



Environment Sector — Employment Trends and Opportunities

23% of environmental organizations employ recent immigrants. 13% employ Aboriginal people
Fast Facts - www.eco.ca

Market Trends

Growth in Global Carbon Offset Market: **176% Annual Growth**

Canada represents about 1.7% of the global market for environmental goods and services, highlighting significant global demand opportunities for Canadian firms.

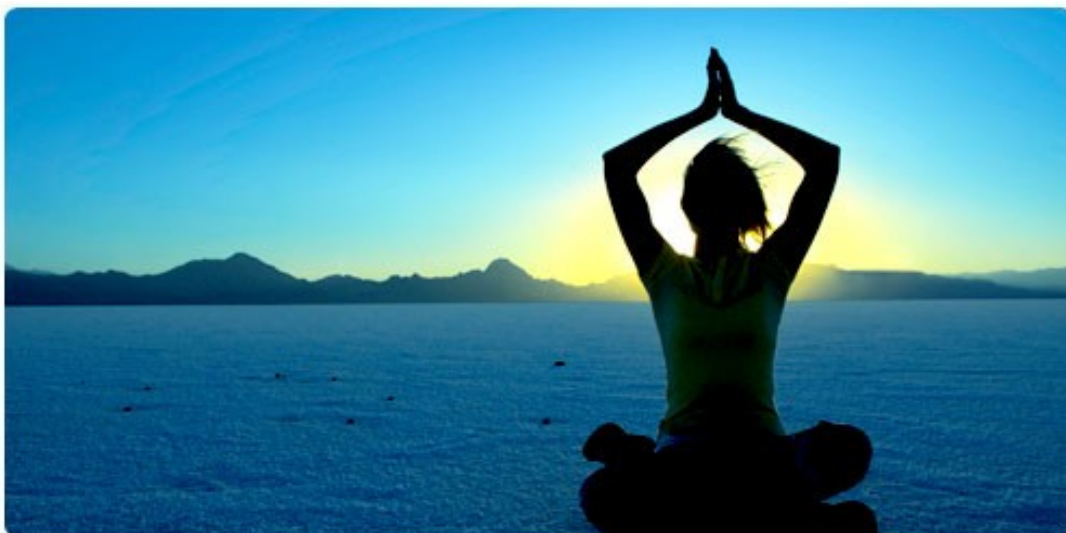
Between 2008 and 2009, the number of certified energy advisors in Canada grew from 1,004 in 2008 to 1,770 in 2009, a 76% increase.

ecoENERGY Program

Sector Sample

Since the areas of water and wastewater treatment and solid waste management are of critical importance to human health and the environment, municipalities need to ensure that these facilities are appropriately staffed with skilled and engaged workers. With the expected retirements of many senior personnel, municipalities will have to work actively on succession planning and recruitment strategies to ensure that the experienced-based knowledge is not lost.

Environmental Labour Market Research



The environment is dear to us at Integration Resources Canada. We strive for a near paperless office. We have sponsored and run a mentoring program for Internationally Educated Professionals targeting the environmental sector. We sign our emails 'consider the environment', and hope that our actions however small, continue to support and enhance trends within the sector. The sector is fast becoming an employees' market and growth within the sector is predicted to be explosive.

With a little research and a clear objective the Environmental Sector offers significant opportunity for career and professional development.

We pay homage to the initiatives already introduced by the sector council and their efforts to address the needs of employers and all potential employee candidates seeking to enter the industry. Best of all while the need for labour careens toward critical, the Environmental Sector Council (www.ECO.ca) is demonstrating leadership in developing workable strategies to address predicted labour shortages.

How an Internationally Educated Professional strategically entered the Environmental Sector

A case study for employers, mentors and mentees by Bruce Switzer

I was contacted by OCISO, the Ottawa Community Immigration Service Organization, in January 2010 with a request to mentor a Cuban Power Engineer recently arrived in Canada.

To my delight Gilberto Lazo Hernandez' specialization was in the design of 16 Kilowatt Solar and Wind power stations, enough to power a large town.

Our first meeting was typical. We

spent time getting to know one another and identifying Gilberto's competencies, expertise and preferred career objectives.

As an employer, understanding a candidate's competencies is key



“Gilberto’s next step was to interview professionals in his field”

to finding the best talent fit for an organization. HR may have several experienced people applying for a particular job, however competencies, character, motivation and organizational fit are the key assets that usually seal the deal in the hiring decision.

Gilberto was proactive upon arriving in Canada and within a short while had taken English courses and secured a part time job as a Houseman at a local hotel.

Gilberto had also contacted four local immigrant service providers and attended several workshops in order to understand work environments and culture to get information on job interviews, resumes, cover letter preparation, etc.

After four months of sending resumes to job postings without results, Gilberto was advised to register for a program at a local college that would prepare him for solar panel installation after a one year program.

He was reluctant but ready to shift his career objective based on the advice of career counsellor at a local college. Keep in mind that the counsellor likely knew little about Gilberto’s area of expertise or the growing needs within the environmental sector.

I recommended that Gilberto’s first task was to research market trends, and career opportunities while developing a list of personal preferences that included salary ranges, management styles and the work cultures of companies in solar and wind power industry. Gilberto was the only one qualified to determine whether or not his skills were needed and accepted. He chose research before defaulting to a job outside his area of expertise.

The feedback was encouraging! Research gave Gilberto the information he needed to make informed decisions regarding his career path. Additionally, as ambiguity about the labour market retreated, Gilberto rebuilt his confidence in his value and likely contributions to the market.

After contacting ECO Canada and the Solar Power Association of Canada Gilberto realized that market trends were moving in his favour and that within a very short time span (less than a year) his value as a specialist in his field would start to rise.



Gilberto’s next step was to interview professionals in his field. He reviewed job opportunities on ECO.ca to see what were present trends and then signed up with LinkedIn (a free professional networking site). His initial search on LinkedIn was based on the words ‘Solar Power’ within a 50 mile radius of his postal code. Gilberto received over 200 hundred hits on individuals interested or working within the Solar Power Industry.

Gilberto then created a spread sheet that listed the top companies that aligned with his own preferences. Gilberto wanted to match his objectives and long term goals to companies that shared his values, including a professional and motivated workforce. He also wanted the opportunity to grow and develop professionally and provide long term security for his family. He also determined that Ottawa was his family’s location of choice. The process of narrowing his choices allowed him to better target the industry.

From this list of companies Gilberto contacted the individuals that shared his expertise, clearly stating that he was doing research to map out his career. He also ensured the professionals he contacted that he was doing research and would not be asking for work.

After Gilberto’s initial research, he determined that engineering firms with an interest in the

environment were his best choice, as they were better placed to handle bidding for some of the larger projects starting to emerge on the market. He re-tooled his research parameters and began to approach consulting firms after narrowing his choices down to five preferred companies.

Gilberto wrote a letter to the principle of one of those companies asking for the opportunity to talk about the industry. Gilberto made it very clear that he wasn’t asking for a job, but rather he was seeking information to best determine his career trajectory. What started as an information meeting turned into a panel interview and discussion with two of the principle partners and ended with an offer of a job.



Not surprisingly, the two partners recognized in Gilberto a keen and competent professional who would add positive value to their firm. They understood that Gilberto was well motivated and would swiftly fill any knowledge or skill gaps. Gilberto’s trial period ended this month with the offer of a full time position and a wish from the company to build a long term partnership.

Gilberto has since mentioned that he had never worked so hard to keep abreast of all the new information so he can provide quality deliverables for his employers. He is also exhilarated by the leap his career has taken and the quiet certainty that he has moved from an adaptive career strategy to one that serves his objectives, hopes and dreams and strategically fits him in the market where he can best contribute.



Gilberto's 17 step 'check list' to employment

Each case is unique, however the guide below will help you create a targeted objective and position you in the job market. Seek to talk with five Canadian Professionals who share your exact area of expertise. Seek a mentor.

STEPS TO TAKE	WHERE ARE THE GAPS?	RATE
Identify a specific career objective		
Create a list of workplace preferences (i.e. Management style)		
Research target market against expertise and fit		
Identify the 5 top companies		
Prepare 12 research meeting questions		
Identify 5- 10 professionals in your field of expertise		
Create and practice a professional introduction		
Print business cards		
Prepare image (attire)		
Practice body language		
Master a genuine smile & handshake		
Request research meetings and set up appointments		
Ask to speak with other experts in the field		
Arrive 5-10 minutes early		
Meet with people in your field, research and create market interest		
Send thank you emails and cards		
Finish and target your resume based on research		

Gilberto Lazo Hernandez speaks

"The mentoring program helped me more effectively plan my job search giving me strategies, tips and a lot of support. It also gave me a lot of useful tips on how to do my research on my field of choice, what finally led me into the labour market.

I continued my job search and started using information interviews as a valuable job search tool, not only for getting information in my field but to be able to talk about my work experience and get feedback from professionals working in the field I was pursuing.

I attended several informational interviews with companies in the sustainable field hoping to continue my career in this sector.

I noticed this sector is starting to grow in Ottawa, but it's just in the initial stages. I moved on to start looking for bigger companies in the consulting field. I developed a list of companies of interest and started calling for informational interviews in this field.

After my first information interview with a consultant company I had the opportunity to talk about my work experience and received a job offer.

It's been more than 2 months since I started and I feel I'm getting valuable additional professional experience to move forward in my field. I also have the opportunity to perform and get recognition for my experience, which along with the language barrier is a major barrier for new comers."

Coaches Corner

Q - Here at our Centre we take on job placements and student work placements. What we are seeing is that many of the newcomers (immigrants) are having problems understanding the organization's corporate culture. This can be an elusive and difficult topic to explain to newcomers.

Culture occurs on different levels in Canada – family dynamics, schools, society, associations and in the workplace. An article on corporate culture would be helpful to your readers. - A Canadian Cross Cultural Learning Centre

Thank you for your question. Understanding corporate culture in Canada can be challenging for both Canadians and immigrants.

Much of the world's organizational culture is top down. In contrast, Canadian organizational culture often differs from one company to the next.

The quick answer to your question can be addressed through a strategic approach.

1. Research each company of interest to identify and understand their culture
2. Match clients with a Mentor in the companies of Interest
3. Train candidates to seek clarification about organizational culture once hired.

We had a client that was hired on a trial basis in 2009. At the end of her three month probation the employer called her into his office and said, "I want you to know that you are the best person we have ever had in this position, however I will have to let you go."

Once we investigated the situation, we found that her colleagues had invited her to lunch each day for the first two weeks of her employment, which she always turned down.

She arrived at work each day before anyone else. She worked through her breaks and lunch and was usually the last one to leave. She even brought her lunch to work as she was saving her money to buy a house.

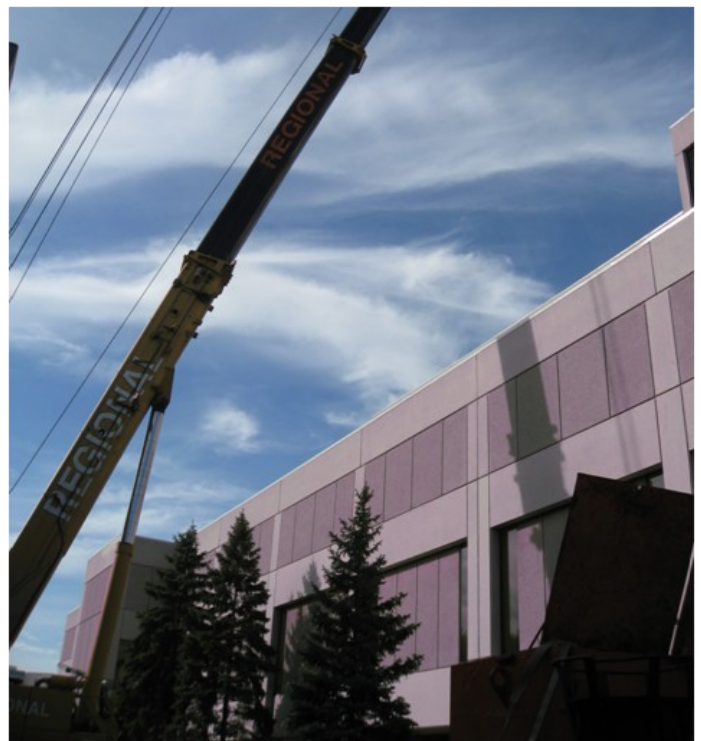
Her co-workers thought she was snubbing them and didn't want her re-hired. They convinced her employer not to continue her contract in the interest of team work and group dynamics.

We surmised that by explaining to her colleagues that she brought her own lunch to save for a house, she might have reduced their concerns about team cohesion. Often it is the little cultural clues that have the biggest impact.

Some cultures never smile at interviews for fear that they will appear frivolous, yet a Canadian employer might think that individual has behavioral problems and is too serious. It is also common for IEPs to assume that service providers will provide them with all the information they need for employment.

Our experience shows that the largest single barrier to employment for IEPs is lack of information about their target market.

Ask a group of IEPs how many Canadian professionals in their exact field of expertise they have talked with and the answer is typically zero.



Our approach is to request individuals to:

1. Create a list of workplace preferences e.g. management Styles, wages, company values etc.
2. Identify top five companies that need their skill set
- 3 Do in-depth research using their preference list to narrow potential employers.

Understanding Canadian corporate culture is at best a targeted research process. There is no single answer. In the case of your placements, teaching your candidates how to seek clarification as an essential communications tool will likely provide them with the information they need. This leads to greater confidence, smoother integration and higher landing rates.

Sector Councils

Each issue we will highlight useful information from one or more of the sector councils. This information will target the needs of employers, mentors and potential employees. The sector councils are often at the leading edge, developing strategies designed to ensure positive labour growth and sustainability for their members. Sector councils are a good place to start research if you are an international professional or Canadian looking for work in your field of expertise. For more information regarding sector councils link to:

<http://www.councils.org/sector-councils/list-of-canadas-sector-councils/>
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/sector_councils/listsectorcouncils.shtml

The Environment Careers Organization is increasingly bridging across most sectors. To find out more about opportunities, link to:
<http://www.eco.ca>

The Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) Canada

We are the national sector council for the environment. Our mission is to ensure an adequate supply of people with the demonstrated skills and knowledge required to meet the environmental human resources need of the public and private sectors. ECO Canada:

- Develops programs that help **individuals** find and build meaningful environmental careers through employment and career development resources;
- Provides **employers** with resources and tools to find and keep the best environmental professionals;
- Informs **educators** and **government** of employment trends to ensure the ongoing prosperity of this growing sector.

Resources for Internationally Trained Professionals

As a newcomer to Canada, it's critical that you have all the information and tools required to succeed in your career.

Know the Sector: Read our Labour Market Research

As the sector grows and changes, ECO Canada continually works to define environmental employment, while also providing up-to-date knowledge on environmental trends and employment needs. ECO Canada is the leader in environmental labour market research.

Find out about work activities in the sector, upcoming careers, skills employers are looking for, and more through these free publications. Visit www.eco.ca to start your search.

"Retirements of environmental workers will create vacancies over the next decade as over 100,000 environmental employees (14% of the environmental workforce) reach retirement age." - *Profile of Canadian Environmental Employment, ECO Canada, 2010*

Be Prepared: Visit ECO Canada's Immigrant Career Centre

Before applying for positions, make sure that you are prepared. The Immigrant Career Centre is an excellent starting point to proactively overcome barriers prior to entering the Canadian workforce. Gain a better understanding of the types (and names) of environmental careers in Canada, through over 120 occupational profiles and videos. Learn how to showcase your best assets and present yourself as the right candidate for the job. Find resources on writing a strong, tailored cover letter and resume, creating a portfolio, interview tips, and more! Sign in to www.eco.ca to access these services.

Continued



Gain Experience: *New* Environmental Immigrant Bridging Program

Break into your Canadian environmental career through the ECO Canada Environmental Immigrant Bridging Program. Designed for internationally trained professionals with skills that align with the environmental sector, this program enables individuals to bridge their cultural knowledge gap to proactively address barriers, and obtain Canadian work experience. The Environmental Immigrant Bridging Program consists of 120 hours of in-class training. The curriculum was designed by ECO Canada, with the help of environmental employers, internationally trained individuals, and employment counselors. It provides training related to essential skills, the Canadian professional workplace culture and the environmental knowledge.

Following training, participants partake in a work placement with an environmental employer to gain hands-on work experience.

This program is in its pilot stage and will be delivered in partnership with immigrant serving agencies across Canada. For more information about this program, visit www.eco.ca/bridging.

Stay Knowledgeable: Professional Development through the CCEE

It is important to stay on top of changing industry practices and new technology through professional development. Gain Canadian environmental knowledge through the Canadian Centre for Environmental Education (CCEE). The CCEE offers a flexible, distance based, post graduate Certificate in Environmental Practice which provides industry-specific skills and knowledge from a range of recognized Canadian institutions.

New this winter, the CCEE will also be offering a Master in Environmental Practice for professionals interested in gaining strategic knowledge and leadership skills specific to the environment.

The CCEE is a partnership between ECO Canada and Royal Roads University, along with 25 colleges and universities from across Canada. For more information, visit www.ccee.ca.

"The most commonly stated reason for inability to fill vacant positions was lack of qualified candidates--in particular a lack of candidates with the appropriate education and experience was cited by about a quarter of firms experiencing hiring difficulties." - *Profile of Canadian Environmental Employment, ECO Canada, 2010*

Be Recognized: Work towards your Environmental Professional (EP) certification

It's essential to demonstrate to employers how your current skill set translates into Canadian industry standards. Recognize your Canadian environmental skills through ECO Canada's Environmental Professional (EP) certification. The EP certification is the only national designation of its kind for environmental professionals, which uses the National Occupational Standards for environmental employment as a foundation to separate the self-proclaimed environmental experts from the real ones.

As a newcomer to Canada with minimal Canadian work experience, you are eligible for the Environmental Professional in training (EPt) option. Gain access to environment relevant workshops, meet other professionals to grow your network, participate in a mentorship program to guide your career path, and more! Visit www.eco.ca/EPcertification.

Are you an employer interested in hiring internationally trained environmental professionals? Or an immigrant serving agency interested in hosting the Environmental Immigrant Bridging Program? We want to hear from you! Please contact us at immigration@eco.ca.

Integration Resources Canada Inc began operations in 2006 with one objective in mind; to facilitate the integration of internationally educated professionals into the Canadian workforce at a level commensurate with their education and experience.


What began with a one-on-one coaching model and a philosophy of 'failure is not an option'. We since expanded to include:

- IEP Program development
- Mentor Training program delivery and development for Service Providers and Organizations.
- One-on-coaching

- Assisting regions already impacted by demographic downturn or are preparing and implementing regional economic development strategies

Our programs are also useful for HR, Career Coaches and Recruiters as they focus on key best practices including:

- Assessing IEP skills, competencies and fit
- Developing labour pipelines
- Building organizational and community inclusion for long term labour force sustainability

All inquiries are welcome, 

info@integrationresourcescanada.com

Organizations

If you or your organization would like contribute to this bulletin or promote an event please Email or call



Employers

If you are seeking answers regarding labour markets, Integration or hiring Internationally trained professionals please send us your questions

Internationally Educated Professional

Looking for work or questions regarding job market strategies, your resume, interviewing style? We can help

Speakers Corner

If you are interested in having us speak to your organization business let us know

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Contributors to this issue recognize the skills and economic importance that International Trained Professionals (IEPs) bring to Canada and are dedicated to facilitating positive strategic change.

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