



# TIP SHEET 1

## HOW TO CREATE BARRIER-FREE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

# TIP SHEET 1: HOW TO CREATE BARRIER-FREE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

In British Columbia, we have a world of talent right here on our doorstep. Companies and organizations that are able to attract, hire, and retain skilled immigrant labour have a competitive advantage in today's global talent marketplace. In this Tip Sheet, you'll find information that will give you an edge in creating job descriptions that will help to attract new immigrant talent to your workplace.

## 1 Specify the need, rather than how it's achieved:

- Ask for the ability to meet the requirement instead of a specific requirement. For example, instead of requiring a valid driver's license, ask for the "ability to travel and provide own transportation", or instead of requiring that a candidate reside in a given location, ask for "the ability to report to work within 30 minutes of call".
- Focus on the desired skills and abilities instead of personal traits. For example instead of requiring a "mature, cooperative person", ask for "ability to work effectively as a team member".

## 2 Ask for related work experience instead of Canadian experience:

- Ask for related work experience instead of Canadian work experience, a certain number of years of experience or recent experience.
- Ask candidates to demonstrate their ability to do the job through past achievements, such as previous work and volunteer experience.

## 3 Focus on skills or knowledge needed rather than credentials:

- Focus on relevant skills and competencies needed to perform the work effectively rather than at specific credential (a degree, diploma, certificate or license), unless required by law.
- Consider other skills and knowledge relevant to do the job and include a credential where it's the only means of obtaining the skills, knowledge, and ability needed to perform the work.

- Ensure the qualifications you are asking for do not inadvertently rule out potentially qualified applicants.

## 4 Identify the communication skills required to succeed in the role:

- Specify the kind of communication required such as listening, speaking on the telephone, writing, or negotiating agreements, rather than asking for a general ability to communicate effectively.

## 5 Specify the working conditions:

- Specify the number of hours of work per pay period for part-time position, and the expected duration of the term if it is not an on-going position. For shift or late-night work, include information about security.
- Reference your diverse/inclusive hiring practices.

## 6 Use plain language:

- Create a list of information critical for potential candidates to know and present the information in a logical order and avoid jumping around.
- Write clearly and simply, using common words, a straightforward style and simple sentences.
- Avoid wordiness, long and complex words, jargon, technical and legal language, and acronyms.

**Skilled immigrants to B.C. are more than twice as likely as Canadian-born residents to have a post-secondary degree.**

## Upcoming Tip Sheets:

Tip Sheet 2: Where to Post a Job Vacancy

Tip Sheet 3: How to Conduct a Culturally-Sensitive Job Interview

Tip Sheet 4: How to Assess Skills and Negotiate Competencies

Tip Sheet 5: How to Create a Culturally Inclusive Work Environment

“The reality is that the majority of skilled immigrants have sufficient language skills as they’ve come to Canada through a points system that requires a defined level of language proficiency. As far as “Canadian” experience, immigrants have something else to share: valuable international know-how.”

*Kelly Pollack,  
Vancouver Sun Opinion Editorial  
March 26, 2014*

There’s more... IEC-BC provides an extensive online library of employer tools and resources. The IEC-BC Employer Tools and Resources Library is a collection of materials developed in part or entirely by partners or key organizations throughout Canada. If you’re ready to dig deeper in attracting immigrant talent click the button below.

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