



## WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES IN METRO VANCOUVER: IDEAS IN ACTION

NOVEMBER 2012

WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES IN METRO VANCOUVER  
IDEAS IN ACTION

COVER PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT): “METAL LATHE ART” BY SIMONIDA JOCIC, “CRANBERRY HARVEST” BY TED NODWELL AND “YOGA INSTRUCTOR” BY IAN SNOW.

BACK PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT): “RICK HARRY (XWA LACK-TUN)” BY GARY FIEGEHEN, “KNITTING ON GORE STREET” BY LOUISE FRANCIS-SMITH AND “ART GALLERY” BY IAN SNOW.

PREPARED BY THE SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
(SPARC BC)



FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
THROUGH THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE.



© NOVEMBER 2012

WWW.SPARC.BC.CA  
INFO@SPARC.BC.CA  
4445 NORFOLK ST.  
BURNABY BC V5G 0A7



WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES IN  
METRO VANCOUVER

IDEAS IN ACTION

NOVEMBER 2012

# Acknowledgements

We have many people to thank who supported this project. Firstly, we want to acknowledge the contributions of the seventeen (17) Metro Vancouver workplaces that participated in the *Diversity is Working* case studies that form the basis for this project:

BC Hydro	Mission Community Services
Canada Safeway	MOSAIC
Canadian Mental Health Association	SAP Canada
City of Abbotsford	South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
City of Vancouver	S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
Corrections Canada	Vancity
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Vancouver Coastal Health
ICBC	WorkSafeBC
Investors Group	

A very big thank you goes to the following local artists whose photos are displayed in the mobile exhibit that accompanies the delivery of this document and workshop.

- Gary Fiegehen
- Louise Francis-Smith
- Simonida Jovic
- Jugoslav Kitanovic
- Ted Nodwell
- Ian Snow
- Aaron Zenga

We would also like to thank community partners including Hanna Cho, Joan Seidl and Dave Winstanley of the Museum of Vancouver as well as Myungsook Lee of Diverse Magazine. Thank you also to the Committee for Cultural Pluralism members for your ongoing support:

- Daniel Hill, Native Education College (NEC)
- Rika Uto, Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall (VJLSJH)
- Ashli Komaryk-De Lucio, Italian Cultural Centre (ICC)
- Parmenas Tse, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

This project was funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia through the Welcoming Communities initiative. Our sincere thanks go to the funders for their support of innovative, community-based projects about diversity and immigration.

# Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
What is a welcoming and inclusive workplace?	1
Where did this information come from?	1
What is in this document?	1
2. The case for diversity	2
3. The impacts of growing diversity	3
4. Ideas from around here	4
Recruitment and hiring	4
Assess areas for improvement	4
Build relationships with target communities	5
Revise interview practices	6
Creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace	8
Formal mandates and policies	8
Diversity training	9
Celebrating and having fun	10
Leadership development	11
Assign responsibility or support a champion	11
Remove systemic barriers to advancement	11
Mentorship	12
Leadership development programs	12
5. Activities	13
Respect exercise	13
Hiring process: Opportunities to reduce bias	14



# 1. Introduction

Metro Vancouver is alight with ethnocultural diversity. As our cities grow and our populations diversify, places of work inevitably become venues of interaction across cultural difference – people inhabit multiculturalism in their everyday work lives. More and more we find scholars, governments, artists and the general citizenry engaged in a conversation of what it means to include diversity in work. How does cultural and linguistic difference affect how we communicate? What benefits do diverse leaders bring to an organizations' ability to operate in global economies? How do employers welcome cultural difference at all levels of their organizational structure? What challenges and opportunities do recent immigrants face in Metro Vancouver workplaces today?

## What is a welcoming and inclusive workplace?

A welcoming and inclusive workplace is a vibrant workplace where immigrants can realize their full potential, racism is eliminated and cultural diversity is valued and celebrated.

## Where did this information come from?

In 2011-12, SPARC BC undertook two simultaneous projects to explore how Metro Vancouver residents and employers were grappling with the multicultural realities of modern workplaces. The first project was an exhibit of local photography on display at the Museum of Vancouver. The second project was a set of seventeen (17) case studies with Metro Vancouver employers on best practices for creating a welcoming and inclusive workplace. This resource shares some bright ideas from Metro Vancouver employers who participated in the case studies, with illustration and insight drawn from the *Working World* photographs.

## What is in this document?

The learning objectives of this resource guide and accompanying workshop are to:

1. Better understand the value of making a workplace more welcoming and inclusive to recent immigrants, and how diversity can help an organization achieve its goals;
2. Explore the meaning of “diversity”, how we negotiate difference and how it affects how we work together in increasingly diverse and multicultural organizations; and
3. Identify specific ideas and tactics used by Metro Vancouver workplaces to become more welcoming and inclusive of recent immigrants and other under-represented groups.

Four sections follow this introduction. Section 2 reviews reasons why workplaces want to be more welcoming and inclusive. Section 3 frames a modern approach to understanding diversity and multiculturalism that is relevant to workplaces. Section 4 shares ideas applied by Metro Vancouver workplaces to become more welcoming and inclusive of recent immigrants. Section 5 provides two ideas for activities to engage the learnings herein.



## 2. The case for diversity

There are numerous reasons why workplaces are taking diversity seriously these days. The Canadian workforce is expected to undergo significant demographic changes: the baby boom generation is nearing retirement; there are lower Canadian birth rates; and there is an increased number of educated and skilled immigrants entering the country. Culturally competent workplaces that welcome immigrants benefit in terms of productivity, innovation, creativity, agility and sustainability (PICAS). Workplace diversity is not just about valuing inclusivity, it is a business reality and a boon to good service.

Three central benefits to becoming a welcoming and inclusive workplace stand out: access to talent, market relevance and cultural mobility.

**Access to talent:** Employers in Metro Vancouver want and need to tap into all of the available talent pool. Though labour supply and demand varies from industry to industry, there is a universal interest on the part of employers to access excellent employees. There is also interest in having ready access to those talent pools so hiring is efficient. A workplace that is welcoming to recent immigrants and promotes a safe and inclusive environment for diverse employees will attract interest from a broader pool of applicants and, once they are hired, help employees fully contribute their skills and abilities.

**Market relevance:** Employers in Canada want and need to tap into all of the available market. It is “good business” to hire employees with access to the market that a company wants to be relevant to. A workforce that reflects the demographic make up of current and prospective clients/customers provides better connection to and understanding of the market.

**Cultural mobility:** In the same way that a diverse workforce can better connect a business to its client base, a diverse workforce can also bring a company the “cultural intelligence” – or “CQ” – needed to work in global business. An individual who has lived across many countries and who has experienced immigration themselves has the opportunity to develop incredibly diverse social, economic and cultural understanding. Such individuals can help an employer work flexibly across cultures and countries.

Alden Habacon suggests that sometimes the most valuable form of CQ intelligence is “knowing your own bias – the unique lens that colours and filters everything you see”.<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, please see the [Respect Exercise](#) in Section 5: Activities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Habacon, Alden (2007). Beyond the Mosaic: Canada's Multiculturalism 2.0. A presentation at the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs Annual Summer Conference, *Putting Diverse Talents to Work*, August 9-12, 2007.



## 3. The impacts of growing diversity

Immigration has long been a major driver behind Canada's changing demographic composition. In the past 10 years, net international migration accounted for two-thirds of Canada's population growth while natural increase (births) accounted for about one-third.<sup>2</sup>

Statistics about the ethnocultural composition of Metro Vancouver residents remind us that the term visible minority is less and less accurate. Visible and quantifiable signs of change proliferate, but it is the impact of these demographic shifts on how people interact, live, move and relate to one another that will affect workplaces. Has there been a shift in how we interact due to increasing diversity? Is there a uniquely Metro Vancouver way of working together?

Canadian multicultural policy has traditionally encouraged the celebration of difference. This "cultural mosaic" approach sees each person and their unique cultural affiliations coexisting harmoniously together. Although this is still a positive image, in communities where diversity has been in place for years and where technology offers exponential modes of connection and interconnection, there is a sense that people are more linked to each other and to a range of overlapping cultural identities.

Rather than focus on difference, recently an "intercultural approach" that is focused on building bridges and exchanges between people has emerged in Metro Vancouver. As articulated by Paula Carr of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House, the intercultural approach recasts the diversity challenge beyond immigration to include all sorts of diverse ideas, abilities, incomes and perspectives within our families, neighbourhoods and communities.<sup>3</sup>

In this same vein, we can see that diversity at work is not just about reaching quotas or teaching acceptance. Diversity is present in how we solve problems and apply logic, how we interact with colleagues, staff and supervisors, what our professional expectations are, and how we view our role as employee and employer. A welcoming and inclusive workplace is understanding of the fact that diversity is not just race or immigration status.

This document highlights ideas from seventeen (17) Metro Vancouver-based workplaces that have created and tested the tools that enable decision makers, employers and hiring managers to reflect the modern face of Canada and perhaps more importantly, stay current with changes.

---

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. "2011 Census: Population and dwelling counts". The Daily, February 8, 2012.

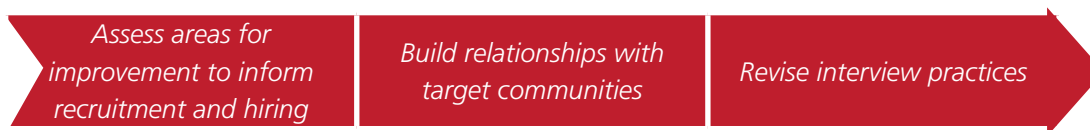
<sup>3</sup> Carr, Paula. (2012). "Being, Belonging, Becoming: Stories of Being, Belonging, Becoming in Renfrew-Collingwood."



## 4. Ideas in action

In this section, we look at three areas where Metro Vancouver workplaces have excelled: recruitment and hiring, creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive workplace, and leadership development.

### 4.1 Recruitment and hiring



#### *Assess areas for improvement to inform recruitment and hiring practices*

**Idea 1:** Conduct a workplace diversity assessment.

Many organizations review the diversity composition of their workplace in order to identify areas of need to inform recruitment and hiring practices.

#### **Examples:**

- Vancity has data available from annual employment engagement surveys on the overall representation rates across the organization. They are looking into collecting more detailed data in order to delve deeper into issues such as hiring and promotion ratios and pay rates across equity groups.
- WorkSafeBC hired an external consultant to conduct an Employment Systems Review - An in-depth assessment of all employment systems, policies, practices in order to identify barriers to the full employment of under-represented groups
- After completing an internal diversity needs assessment, the Correctional Services of Canada discovered an under-representation of Aboriginal and visible minority employees in their ranks. As a result of this finding, the agency hired an Aboriginal recruitment officer and a visible minority recruitment officer. These officers attend career fairs at universities and colleges as well as in Aboriginal communities.

**Idea 2:** Understand the barriers to meeting job qualifications for recent immigrants, and create doorways or training opportunities for new hires.

One of the biggest barriers to employment for recent immigrants is recognition of foreign credentials, as well as acknowledgment of out-of-country training and work experience.



### Examples:

- When it is viewed essential that a new hire speak a particular language and has experience with a particular target group, and they are unable to find a candidate from the target group that meets all the job qualifications, Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) has a policy of “under-hiring” people from the communities it needs to serve and provides them with an “internal apprenticeship”. While completing on the job training, the “under-hired” staff person is paid a step lower than other staff in the same or similar position, but moves up to equal pay once the new hire has developed all the necessary skills and competencies for the position. This practice has been invaluable to the organization because it enhances service delivery to hard-to-reach target populations, and provides a valuable learning opportunity for other staff members who are involved in the training process. It is important to note that FSGV never “under-hires” in situations where it has the potential to threaten the quality of service.
- Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) partnered with Kwantlen Polytechnic University, the BC’s Nurses Union and Providence Health Care to develop the VCH Training Program for Internationally Educated Health Professionals. This 14 week program supports the transition of internationally educated nurses (IENs) into the Canadian health care system. As part of the intake process for this transition program, nurses were hired into units and were paid while they participated the transition program. The training consisted of two components: 1) a review of clinical nursing skills such as assessments and clinical decision-making; and 2) transition to the unit they were hired into to apply knowledge and skills. The IEN Transition Program together with other projects and research findings, drew attention to the communication challenges that internationally educated health professionals face when working in the Canadian health care system. VCH, in partnership with the Fraser Health Authority and Providence Health Care, led the development of a series of courses to address these issues.

### *Build relationships with target communities*

How to network when there is no existing connection between talent pool and employer? Metro Vancouver workplaces are taking some innovative approaches to bridging the gap between immigrant communities and prospective employers.

**Idea 1:** Reach out and create formal partnerships with community organizations.

**Example:** To expand their talent pool, Canada Safeway partnered with MOSAIC, Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Progressive Intercultural Community Services, and Aboriginal Community Employment Services (ACCESS). These organizations support Canada Safeway in increasing its applicant pool and recruiting strong candidates from the communities that they serve. Some strategies Safeway participated in included: job fairs, providing work experience opportunities for people with developmental disabilities, partnering on an ACCESS Essential Skills training program, and trade talks.



**Idea 2:** Take an active role in broadening reach through employee’s connections.

Once a workplace represents the community that it serves, the power of informal networks steps in. Employees provide valuable connections to peer, professional and cultural networks.

**Example:** Vancity has an active talent scout program that encourages staff to refer a friend or family member. Once people come to work at Vancity, they tend to tell their friends and family that it is a great place to work. As a result, once people from diverse backgrounds join the organization they start recruiting friends and family within their communities. Vancity also offers a financial literacy program with a focus on newcomers called *Each One Teach One* where staff go out into their community to teach financial literacy skills. This introduces newcomers to Vancity both as a potential employer and a financial service provider.

**Idea 3:** Develop a presence in the community.

When it comes to hiring from the broadest talent pool possible, a good reputation is critical. Being involved in community events is important – being part of the community is priceless.


**Examples:**

- After introducing diversity and inclusion initiatives, the City of Abbotsford found that staff and managers readily embraced the focus on diversity and inclusion. Staff members from a range of different departments started to volunteer for Abbotsford Community Services employment mentorship program, which pairs newcomers with mentors from the same profession to help newcomers understand how to enter their profession in Canada and Canadian ways of doing business.
- Canada Safeway is an active participant in cultural events and festivals, and suggests face-to-face exchanges are the most valuable form of relationship building.

**Revise interview practices**

A diverse group of candidates is one thing, but research shows that people are more likely to hire someone like themselves. Therefore, it is advantageous to develop a culturally responsive interview process that reduces systemic discrimination and gives each candidate an opportunity to perform to their best ability.

**Idea 1:** Review existing hiring and interview processes and consider if the process used to assess the best candidate is fair or if there are unintended obstacles.



**Example:** ICBC is closely involved in reviewing their recruitment and selection process in an effort to identify any systemic barriers which may unintentionally limit the hiring of diverse candidates. Some questions that they are looking into are:

- Are we casting the net wide enough? Are applicants to ICBC representative of BC?
- Are we attracting diversity? Is our website reflective of our commitment to diversity?
- Are our requirements valid, bias free and solid predictors of success?
- Are our assessment practices bias-free and focused on identifying the best talent?
- From screening, to shortlisting, to testing, and interviewing, are practices barrier-free?

**Idea 2:** Change interview questionnaires to be more culturally responsive.

**Examples:**

- Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) uses behavior-based questions in interviews which reflect job requirements and limit systemic discrimination.
- The City of Abbotsford has implemented new interview questions focusing on customer service, innovative thinking and diversity which align with the City's strategic goals.

**Idea 3:** Diversify the hiring team and interview panels.

**Example:** When the Correctional Service of Canada conducts its interviews, one or two people on the interview panel are constant for all candidates, but the third individual is selected to be someone with a similar background as the candidate. For instance, when interviewing an Aboriginal candidate, The Correctional Service of Canada will work to ensure that the third person on the interviewing panel is an Aboriginal employee.

**Idea 4:** Provide pre- and post-interview information for recent immigrants.

**Examples:**

- As part of the recruitment process, Investors Group invites interested candidates to register for career seminars where they can learn more about the company and what type of candidates Investors Group is looking for.
- As Hydro interviews job candidates referred to them by outreach organizations and shares feedback with candidates on how they did during the hiring process, and opportunities for development.

**Useful resources for hiring and recruitment:**

- Please see the [Hiring Review Activity](#) in Section 5 of this document
- View the HR Council for Non-Profit's toolkit on diversity recruitment at: [www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-recruitment.cfm](http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-recruitment.cfm)
- Consult Texas A&M University's "Increasing Diversity in the Hiring Process document" at [www.employees.tamu.edu/docs/employment/hiring/415AddDiversity.pdf](http://www.employees.tamu.edu/docs/employment/hiring/415AddDiversity.pdf)



## 4.2 Creating and maintaining a welcoming inclusive work environment

Many workplaces in Metro Vancouver already have a diverse set of employees, including recent immigrants and other underrepresented groups. Now the next step is to create an inclusive workplace where employees want to work and where they will prosper.



### *Formal mandates and policies*

A good first step is to acknowledge diversity and inclusiveness as a priority by making a written commitment to diversity and inclusion. Though a written mandate does not itself make a workplace more welcoming to recent immigrants, it is important to let employees and community partners understand the organization's official stance on diversity and inclusion.

**Idea 1:** Formally incorporate diversity into the organization's strategic, operational or business plan or other formal diversity policies/strategies.

#### **Examples:**

- BC Hydro defined diversity goals including accountabilities, reporting, measurement and timetables. They have also developed a business case for diversity which accompanies the diversity goals. Also, the BC Hydro Board of Directors endorsed a vision for diversity.
- SAP's Global Diversity Policy cites its diversity mandate as one that "goes beyond pure legal requirements" to consider the business imperative of respectful, efficient and effective cooperation and teamwork within the organization.
- In 2008, Vancity developed a diversity strategy that was incorporated into the organization's longer term directional plan and aligned with existing strategies and initiatives. Vancity is using this as an opportunity to build the diversity strategy into the overall talent management framework and to differentiate Vancity in its ability to attract, recruit, and retain talent. The strategy employs a 4 phase approach: 1) make diversity intentional, 2) identify the barriers, 3) remove the barriers and 4) make diversity sustainable.

**Idea 2:** Reiterate a pledge or dedication to build an inclusive workplace in formal settings.

**Example:** The Canadian Mental Health Association's BC Division makes a dedication to build an inclusive organization at each Board meeting – this was identified as one of the best ways of incorporating diversity and inclusion into everything this very large organization does.



**Idea 3:** Encourage integrated diversity policies that connect to all departments.

**Example:** The City of Vancouver's Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO) is an impartial and confidential resource that provides assistance to City Departments and staff on issues related to human rights and harassment prevention. The EEO Program works in collaboration with all City departments to ensure that equity, inclusion and diversity are interwoven into all of the City's values and practices. This includes everything from initiatives focused on attracting and retaining a diverse workforce to ensuring that City services and public engagement processes are inclusive of the whole community.

### *Diversity training*

**Idea 1:** Introduce diversity training as part of a diversity initiative or certification.

**Example:** Mission Community Services Society participated in AMSAA's Safe Harbour program, which is one of the most accessible diversity training options for Metro Vancouver workplaces that want to introduce a diversity initiative or gain certification. Safe Harbour is free, open to all and is a reputable wide-scale program. Safe Harbour offers businesses, agencies, municipal offices and institutions a free training workshop which provides information on how to provide a "Safe Harbour" for clients, customers, students and employees and how to better serve a diverse population. The training reviews different ways people might experience discrimination and identifies simple steps to support those who need temporary refuge. Participants sign a Safe Harbour Commitment form and the organization receives Safe Harbour designation and a window decal to display as a visible marker of their commitment to promoting diversity in their community.


**Idea 2:** Include diversity training for all new staff as part of orientation or offer diversity training as part of ongoing professional development.

**Example:** Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) provides mandatory training on diversity related matters to all staff, and staff are required to recertify their diversity training every three years. Training is a component of FSGV's diversity plans that are revisited every year and re-written every three years.

**Idea 3:** Provide on-the-job, periodic training for target groups, or provide ready access to resources available anytime.

#### **Examples:**

- Canada Safeway partnered with an ACCESS Essential Skills training program to train a group of employees who lacked some Essential Skills needed for the workplace.

- 
- FSGV supports ongoing learning among managers by providing an “essential learning” platform on its Intranet, which includes online modules on inclusivity. These modules are part of leadership training and are mandatory for staff when hired at management level.
  - The Canadian Mental Health Association (CHMA) BC Division provides periodic diversity and inclusion awareness training to staff members and the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has a tradition of allocating one hour out of every board meeting for a diversity sensitivity exercise. These are short exercises that stimulate conversation. Some examples include asking board members: What are your traditions for celebrating major holidays during the winter season? Bring a photo of your family and friends from when you were young and explain it. These exercises help the individuals and the team realize how much experience and culture they are bringing into board meetings.

### *Celebrating and having fun at work*

**Idea 1:** Create a fun atmosphere at work where people can get to know each other - throw potlucks, parties, lunch and learns and other gatherings for all staff.

**Example:** At MOSAIC, the most successful and satisfying activities for building inclusion within the organization have utilized food and celebrations. Multicultural potlucks have been a long-standing tradition at MOSAIC. These and other informal cultural events provide staff with an opportunity to highlight and share their cultures in an inclusive workplace setting. It sets a platform for sharing and understanding through practical exposure.

**Idea 2:** Keep celebrating important cultural dates.

**Example:** WorksafeBC celebrates important cultural dates to increase recognition, awareness, and understanding. For instance, WorksafeBC celebrates Ramadan and hosts a lunch and learn to provide staff with an opportunity to learn more about it. This past Chinese New Year, dragon dancers were invited to come to the office for a performance. During multiculturalism week, WorksafeBC has shown movies related to multiculturalism during lunch time and invites directors to come in and talk about their films. WorksafeBC has also invited a holocaust survivor to come in and share his experience, as well as Aboriginal peoples to come in and talk about their experiences. In addition, WorksafeBC has hosted a Canadian citizenship ceremony in its Richmond office to welcome new Canadians who are swearing the oath of citizenship.

## 4.3 Leadership development

Two types of leadership are discussed here: 1) the leadership needed within an organization to take on welcoming and inclusive initiatives; and 2) leadership opportunities for recent immigrants and other people from under-represented groups.



### *Support champions and designate responsibility for welcoming and inclusive projects*

**Idea 1:** Assign a staff or a team to work specifically on welcoming and inclusive initiatives

#### **Examples:**

- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House has a Building Welcoming & Inclusive Neighbourhoods team with representatives from organizations and residents groups
- Safeway has diversity boards in each district, comprised of managers and employees.
- ICBC has a Manager of Diversity and Inclusion position
- Worksafe BC established a joint diversity committee between management and union

**Idea 2:** Foster a “champion” for the diversity cause - ideally someone with influence.

**Example:** The Investors Group, an 80-year-old Canadian personal financial planning company, recently undertook the expansion of services to target newcomers from China. A Regional Director at Investors Group, Bala Naidoo, championed the expansion. Naidoo has created a Mandarin-speaking division of Investors Group and implemented new recruitment strategies to recruit advisors who reflect the diversity in the market area he serves.


### *Remove systemic barriers*

**Idea 1:** Conduct an intentional review of barriers that may prevent immigrants and other under-represented groups from advancing in the workplace.

**Example:** At Vancity an employment systems review was conducted to identify some of the systemic barriers that may prevent Vancity from recruiting and retaining employees with disabilities and Aboriginal employees. The ESR identified that there were indeed some barriers around access and attitudes, and Vancity has taken steps to address these barriers.

**Idea 2:** Create a tool or checklist to help introduce control for bias.





### Examples:

- SVNH has developed a “Diversity Health Checklist” which they use to assess whether programs and hiring and retention practices are diverse and inclusive.
- The Correctional Services of Canada developed “The Diversity Lens”, a tool that consists of a checklist and a framework. It can be used to remove systemic barriers and develop more inclusive policy and procedures. It is focused on the following areas: communications, policy and procedures, personnel procedures, recruitment and evaluation. The Diversity Lens is online at: <http://s26716.gridserver.com/files/diversity.pdf>

### *Mentorship*

**Idea 1:** Support informal coaching and mentoring practices.

**Example:** At MOSAIC, informal coaching and mentoring practices have helped build an organizational culture in which employees can identify career goals at supervisory and management levels within the organization. Ongoing training opportunities which provide information on a range of issues help build skills and promote discussion.

**Idea 2:** Provide mentorship opportunities for employees who are recent immigrants or from other under-represented groups.

**Example:** Through a gap assessment process, the Pacific Region of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) learned that while the Pacific Region had a good level of representation from the different employment equity groups, there were lower levels of diversity in management positions relative to entry level positions. In response, the region initiated mentorship programs to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to pursue middle and senior management positions within the organization. CSC also supports a national Executive Leadership Development Program to prepare staff for future leadership positions.

### *Leadership development programs*

**Idea 1:** Connect with existing leadership development programs

**Example:** S.U.C.C.E.S.S. partners with Douglas College in the Tri-cities to offer a Leadership Training Program among nine (9) participating organizations. At the end of the course, each participant is expected to produce an individual project to apply what they have learned to make their respective workplace more welcoming and inclusive.

**Idea 2:** Operate an internal leadership development program

**Example:** WorkSafeBC supports a leadership development program that is open to current leaders and aspiring leaders. WorkSafeBC reports that there is currently a significant proportion of females and visible minorities participating in this program.



## 5. Activities

### Respect exercise

Ask everyone to find someone in the room who they do not know well. Instruct them to introduce themselves to that person, and spend five to ten minutes talking about respect. What does it mean for you to show respect, and what does it mean for you to be shown respect? After the allotted time, ask the participants to return to their seats, and open the discussion. What ideas did people discuss?

*Common responses include the “Golden Rule,” looking somebody in the eyes, being honest, and appreciating somebody’s ideas even when you do not agree with them. Each of these responses offers interesting points of reflection. They each are informed culturally.*

Once people have returned to the big group, inquire where people’s notions of “respect” come from and who those notions serve and protect. Does everybody really want to be treated the way you want to be treated? Is it respectful in every culture to make eye contact with whomever is speaking? What if somebody’s ideas are oppressive - should we still respect them? And to whose benefit? It is important to mention that respect is a crucial ingredient in any discussion, but especially in a discussion of often-controversial issues such as racism, sexism, and economic injustice.

The point of this exercise is to learn from our differences - to understand each other’s understanding. But the point, as well, is to reflect critically on our assumptions around the concept of respect.

Source: Critical Multicultural Pavilion: Awareness Activities by Paul C. Gorski.

Link: <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/activity1.html>



**Recruitment and hiring: Review the steps**

Review the steps in this hiring process. Identify opportunities to reduce bias so that recent immigrants and other under-represented groups have equal opportunity to perform well and show their strengths.

Hiring and Recruitment Activities	Ways to reduce bias and increase diversity of participants
1. Define the position	<i>i.e. Use broadest terms possible that remain consistent with unit goals.</i>
2. Select a search committee	<i>i.e. Reiterate the commitment to diversity to search committee members</i>
3. Write the position description	<i>i.e. Include language to indicate the commitment to diversity and policies regarding diversity</i>
4. Advertise the posting	<i>i.e. Advertise in ethno-cultural media</i>
5. Screen applicants	<i>i.e. Work deliberately to avoid unconscious bias in review process</i>
6. Interview candidates	<i>i.e. Use behavioural questions relevant to the job, as opposed to focusing on skills language or training</i>
7. Rank candidates	<i>i.e. Avoid making assumptions based on perceptions of candidates characteristics</i>
8. Offer positions and negotiate resource allocation	<i>i.e. Make the best offer possible to provide the candidate with a situation in which they will thrive</i>



AS OUR CITIES GROW AND OUR POPULATIONS DIVERSIFY, PLACES OF WORK INEVITABLY BECOME VENUES OF INTERACTION ACROSS CULTURAL DIFFERENCE. HOW CAN WE CREATE MORE WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES FOR RECENT IMMIGRANTS AND OTHER UNDER-REPRESENTED COMMUNITIES? THIS RESOURCE SHARES IDEAS AND EXAMPLES FROM 17 METRO VANCOUVER WORKPLACES ON HOW TO INTRODUCE DIVERSITY, RESPECT AND DIGNITY FOR ALL AT WORK.

THIS RESOURCE GUIDE WAS PREPARED BY THE SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (SPARC BC) AND FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA THROUGH THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE.