. The story of the 'Top Hat' app owners can help understand how to keep the business model flexible. Though university professors unanimously appreciated their product, they were not able to sell it to the professors or the university management team. They were able to successfully build the business by shifting their customer base to university students.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



- Usha:** Even before one looks at the product-market fit, one needs to look at the problem-solution fit. It is a tendency that when we have a great idea we tend to listen more to those who agree and appreciate the idea and not the naysayers. It is important to listen to the negative feedback to correct the problem. There are different types of resources we look at for information and hence it's also important to look at what the customers feel. It is important to note that you may have to refine your business steps as you go along and also to figure out who is the paying vs. consuming customer. In many cases the one who pays for the product or service is different from the one who consumes it. You can also refer to other industries for ideas.
- Brent:** You need to know the 'hows-and-whats' of the day-to-day of doing a business. We sometimes come up with a particular solution and get married to the idea. Instead, become curious and have curiosity about the problems people have and would pay money to find a solution. So keep collecting as many problems as you can so that you are able to come up with solutions. I heard in a podcast discussing start-ups that 80% of the business ideas that are pitched eventually become different to the original idea. The start-up support is given not only based on the idea but based on the person's capacity to come up with solutions.
- Ramesh:** The importance of having the idea validated cannot be downplayed. Spend enough time in finding the competition's strengths and weaknesses. Also, keep the core of your business the reference point to making decisions. We have done so in our business and it has helped us differentiate from our competitors.
- Keri:** Keep an open mind to realize the problem and find the solution. You can also test your business idea on a smaller scale and then decide whether you want to take the next step.
- Ronit:** Remember the importance of passion, soft skills and industry knowledge in developing and activating your idea.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



- Usha:** Start the business and proceed at your pace. It is risky, so you need to find out if it is for you. There are free one-on-one entrepreneurship courses online which can help you. Take it easy and take into consideration that there is financial risk. There are other programs like *Futurpreneur* and *Angel networks* which can provide financial support and also you do not need to give up the equity early. Focus on building the business.
- Brent:** Looking for business financing is like researching the market. There will be a 1st, 2nd, 3rd and probably even a 4th time that you will have to ask people for money. Having this information will help you develop a better business plan.
- Gerard:** Another option to fund your business is through *Access Community Capital Fund*, which gives loans as low as \$500, but it helps in building your credit line. There are other non-traditional ways of getting finances. I can share my example. As I work with not-for-profits, I pitch them my proposal, which they include in their funding budgets. You can even be eligible for a loan up to \$100,000 for existing business through *Business Development Bank of Canada*.
- Keri:** You need to be aware that Ontario has funding plans that apply only to Ontario residents. You can keep checking the funding options in other provinces. Though crowd funding may sound easy, you need a well thought marketing plan to qualify for it. Your business idea needs to gather immediate momentum otherwise nothing happens.
- Ramesh:** When you start with your own money in the business, you need to be aware that your personal lifestyle will also have to change. When I started my business in partnership, we had to modify our lifestyle as well.
- Usha:** Also, credit unions are much more accessible for funding. Another mistake new entrepreneurs make are that they do not write clear contracts. Ensure that you have clearly written contracts, especially those related to payments.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

Topic 4:

What is the importance of motivation to the entrepreneur?

- Gerard:** It is important to have a supportive network, especially in the beginning. You must have at least two to three friends, who may already be doing a business, whom you can call for support and to talk. I keep reminders of things that I have achieved in the past. It helps me remember that I have overcome challenges in the past and I will overcome them now as well. Also, learn to say 'no' to short-term profits as they may take you away from achieving your long-term goal. In addition to building a support network, you also have to build business allies and strategic relationships. To give an example, I do not get my business cards done from the person who refers his clients to me.
- Keri:** In the beginning you need to do everything by yourself. You may have to do jobs you do not like or you do not have the skills for, but you can remind yourself that you are not going to do it forever. Also, have goals so that you don't get stuck and you can celebrate each of them as you accomplish them.
- Usha:** An opposite scenario is also true, where you feel that you can do everything, and it takes off the focus from what exactly you need to do. It is important to bring someone on board who has the expertise. So ensure that your paper agreements clearly define the parameters of your contract. Also, if you feel you are new at this, you can begin by working for someone else in the business of your interest, gain experience and then launch your own business.
- Ramesh:** Our Company has a policy of *'please scream for help'*. Also when my partner and I got into this venture, we teamed up because we had complementary strengths, which help the business.
- Brent:** Entrepreneurship is a lifestyle choice. I work harder than I did while I was working for someone else. It is full of adventure and confusion, and there are tons of people going through the same thing. Therefore, become a part of a supportive community, enjoy and have fun.

Topic 5:

What are the general rules and regulations for business?

- Ronit:** Each municipality has different rules and regulations, so you need to research the specific ones related to your business.

Topic 6:

How do you become a lawyer in Canada?

- Ronit:** The *Government of Canada* has online guides with information about regulations and support to start your practice.

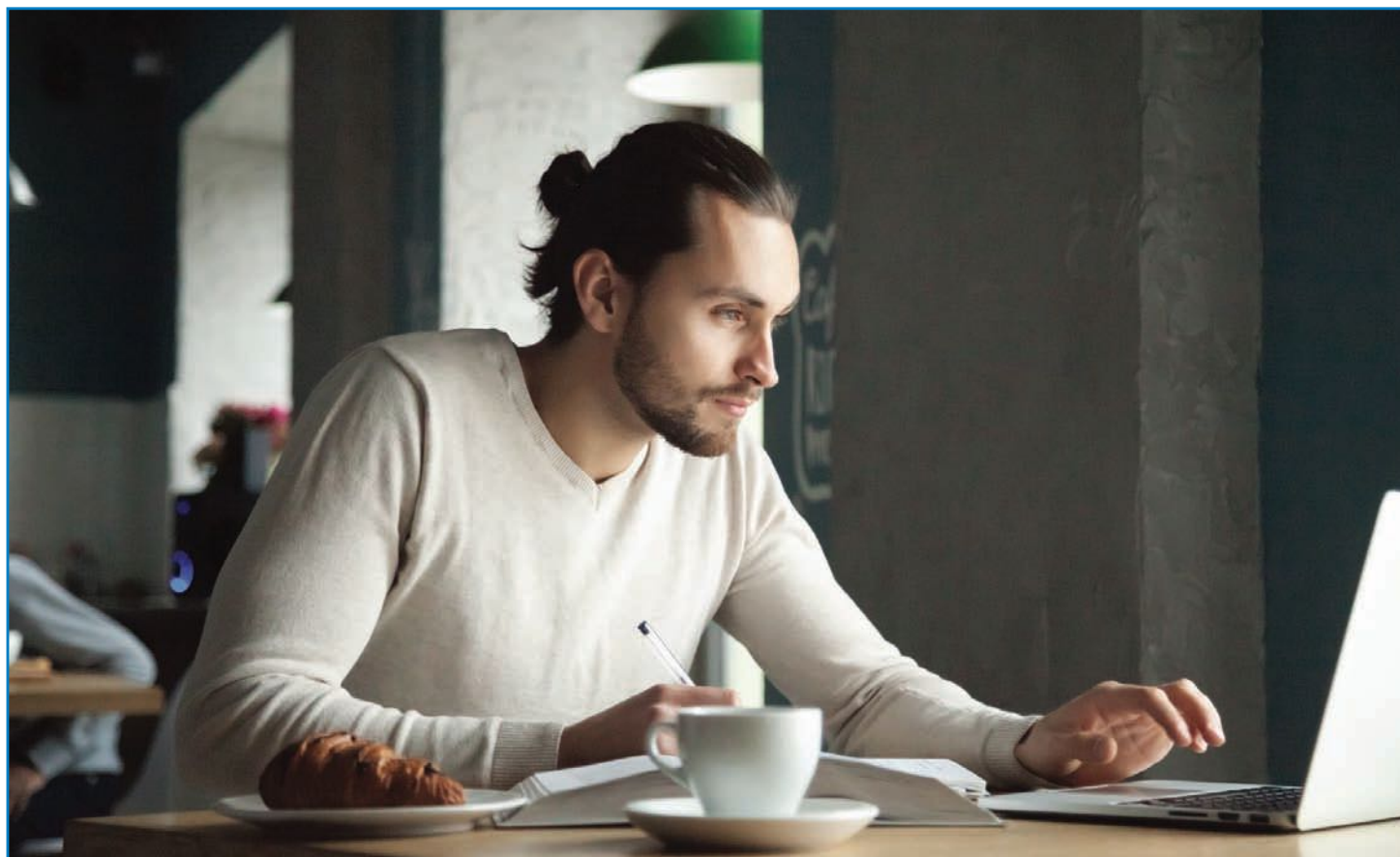
Topic 7:

How do you find a mentor in business?

- Gerard:** *Futurpreneur* can match you with a mentor for 2 years. You can receive all services at the *Centre for Social Innovation (CSI)* for a small fee. These services also involve business consultation.
- Ronit:** You can find support with *City of Toronto – Toronto Enterprise*. In order to qualify, there are conditions, as the City wants to ensure that you are ready for the free mentorship service. There are other organizations which give paid information. If you have specific mentorship requirements, such as legal information, you can get pro bono service as a newcomer for free.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



Topic 8:

Have you ever hesitated while trying to start your business?

How do you know when you are ready, and did you take support from family?

Brent: I stumbled into entrepreneurship at 17, at a time I did not have many responsibilities. It really does not matter at what age you start or how much experience you have, it is for the person to experience. I had a business from 17 to 24 years of age and then I started another business with a new set of experiences.

Topic 9:

I want to diversify food in Toronto, but I am having difficulties with the City permit? What should I do?

Usha: It is difficult to have a food-truck business because of the permits and because it can become very expensive. The *City of Toronto* has a food incubator known as *Food Starter*.

Gerard: You can also take your idea to another location. There are food truck festivals you can participate in.

Final advice for delegates/would-be ENTREPRENEURS

Ronit: The facilitator wrapped up the panel discussion by reiterating the importance of networking, sharing information, and exchanging knowledge and support.

DAY 2 - HIRING EXPO

Leveraging Global Skills to Create a More Competitive Canada

IEP CONFERENCE



FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

Facilitator:

Heather Turnbull

President, Turnbull Consulting Group,
Managing Partner, Lanaverde Inc.

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATION

REGULATORY & LICENSING THOUGHT LEADERS | EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

PANEL MEMBERS:

Evert Akkerman, CHRL, LL.M

Principal Advisor
XNL HR & Communications

Sushma Subedi, CPA, CGA

Director of Finance & Operations
Women's Habitat

Jenny Okonkwo, MBA, CGMA CPA, CMA

Founder
Transform Consulting Inc.

Vishal Mehta, CPA, CMA, MBA, B.Eng.

Team Leader, Business Planning and Strategy
TELUS

Rauf Ali Jan, CPA, CA, ACA (Pakistan)

Director-Disclosure Controls & Procedures Office
Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)

Carmen Jacques, CPA, CGA

Student Recruitment Manager
Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



FINANCE & ACCOUNTING Sector Hub Panel

(L-R) : Facilitator, Heather Turnbull, *Turnbull Consulting Group* | Evert Akkerman, *XNL HR & Communications*
 Sushma Subedi, *Women's Habitat* | Jenny Okonkwo, *Transform Consulting Inc.* | Vishal Mehta, *TELUS* | Rauf Ali Jan, *Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)*
 Carmen Jacques, *Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario*

Facilitator's Introduction and Opening Remarks

Heather: This session is designed to share information, industry trends and job finding tips with you, so you can build a rewarding career in the financial services sector in Canada and the GTHA (Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area). Individual consultation on the regulatory environment, academic qualifications and credential evaluation/recognition, as well as certifications is more fully available at the Exhibitor Marketplace tomorrow.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

- Evert:** I came to Canada in 1999. I did a few jobs before getting my first real opportunity at *Duca Financial Services*.
- Sushma:** I was at this conference as a newcomer and am now on this panel. I have been working in the not-for-profit sector for 7 years.
- Jenny:** I was born in the UK (United Kingdom) of Nigerian heritage and I am looking to build a legacy for women arriving in Canada.
- Vishal:** I arrived in Canada in 2012. I believe one should not regret the move. Be patient and you will succeed.
- Rauf:** I came to Canada in 2013 and found it was very hard to get a job. Desperately, I took the first contract job, achieved a permanent position, got CPA certification and now I give back to the CPA community.
- Carmen:** My focus is recruitment of Internationally Educated Professionals. Originally I am from India, and I came to Canada in 2004. It is the designation I hold now that has allowed me to get to where I am today.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

TOPICS AND RESPONSES

Topic 1:

How do I build networking skills?

- Rauf:** In India you have strong relationships with both family and business colleagues. If someone you know can introduce you to a job, it is better. The similar principle applies here: and although a lot of people are shy, it is important to reach out to someone.
- Jenny:** Also bear in mind, when networking it is better to have a point of reference. I connected with the Toronto chapter of a financial certification organization I was already a member of, back home. There are also private immigrant networks. TRIEC mentoring partnership, [HYPERLINK "https://triec.ca/our-initiatives/mentoring-2/"](https://triec.ca/our-initiatives/mentoring-2/) <https://triec.ca/our-initiatives/mentoring-2/>, aims to partner you with a mentor in the field you want to enter, which can be helpful.
- Carmen:** Networking is always a two-way street: be proactive, get out there and get out of your comfort zone. It will get easier with practice. Meet people wherever you go - school, place of worship, and community centres.
- Evert:** My first contact here was someone who wrote a magazine article published in Holland. I wrote to the author before arriving. The best networks start by giving. One trick is to go to seminars, take notes, type them up and share it with your networking contacts. You can also ask for suggestions on how get in touch with someone from a particular company. Ask for introductions and not jobs. If it is on the table pick it up: it may not be what you want, but it could lead to something else.
- Sushma:** Before networking, ask yourself questions including what you want, and know before you start speaking to people. Remember reciprocity - you bring a lot to the relationship. Ask what can I do to help you?

Topic 2:

What are the career opportunities in Wealth Management, given there is lots of money coming into people's hands, especially through inheritance from parents?

- Rauf:** RBC has several streams for regular Wealth Management and high net worth Wealth Management. Financial Advisory is a growing field. People need advice on tax treatment on retirement investments and TFSAs, and if you have experience in these areas you can transition into that in Canada.
- Vishal:** Every company has wealth that needs managing. Entrepreneurs also require advice in this area of wealth management.

Topic 3:

Do you have to register to start an accounting practice?

- Jenny:** People (clients) require the proof of certification, for the comfort of you being up to date. Most accountants, to deal with that, buy an existing private accounting practice rather than start a new one.
- Carmen:** Do your homework and connect with immigrant serving organizations to develop your business plan.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH

Topic 6:

During an interview how do you handle a gap on your résumé?

Evert: You must address it and be open, otherwise people make up things. You can give concrete reasons such as there was a restructuring at my previous employer, so I took some time to orient myself to the current labour market and what I want to be doing. If you have awards or recognitions add them to your résumé, as this demonstrates accomplishments, shows your effort, perseverance and contribution. Recognitions could include fundraising (like a run for cancer), to employee of the month.

Jenny: In the interview, a classic mistake of immigrants is in their response to “tell me about yourself”. Learn to pause, and ask for a bit more information about what is expected in the role. Write it down and then share just those things about yourself that relate to the position for which you’re applying, point for point. Be concise with your responses.

Topic 7:

How do you respond to being considered as over qualified for a position?

Vishal: Thank them for their feedback and ask what roles you should be targeting instead.

Topic 8:

If I already have a designation in my former (home) country, do I need the Canadian designation right away? Can I get a job with what I have?

Carmen: If you just want a job you can do it. If you want a good position, the ability to move up, have a career, you definitely need the designation.

Jenny: I had a designation with the world’s largest accounting organization, and was shocked that this is not recognized in Canada. Then I became strategic about roles. The *CPA Ontario* designation increased the pay for doing the same roles. So I was able to do the exact same work for more pay.

Sushma: You need to have long-term goals and short-term goals. Designation here shows the long-term goal of investing in your life here. Start with volunteer positions to get the Canadian experience.

Topic 9:

How do I get my résumé noticed? How do I stand out from many other applicants to secure an interview?

Vishal: People only have a couple of minutes to check the résumé. A good summary section at the top with 3 or 4 bullet points related to the position posted is always advised. Also, ensure you use an easily readable font size.

Carmen: At a glance the format is important. Indicate your accomplishments and education. List achievements and how they impact the position you are seeking.

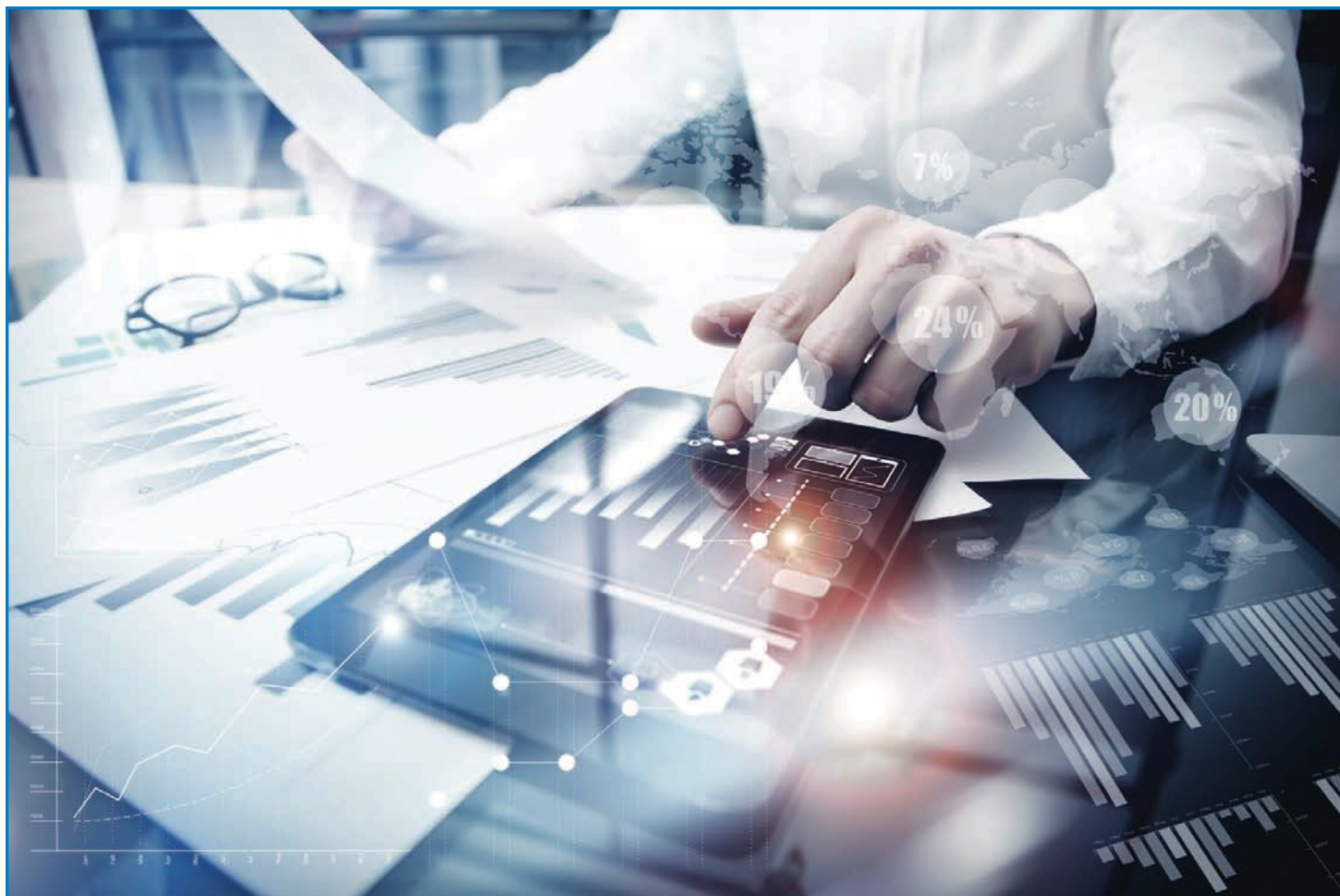
Jenny: If you are looking for similar positions at different companies or a variety of roles, you can create a master résumé, and then get good at tweaking it, using the key words from the posting. You must include accomplishments, which must be verifiable and measurable. List your key 4 or 5 accomplishments at the top. Take your testimonials with you to the interview. Written testimonials are like having a cheer leader in the room with you.

Rauf: Include the key words from the posting. Make sure to modify your résumé to accommodate what HR is looking for. Include actionable items.

Vishal: When you indicate any currency value in your résumé, ensure that it’s converted into Canadian dollars. This helps the reader have a point of reference.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



Tips & Trends in FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Evert: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will meet lots of people: stay in touch with them, someone will open the door for you. • You can also ask for suggestions on how to get in touch with someone from a particular company. • Ask for introductions and not jobs. Believe in yourself and don't give up. |
| Sushma: | Find as many volunteer activities as possible. |
| Jenny: | Practise your networking skills. |
| Vishal: | Get out of your comfort zone. |
| Rauf: | Stay the course. |
| Carmen: | Persevere and stay positive. |

HEALTHCARE AND RELATED PROFESSIONS

Facilitator:

Dr. Nava Israel, PhD

Program Manager, Bridge Training Program for
Internationally Trained Mental Health Professionals (BTMH)
Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto

SECTOR HUB PRESENTATION

REGULATORY & LICENSING THOUGHT LEADERS | EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

PANEL MEMBERS:

Dr. Mayada Sharef

Senior Program Development Coordinator
HealthForceOntario

Dr. Ruth Lee

Executive Director
CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses

Carolyn Menezes

Manager of the International Department,
Bridging Programs and the Michener English Language Assessment
The Michener Institute of Education at UHN

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HEALTHCARE AND RELATED PROFESSIONS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON LICENSING, REGULATORY GUIDELINES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING AND JOB SEARCH



HEALTHCARE Sector Hub Panel

(L-R) : Facilitator, Dr. Nava Israel, PhD, Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto | Dr. Mayada Sharef, HealthForceOntario
 Dr. Ruth Lee, CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses | Carolyn Menezes, Michener Institute of Education at UHN

Dr. Nicodeme Mugisho-Demu, MD, Alternative Careers for IEHPs; and IMGWPN | Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health

Facilitator's Introduction and Opening Remarks

Nava: I am the Program Manager for a bridging program for mental health professionals. We provide information on the registration process for therapists and other mental health professionals. We face a transition when we come to Canada. Though we immigrated by choice, our transition is not generally how we envisioned it. Transition is a significant life event which can be described by the 5 stages of Grief, namely: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Sadness and Acceptance. Your goal needs to be to want acceptance.

HEALTHCARE | PANEL INTRODUCTIONS

Mayada: I am an advisor with a background as a physician. In 1996 I started working with IEPs. I have been with HealthForce's Access Centre for IEPs for ten years where I give programs for international professionals.

Ruth: I am the Executive Director at CARE Centre. I am a Clinical Associate Professor at the School of Nursing at McMaster University. My degrees include BSCN, MSCN, and a PhD in psychiatry. I have a wide range of Clinical experience/expertise. I will focus on culturally competent practice and the issue of diversity.

Carolyn: I am an IEP. I came to work in Canada in 1988. I began my career in the Michener Institute's International Department, doing English Language Assessment. Since then I have developed customized curriculum for international students. I have been leading the bridging programs since 2015.

Nicodeme: I am Lead Consultant from Community Matters Toronto. I work for the waste prevention network. I want to contribute designing and giving programs for IEP integration needs.

Shafi: I am the co-founder of the innovative internationally trained medical doctors post graduate bridging/training program. I work with internationally recognized scientists.

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Presentations: Each thought leader prepared slides which accompany this Report

PRESENTATION 1:

Mayada: The Access Center is part of *HealthForce Ontario*—a government strategy started in 2006. We help people by providing information and advice. We also have information about community resources that can be helpful. Our programs are more than information. The regulatory bodies give presentations at the centre and they do one-on-one sessions. They talk about licensing and give orientations that are geared to specific professions. We also help individuals navigate different professional pathways as the licensing process can be long, unpredictable and people need support.

There are courses to help people understand the Canadian healthcare culture and culture generally. That will help you become more successful. We will talk about differences between registered and non-registered professions. We also have online resources that benefit most people.

Ontario Regulated Health Profession (*see list on PPT slides*) – when you have these qualifications, you can practise. We see that some people who come to us end up working in another regulated profession and some choose to work in an unregulated profession. The majority of our clients are doctors and the second group is nursing.

There are Alternative Career Possibilities which can be pursued with the right skills and without further training. Some people have chosen to stay in these alternative careers and some take them to get a job in healthcare while working on the licensing process.

You have options for financial support such as if your training is covered by *OSAP*, you could get a student loan. There is also an *Immigrant Access Fund*, which none of our clients have been denied for up to \$10,000 CAD. There are other student loans, such as *CanLearn*, which are available at similar interest rates.

Language and communication is most specific for occupation related language. The other times your basic English needs improvement. To access our training programs, the individual requires a minimum level 7 score on the English-language test. Work on improving your knowledge of our healthcare system. You can even get occupation specific training through volunteering. Also assess your transferrable skills.

PRESENTATION 2:

Ruth: I advocate for internationally trained nurses. You have a lot to offer in Canada. You can contribute to the multicultural workplace. The *CARE Centre* for internationally educated nurses is designed to create accessibility to regulated employment. It began in 2001 to address the gap in *Ontario's Healthcare Human Resources* strategy. The crisis was that there was a lack of nurses or dietitians which was addressed with internationally educated nurses.

We have a case management model. Every client who comes gets assigned to staff. The staff walks with you so that you can move toward acceptance of your life change. We partner with a regulating body, social support services for your family members, employers, universities and colleges, and also offer exam preparation courses. We also provide observational job shadowing opportunities so you can see what it is like to nurse in the Canadian settings.

We have over 4,000 members who are actively working. Joining the centre is a life time membership.

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There are some challenges along with solutions. It is a lengthy and complex process which may take three years. In the meantime we need to support our families while retraining. But we have strengths in our partner collaborations and referrals.

PRESENTATION 3:

Carolyn:

The *Michener Institute* is part of the network of teaching hospitals in Toronto. We attract new science grads and new working pros seeking to specialize. We upgrade people through bridging programs and offer full and part time programs, plus options in continuing education.

The programs at the *School of Applied Sciences* have a clinical component, i.e., in hospital or lab environments. 60% of students are IEPs who want to upgrade. The programs all start in September for which applications are accepted in February. Some are part time programs. All programs are accredited following which you take the licensing exam.

The *Pathways to Practice* includes two bridging programs which are the *Medical Laboratory Science* and *Radiological Technology*.

The *Medical Laboratory Science* program provides hands on lab work in all the disciplines. It is offered twice a year—fall and winter. It requires prior learning assessment as well as the applicant needs to be a landed immigrant. You can also apply to *CSMLS* (*Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science*) or *CMRTO* (*College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario*) for assessments.

The other opportunities could be that you send prior learning and get assessed by these licensing bodies. We offer observership where you don't work but you can see what goes on, and you may also be assigned a mentor. There is bursary funding for which you must qualify. This is different from getting a loan.

Individuals looking in Alternative Careers for Medical Laboratory Technologists may do so if they do not want to take a licensing exam, or if they've failed it. Instead of giving up, look at alternatives.

The Alternative careers for radiographers include becoming personal support workers, or looking into imaging informatics.

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My own story began when I came from Congo ten years ago. I did not speak English but I had hopes of going back to practice. My first job in Canada was as a security guard and I worked for 10 years at similar jobs. I discovered my flare for businesses when I got involved in *Community Matters* and I started an employment agency for IEPss. The class at CM helped me negotiate my salary and understand my worth. I was able to double my income since I could leverage my skills to both get jobs and negotiate a salary. There are jobs that will pay you as much money as a practising physician makes in Canada.

Our students describe the program to be innovative, full of opportunity, life changing and optimistic. It isn't a degree program, but it introduces them to the knowledge, network and industry.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1:

This is useful for young professionals. However I am over 60, might retire and have moved to Canada. I have accumulated experience and wouldn't want to be a student, or be assessed for post-secondary education sources that would be recognized. Any ideas from you? Consultation? Part-time?

- Mayada:** Connect with us and let us be creative. I once worked on a program that created material for abused women; it was a job opportunity that I hadn't planned for.
- Ruth:** We have a pre-arrival program.
- Nico:** I have successful experience with this problem. You have communication skills. Teaching is a way to use those skills, teaching medical information.
- Shafi:** You could create a group that develops a business and apply for funding as an entrepreneur.

Question 2:

I am working with a clinical research program at Seneca College. Our Premier has announced more money to cut waiting times in hospitals. If they are shortening the waiting times, is it possible to involve IEPs in hospitals in bridging the gap between the doctors and the waiting times?

- Nicodeme:** I am a radiologist. I wrote the exam; now they are changing the policy and there are more steps to go through. It isn't about your Canadian experience: it is about networking, knowing people. Your job may not be on the front line. You need to talk to people, to have confidence to talk with people you meet. Build a game plan. The thing we would give you at *Community Matters* is a new game plan. It isn't just the bureaucracy.
- Carolyn:** You can get clinical training in radiography. They are grandfathering people. Speak with me about this. The *Michener Institute* has a program for your technician role.

Tips & Trends in HEALTHCARE

- Mayada:** At *HealthForceOntario* the *Residency Training Program* supports include training on interview skills, application portfolio preparation, CV, statement of interest, peer to peer networking, etc.
- Ruth:** The *CARE Centre* provides services such as pre-arrival mentorship connections to *Canadian Nurses Association* and referrals for settlement, employment and language services.
- Carolyn:** The *Michener Institute* offers two Bridging Programs: they are the *Medical Laboratory Science Program* and *Radiological Technology (Radiography) Program*. Both of these programs receive bursary funding from the Ministry and are supported by the regulatory bodies associated with these professions.
- Nicodeme:** *Community Matters Toronto* helps build confidence in natural and acquired skills needed for the Canadian job market. It is important to know that your skills can get you what you want.
- Shafi:** At *Ryerson University's Chang School* we facilitate successful integration of highly skilled and experienced ITMDs in non-licensed health sector employment.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Michael Bach, President and CEO,

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion — CCDI

Michael Bach holds a particular affection for the IEP Conference, given its reputation for bringing people together; and for its delegates who as newcomers choose Canada as a safe and welcoming country. He began his remarks with how understanding one's origins makes a difference, especially when distinguishing Canada (with an attitude of "bringing everything you are and adding it to our mosaic") from the melting pot of the United States.

Bach shared his first exposure to Diversity and Inclusion work through *TRIEC* and the *Mentoring Partnership*, and which also provided him an introduction to the 'no Canadian experience' roadblock when he attempted to help a colleague. Frustration fuelled his advocacy on behalf of newcomers and the experiences they bring: "When we're not taking advantage of the skills of the people who've chosen to call this country home, we as a country are losing out. You're losing out by working at survival jobs, and we're not benefiting from your amazing skills."

So why does Diversity and Inclusion matter in the Canadian workplace? To start with, Bach advised, it's the right thing for business, both public and private, especially for those organizations wishing to capitalize on the competitive advantages of creative thinking, sharing unique experiences and doing more with less - tangible by-products of diverse workforces that are typically more productive and engaged overall.

While embracing diversity is "the right thing to do", that alone becomes problematic because it involves the 'slippery slope' of morals and values. Bach explained that when circumstances change (the economy weakens, for example), some organizations stop doing the right thing to save money, but at the longer-term cost of being permanently out of step with Canadian demographics.

According to *Statistics Canada (Stats Can)* and the *Conference Board of Canada*, for example, by the end of 2018 our economy will be 100% dependent on immigration for any growth; and the traditional Canadian worker (Straight, white, Christian and able-bodied male) will represent less than 30% of our working aged population (20% in Toronto). "So if your workplace doesn't reflect the 'other 80%', you're missing out on fishing for talent in the biggest pool that thankfully includes newcomers."

Bach noted that a survey commissioned by *Deloitte (Australia)* entitled "Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup?" definitively proved the correlation between higher levels of diversity and inclusion, and improved employee engagement. Numbers don't lie: the greater the engagement, the more productive and profitable organizations are.

So are large Canadian companies the only ones thriving by virtue of hiring IEPs and celebrating the benefits of their multi-cultural workforces? Not necessarily, according to Bach, whose own organization is a prototypical small Canadian enterprise realizing better business results.

As an educational charity with 30 employees, \$2M budget, and 2 offices, 50% of CCDI's employees were born outside Canada; and its most recent hire was "someone who'd just arrived in the country 15 days ago". Seeing "past the bias" has resulted in CCDI hiring and promoting a director of technology, for example, whose contributions have led to the organization receiving increased funding.

Bach concluded his remarks with these tips for IEPs seeking employment in their chosen field:

- Stop worrying about your accent (everyone has one) vs. your language skills. Speak English at home, seek opportunities to practise –and do so confidently
- *LinkedIn* is your best friend - make sure your profile speaks to what you do, and have a friendly photo. Connect with recruiters
- Work on your résumé: observe Canadian norms, and don't be afraid to brag about your accomplishments
- Practise interviewing and polish your delivery
- Look for complimentary employment (e.g. interpretation services) that utilize your skills, and to provide income until you get accredited to practise in your chosen profession (e.g., healthcare)
- Take a step back, not a step down: don't take just any job or get stuck in a survival position. It's ok to take a junior position in order to prove and showcase your skills and abilities, en route to your promotion
- Focus on employers that are focused on you, e.g. target the Top Diversity Employers
- Don't ever give up. We need you and want you here. This country is better for you being here

WINNING IN THE WORKPLACE

*Michael Bach, President and CEO,
Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion — CCDI*



Following his remarks, Bach fielded some audience questions:

Q. What are the best ways to find a position, using your current skill set, especially if you're new to the country?

A. Network like crazy, even though it's exhausting. Connect with recruiters and ask for informational interviews: get to know them. Seek out opportunities to meet employers like at this conference (don't discount any employer).

(Audience member comment: Join *Toastmasters Club* to build public speaking confidence and self-esteem.)

Q. How do you represent yourself fairly on your résumé, and still get called for an interview, appreciating you may be overqualified?

A. Speak to recruiters in advance and discuss how best to represent your experience to employers. Handle it in the cover letter: recognize fully you're overqualified but willing to prove yourself, get experience.

(Other suggestions from an audience member: describe the requisite number of years of experience as "over"; add only what is relevant, customized to the job posting; and write a functional résumé based on skills versus numbers of years of experience.)

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