

Tool 5 Culturally-Competent Approaches For Integrating Skilled Immigrants

TYPICAL WORKPLACE SCENARIOS	POSSIBLE CANADIAN EXPECTATION	CONSIDERATIONS
Meeting discussion	A prompt start and agenda-directed discussion.	Many skilled immigrants surveyed emphasized relationships over tasks. Greetings come first in many cultures.
Group decision-making	Everybody has a say and group decisions are made by majority or consensus.	Many skilled immigrants surveyed are familiar with hierarchical leadership styles where authority is not questioned. Their input may have to be directly requested.
Managing team conflicts	Team member deals with other team members (egalitarian).	Skilled immigrants may be accustomed to asking supervisors to deal with other team members. (hierarchical)
Supervising and being supervised	Supervisor both delegates and expects staff to take initiative on the project.	Many skilled immigrants expect firm direction from the boss. Skilled immigrant managers may be uncomfortable delegating to staff.
Performance evaluations	Managers “sandwich” negative feedback between pieces of positive feedback, and expect frank feedback from staff.	Skilled immigrants may appreciate frank direction to focus on key areas of improvement. Speak frankly, give praise as due, and solicit discussion. Skilled immigrants may find it inappropriate to challenge authority. Encourage critical feedback.
Promotions	Employees wanting promotion let managers know and work to demonstrate abilities.	Skilled immigrants may think it inappropriate to self-promote and expect their good work is sufficient to communicate their intent.



HERE ARE SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF HOW DIVERSITY LEADERS SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL-COMPETENCE THROUGHOUT THEIR ORGANIZATION.

- Talk with managers about how to set appropriate expectations with their teams about what constitutes culturally-competent behaviour.
- Post multi-cultural calendars in all departments so everyone can see the full range of cultural holidays and celebrations every week.
- Hold a diversity week and celebrate with different food and cultural events.
- Celebrate the “country” day of every member of your workforce – hoist their flag and put on a local dish at lunch time or break time.