



# Leading the Conversation: Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

**Beth Clarke**

Director, Employer Programs  
Toronto Region Immigrant Employment  
Council (TRIEC)



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Beth Clarke joined TRIEC in 2014 as Director, Employer Programs. She is responsible for leading the Employer Engagement and Learning Initiatives teams and inspiring employer culture change in the GTA. Beth has over fifteen years' experience in the non-profit employment sector. In this time, she has developed considerable expertise in the leadership and delivery of employment focused programs for skilled immigrants and employers. In her past role as Director, Programs and Services at JVS Toronto, Beth provided strategic direction and operational oversight in the development of a centralized employer services team and lead the development and implementation of a number of new programs and services within the mentoring, newcomer and employer service departments. Beth brings with her a solid background in program management, program development and stakeholder relations. She is a graduate of Trent University and holds an Honours Diploma in Career and Work Counselling from George Brown College.



# The Facts

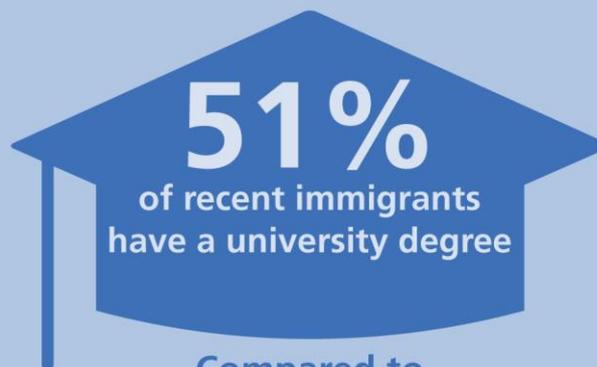
## IMMIGRANTS MAKE UP

**50%**  
of Toronto's Population



By 2031  
**1 in 3**  
workers will be born  
outside of Canada

## THEY BRING NEEDED SKILLS AND EDUCATION



Compared to  
20% of Canadians

Recent immigrants aged  
**25 TO 64**  
make up

**23%**  
of the Canadian population and

**49%**  
of doctorate holders

**40%**  
of Masters recipients



## **...and this costs us**

The unemployment/underemployment of immigrants in Canada costs more than \$30-billion a year – about 2 per cent of the GDP.

([RBC Economics, December 2011](#)).

# What is TRIEC?

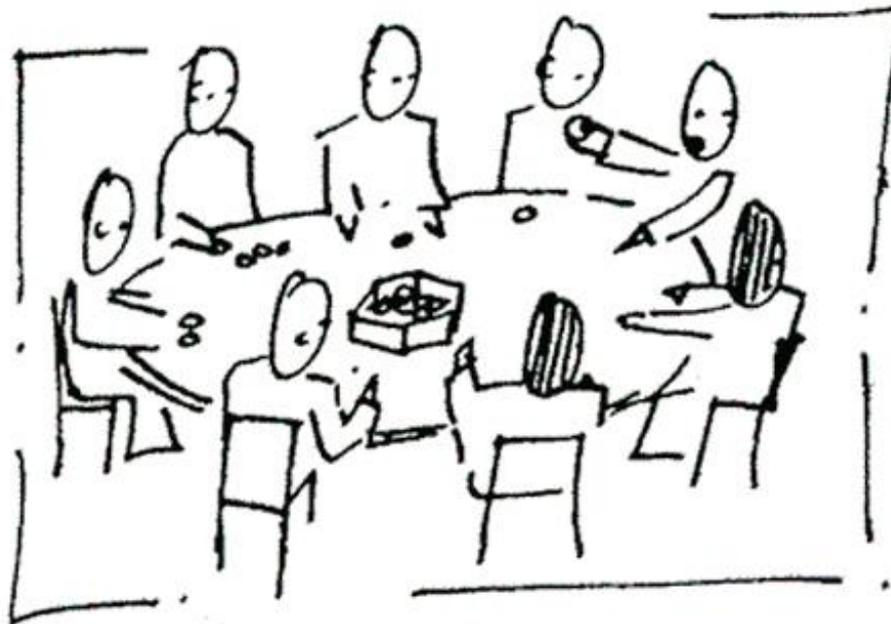
TRIEC

Employers

Community

Business associations

All levels of government



Educational institutions

Industry associations

Professional associations

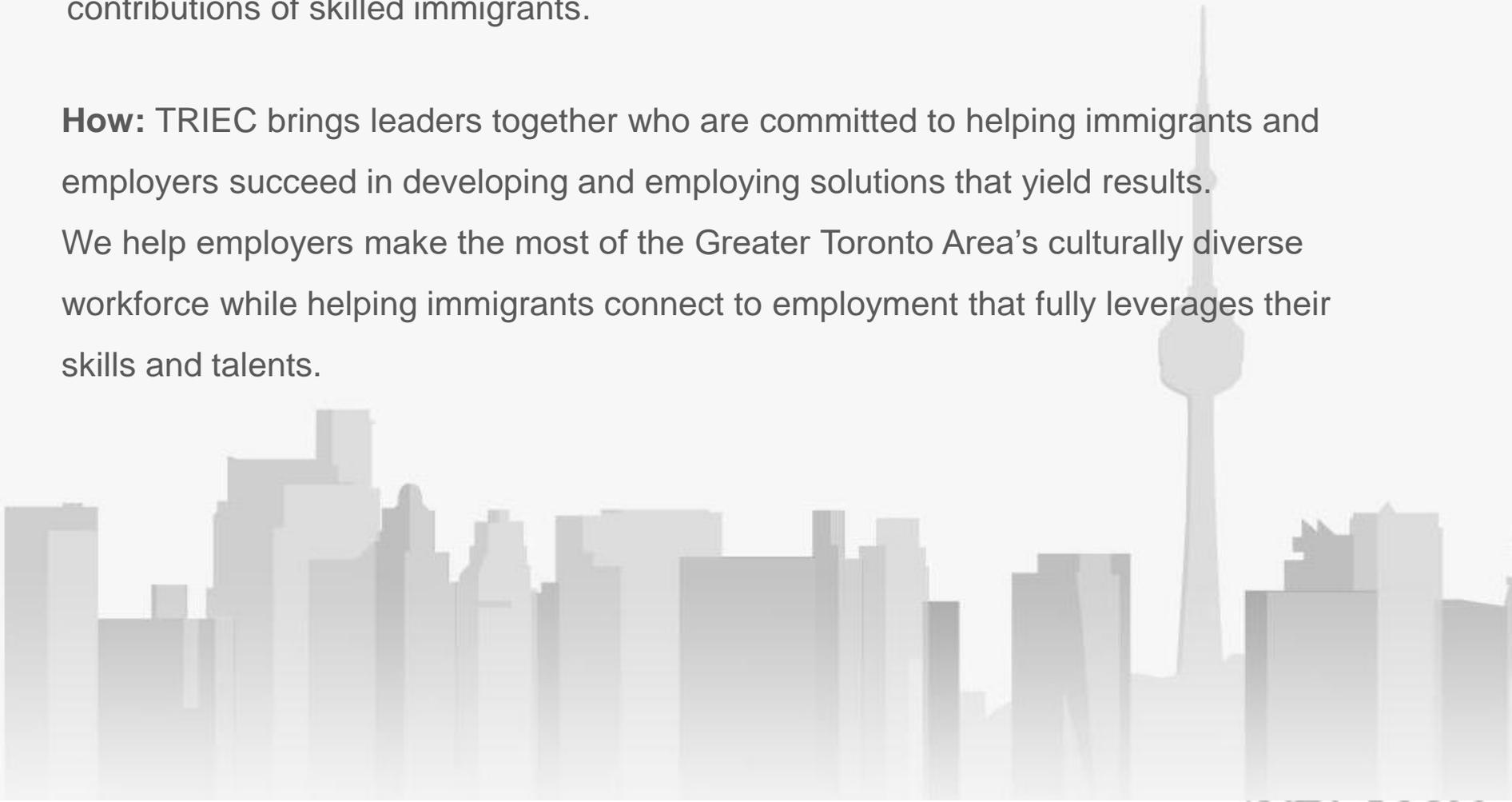
Labour

# TRIEC – creating solutions

**Vision:** A Greater Toronto Region that prospers by fully engaging the contributions of skilled immigrants.

**How:** TRIEC brings leaders together who are committed to helping immigrants and employers succeed in developing and employing solutions that yield results.

We help employers make the most of the Greater Toronto Area's culturally diverse workforce while helping immigrants connect to employment that fully leverages their skills and talents.





# The ROI of Diversity

## How can it help your business?

- Diverse teams make better decisions.
- This mix of perspectives brings a set of benefits to the table, including:
  - Enhanced creativity
  - Fuller understanding of market
  - Fresh ideas
- Diverse teams better serve their customer base (readership/viewership)
- Diversity in the workplace is that it better equips teams to serve their target markets



# Key Strategies

## 1. Connect with immigrant talent sources

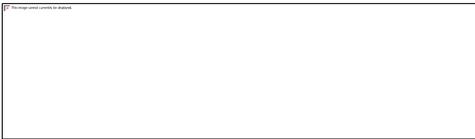
Many aspire to 'hire the best,' but an over-reliance on referrals tends to deliver the 'best within reach'. Access to new talent sources increases your pool of qualified candidates than relying on friends/family/colleague networks.

## 2. Develop your diverse workplace

Résumés from diverse sources isn't enough if your team is unprepared to manage cultural differences in the workplace. Building recruitment and selection skills and embedding a cultural diversity lens into professional and leadership programming promotes positive, long-term success in a diversifying workforce.



# Immigrant Talent Sources



## Professional Immigrant Networks (PINs)

Immigrant organizations that share ethno-cultural and occupational or industry commonalities (e.g. Filipino accountants, MBA holders from Latin America). TRIEC works with over 60 such groups, representing a 30,000 person workforce and new talent opportunities for employers.



## The Mentoring Partnership mentee pool

Hundreds of job-ready skilled immigrant professionals served at 15 employment service partner agencies participating in our flagship program.



## CanPrep

TRIEC is working with partners to help skilled immigrants with labour-market support *before* they arrive to Canada, representing a pre-arrival source of immigrant talent for employers.



# Developing Your Inclusive Workplace



## TRIEC Learning Initiatives

E-learning modules, workshops, training videos and resources – TRIEC has developed more than 90 traditional corporate learning opportunities that can align with your unique training and development culture.



## The Mentoring Partnership (TMP)

A large-scale, best-in-class program providing experiential learning for developing cultural competencies, TMP helps employers enhance their leadership training to high-potentials and hiring managers, while achieving objectives for community involvement and volunteerism. Employers are also promoting their participation in TMP to strengthen their brand as a good corporate citizen and leveraging the program increasingly as a talent channel.



# How We Develop Inclusive Workplaces

- Leading the Conversation: Inclusion in Non-Profits
- Skilled Newcomer Career Advancement Pilot Learning Initiatives
- International Trainer Lawyer Internship Program
- Consultation and Tailored Support



# Inclusive Workplace Index (IWI)



Contact TRIEC today:  
 Phone: 416-944-1496 or  
 Email: [triecinfo@triec.ca](mailto:triecinfo@triec.ca)  
 Website: [www.triec-campus.ca](http://www.triec-campus.ca)

## Inclusive Workplace Index

You know that diversity and inclusion in your workplace give you a competitive advantage. But how much progress have you made towards building an inclusive workplace?

Identify where you believe your organization is on a scale from 1 (no progress) to 10 (fully inclusive workplace).



TRIEC can help you move along this line!

Start by completing the self-assessment below. It's a tool your organization can use to identify priorities and measure progress towards building a culturally inclusive workplace. Once complete, identify those areas where you want to focus. TRIEC can then help you with the tools, resources and support to take action.

1 = Never considered  
 2 = Thinking about it  
 3 = Have a plan  
 4 = Working on it  
 5 = Fully implemented

| Diversity Strategy  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| We have a diversity and inclusion strategy with a vision statement that positions diversity and inclusion as a priority and ties it to our mission.   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Our diversity strategy includes specific objectives related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruiting and developing skilled immigrant talent</li> <li>Achieving the same cultural representation within the workforce as within our reference population (e.g. clients or community)</li> <li>Ensuring equitable representation of skilled immigrant talent at all levels of the organization</li> </ul> |   |   |   |   |   |
| We track key performance indicators related to our diversity and inclusion objectives (e.g. number of immigrant employees, representation at different levels).   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Communications  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Our communications policies include guidelines to ensure all forms of communications are clear, and free of jargon and cultural bias.   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Our internal and external communications highlight the role and benefits of cultural diversity and skilled immigrant talent with the organization.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| We have a formal process for employees to communicate their concerns about diversity issues in a non-threatening manner, and all employees are made aware of this process upon hiring.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| We provide our staff with tools and supports to promote cultural competence (i.e. strategies for effective cross-cultural communication and how culture shapes interactions).   |   |   |   |   |   |

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|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Review and update our policies related to immigrant religious accommodation) to address emerging and changing practices.    |   |   |   |   |   |
| Implementation of our diversity and inclusion council.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Reporting regularly (at least annually) on the progress towards immigrant inclusion objectives.                             |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Remove any barriers that may keep immigrants from participating in our programs.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Programs that provide access to new immigrant talent (e.g. mentorship, immigrant networks).                                 |   |   |   |   |   |
| Focus on bias-free recruitment, selection and hiring.   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Programs that are designed specifically to help immigrants succeed in their role within it.                                 |   |   |   |   |   |
| Regular meetings, involve managers directly and indirectly.   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Skills training and development in the workplace.   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Communicate our diversity and inclusion strategy, why it is important, and the importance of cultural diversity.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| Programs that offer hard and soft skills, include a cultural component, and provide opportunities for growth and promotion. |   |   |   |   |   |
| Communicate our expectations regarding cultural diversity and how to develop these skills.                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Programs that help employees develop their skills both for their current role and to achieve their full potential.          |   |   |   |   |   |





# Case Study

## Challenges

- Lack of innovation
- Flattening revenue
- Homogenous leadership pipeline

## Strategy

- Divide high-potential staff into cross-functional working groups to tackle challenges, conceive solutions, create social capital across the organization
- Diversify leadership pipeline

## Learning

- New revenue opportunities connecting with SMEs within culturally diverse sub-economies of the greater Toronto region
- Culturally homogenous sales team

## Action

- Broad staff participation in The Mentoring Partnership to build cultural competencies
- TRIEC workshops for HR staff
- Networking event for two dozen, pre-screened immigrant sales professionals

## Outcomes

- 10 immigrant candidates moved on in recruitment process, five hired
- Penetrated diverse local markets
- Sustainable diverse talent sources established
- Contributed to 8-figure increases in revenue within two years



# TRIEC Campus

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.trieccampus.ca - TRIEC Campus". The page header includes "CONTACT US" on the left and "WELCOME Guest | LOGIN | ? | [Printer Icon]" on the right. The main content area features the TRIEC logo and the tagline "Learn. Lead. Transform." with a colorful arc graphic. Below this is a large photograph of three diverse professionals in an office setting. Underneath the photo are two buttons: "CREATE ACCOUNT" and "LOG IN". A text block describes the platform as an online learning hub for team members and leaders, covering topics like communication, team-work, and talent management. A section titled "What will you find on the Campus?" is followed by a small image of three people's faces and a bullet point stating that the campus contains e-Learning modules, videos, and discussion guides on topics related to these areas.



# Employment Life Cycle

The screenshot displays a user interface for the MagNet website. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with icons for home, calendar (showing '10'), and a book, along with a 'MY PROFILE' link and a user icon. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'TRIEC CAMPUS / MY DASHBOARD / CATALOGUES'. A search bar with the placeholder text 'Search' and a magnifying glass icon is positioned next to it. The main content area is titled 'The Inclusive Workplace Catalogues' and features six grey, card-like buttons arranged in a 2x3 grid. Each button has a dark square icon on the left and text on the right: 'RECRUITMENT' (checklist icon), 'ONBOARDING' (person with list icon), 'COMMUNICATIONS' (speech bubbles icon), 'LEADERSHIP' (group of people icon), 'EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT' (person with chart icon), and 'DIVERSITY STRATEGY' (globe icon). At the bottom of the grid, there is a grey button with a printer icon and the text 'PRINT LIST OF RESOURCES'.



# User dashboard

www.trieccampus.ca/elm/One.aspx — My Dashboard

MY CLASSES CURRENT(6) | PAST(5)

|   |                                |                                   |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>DCB100-D01 - Developing Cross-Cultural Behaviour Based Interview Questions</b> |                                | <a href="#">LAUNCH CLASS &gt;</a> |
| <b>Category:</b> Printable Resources  |                                |                                   |
| START DATE:<br>Nov 07, 2012   | REGISTERED ON:<br>Jun 23, 2014 | STATUS:<br>Approved               |
| <hr/>   |                                |                                   |
| <b>FTA210-V01 - Finding Talent, Scenes 11/12: Assertiveness</b>                   |                                | <a href="#">LAUNCH CLASS &gt;</a> |
| <b>Category:</b> Videos & Guides  |                                |                                   |
| START DATE:<br>Sep 01, 2012   | REGISTERED ON:<br>May 13, 2014 | STATUS:<br>Approved               |
| <hr/>   |                                |                                   |
| <b>FTA209-V01 - Finding Talent, Scenes 10: Call of Duty</b>                       |                                | <a href="#">LAUNCH CLASS &gt;</a> |
| <b>Category:</b> Videos & Guides  |                                |                                   |
| START DATE:<br>Sep 01, 2012   | REGISTERED ON:<br>May 13, 2014 | STATUS:<br>Approved               |
| <hr/>   |                                |                                   |
| <b>FTA207-V01 - Finding Talent, Scene 8: Tell Me About Yourself</b>               |                                | <a href="#">LAUNCH CLASS &gt;</a> |
| <b>Category:</b> Videos & Guides  |                                |                                   |
| START DATE:<br>Sep 01, 2012   | REGISTERED ON:<br>May 13, 2014 | STATUS:<br>Approved               |

1 2

LEARNING PATHS IN PROGRESS



# Screening Resumes





# Cultural Perceptions of Change and Leadership





# 10 Keys

[www.triec.ca/10/](http://www.triec.ca/10/)

1. View cultural diversity as a potential business driver
2. Learn how cultural differences affect individual and team effectiveness
3. Search for the best local talent
4. Review your hiring practises to make sure you hire the best
5. Make sure your new hires start off on the right foot
6. Help your diverse teams build the skills they need to achieve your business goals
7. Identify high potentials in your diverse workforce
8. Have a strategy to become inclusive
9. You cannot build an inclusive workplace on your own
10. Know where you're going. Identify what success looks like and the indicators to measure progress



# Factors for Success

- Executive sponsor
- Clear vision and goals
- Messaging and framing
- Strong communication plan
- Strong evaluation strategy
- Strong curriculum design and relevance to participant
- Sustainability and capacity building





# Thank You!

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Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council



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