

# Improving Human Resources Management in the Canadian Criminal Justice System

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## Abstract:

*Immigrant professionals from all over the world come to Canada with a strong desire to contribute to its national and international growth. The immigration process entails a very detailed assessment based especially on their education and professional experience. Arriving in Canada, these specialists face important challenges when finding that their assets do not count as much as they did in the immigration prescreening process. Being armed with ambition and tenacity, and following a good pattern for language and knowledge update, however, some of these immigrant professionals overcome obstacles and manage to successfully integrate themselves into the new Canadian professional landscape.*

*This study bestows to the ongoing federal, provincial, private, and community concern for better integrating immigrant professionals into Canada. The study is guided by the belief that a better understanding of Canada's call for professionals and immigrant professionals' needs for a better life will help improve actual approaches towards integrating immigrants. I conducted interviews with ten workers in the Canadian criminal justice system and ten community leaders to find answers about how a better integration of the immigrant professionals can be achieved.*

*The following questions are posed in this study: Are there obstacles that new immigrant professionals must overcome in setting themselves in Canada and, if affirmative, what are they, especially with respect to the Canadian criminal justice system? What is the best strategy for these professionals to become effective contributors to Canada's standards, especially for the criminal justice system? How can they utilize their full capacity or potential? Is there another possible federal, provincial, or private approach for a better integration of immigrant professionals? What do employers require and what can immigrant professionals offer to Canada, particularly within the criminal justice system? The analysis of the answers to all those questions conveys a thoughtful perspective able to bring closer the two protagonists of the integration scenario: Canada and its immigrant professionals.*

## Rezumat:

*Profesioniști din întreaga lume imigrează mereu în Canada dornici să contribuie la creșterea națională și internațională a țării lor de adopție. Procesul de imigrare se*

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bazează pe o evaluare prealabilă detaliată a fiecărui aplicant în special cu privire la educație și experiență profesională. Ajunși în Canada, acești specialiști se confruntă cu dificultăți majore determinate tocmai de nerecunoașterea factorilor care i-au calificat cu succes la imigrare: educație și experiență profesională. Înarmați cu ambiție și tenacitate și dedicați îmbunătățirii cunoștințelor teoretice de specialitate, dar și de limbă, câțiva imigranți depășesc obstacolele și reușesc să se integreze în noul mediu profesional.

Acest studiu se circumscrie eforturilor federale, provinciale și locale, precum și celor comunitare pentru mai buna inserție a specialiștilor care imigrează în Canada. Premisa de la care pornește studiul este că o mai bună înțelegere a nevoii serioase de profesioniști, naționali sau străini, pe care Canada o are constant, precum și a nevoii unei vieți mai bune pe care o au specialiștii ajunși în Canada duce la o mai bună viziune asupra integrării profesioniștilor în țara lor de adopție. Pentru această cercetare au fost intervievați zece specialiști din sistemul judiciar canadian și zece lideri comunitari care să ofere răspunsuri capabile să îmbunătățească absorbția profesioniștilor în sistem.

Următoarele întrebări sunt esențiale în acest studiu: Există obstacole pe care un profesionist trebuie să le depășească în vederea integrării în Canada, și, dacă da, care ar fi acestea, în special cu referire la sistemul judiciar canadian? Care este cea mai bună strategie pentru ca acești specialiști să facă o diferență notabilă potrivit standardelor canadiene, în special în sistemul judiciar? Cum pot acești specialiști să utilizeze potențialul lor maxim și să exceleze în noul lor mediu profesional? Este loc pentru o viziune mai bună la nivel federal, provincial sau local, ori în domeniul privat pentru o integrare mai eficientă a specialiștilor? Ce anume vor angajatorii din interiorul sistemului judiciar canadian și ce anume oferă specialiștii care se naturalizează în Canada?

Analiza răspunsurilor primite la toate aceste întrebări duce la o perspectivă fundamentată care apropie semnificativ cei doi protagoniști ai scenariului integrării: Canada și specialiștii imigranți. Acest studiu este dedicat tuturor profesioniștilor imigranți care, motivați diferit în scopul imigrării, descoperă și urmează cele mai bune căi pentru integrarea lor cu succes în Canada și care, prin depășirea tuturor obstacolelor întâlnite, contribuie din plin la ridicarea standardelor ambelor lor țări: de origine și de adopție. În același timp, acest studiu este dedicat tuturor canadienilor, în special celor care lucrează în sistemul judiciar, și care, printr-o înțelegere clară a nevoii constante de specialiști în Canada, îi evaluează, acreditează și utilizează pragmatic, împlinind în acest fel interesul național și internațional al Canadei.

**Keywords:** Immigrant professionals, successful integration, obstacles, criminal justice system, immigration law

### Dedication

This study is dedicated to all immigrant professionals who, by substantiating their reasons for immigration, discover and follow the best pattern for their successful integration in Canada and, by overcoming all encountered obstacles, become full

contributors to the standards of both their countries of origin and adoption.

At the same time, it is dedicated to all Canadians—especially those who work for the criminal justice system—who, by clearly understanding why immigrant professionals come here, assess and utilize them pragmatically, thus fulfilling the

Canadian national and international interest.

### **Excerpt**

“Too many newcomers can’t get jobs they have been trained for. That’s a terrible waste, for them and for the country. Today, we are delivering on our commitment to do something about it,” said Minister Finley. “In our first phase, the Foreign Credentials Referral Office will help newcomers access what they need to become accredited, both in Canada for those newcomers already here, and abroad for those waiting for an opportunity to come to our country.” ([www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca))

The Honorable Diane Finley,  
Minister of Citizenship and  
Immigration  
Toronto, May 24, 2007

### **Introduction**

The problem discussed in this paper is that many immigrant professionals arriving in Canada - individuals with undergraduate, MA, MS, and even PhD degrees - frequently do not find employment in their professions. While granted entry to Canada based in part on their academic credentials, experience, and achievement levels, they find upon arrival that the professional associations, e.g. gatekeepers, do not recognize their training and previous experience. At the same time, Canada is crying out for skilled labor and depends on the landed immigrants to bring expertise to the country, particularly in highly trained occupations. Over time, the validity of immigrants’ competencies is lost to attrition and, as a result, immigrants can become disillusioned, and the country’s skills-deficit continues.

An example of how this problem affects those who seek employment in the criminal justice system, which includes a broad range of occupations, is that although there is a need for highly skilled

professionals, this system has difficulty integrating them into the workforce. For example, police officers from the United Kingdom, a country that boasts one of the most highly trained police forces in the world, must retrain upon arrival in Canada by joining recruit classes of less skilled and experienced officers. Other examples are social workers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, and master tradesmen. With this in mind, there is a strong need to find better solutions for a proper integration of all immigrant professionals who choose to become a significant addition to a great country. Identifying the obstacles these professionals face in their integration is the most important step.

When immigrant professionals are not permitted to work in their chosen field, the skills set deficit continues in the country, and immigrants are underemployed and unable to professionally contribute to their field. Economic contributions are reduced through lower wages and lower taxes; immigrants’ potential is not maximized by the receiving country. In addition, the draws on social safety network increase.

Several groups of people claim that better integration of immigrant professionals is an important issue: immigrant professional associations across Canada, Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD) Canada, provincial governments (immigration programs are in place in every province), and sector councils (funded by the federal government in Ottawa). Finally, immigrant professionals can testify why and how this situation is affecting them, starting with their application for the Canadian immigration visa, until today.

### **Chapter One: Literature Review and Theory**

Preoccupations for globalization target factors as: development of world trade, dynamics of the goods, capital and

services, and international migration (Saskia Sassen, 1996, 2001, Castles and Miller, 2004, Docquier and Marfouk, 2004). International competition determined by the skills demand is correlated with the aging population of well-developed countries and its associated taxes (Docquier and Marfouk, 2004). These authors conclude that:

“Governments will be pressed to ease immigration restrictions so as to provide domestic firms, especially those in innovation-intensive sectors of the economy, with a source of competitive advantage through improved and cheaper access to a diverse set of skills” (Docquier and Marfouk, 2004: 2–4).

Highly contentious (Walker, 1992), the immigration policy “involves emotions and value judgments” (Globerman, 1992: 40). Targeting demographic and labor force growth, “immigration needs to be well planned preferably in a long term context, however, including appropriate integration programs for the new arrivals, preferably balanced distribution of immigrants over space, as well as being in harmony with various efforts to build a harmonious multicultural society” (Globerman, 1992: 71). Being viewed as “both producers and consumers”, or, as it was suggestively expressed, “an immigrant has hands and a mouth” (Globerman, 1992: 100), immigrants contribute to the development of local people, pay taxes and increase the internationalization factor in countries of their adoption (Globerman, 1992). “Immigration is not unique among social forces or policy areas in its capacity to affect these things but it does have undeniable consequences for how we relate to each other and even for whom we are as a people” (Globerman, 1992: 212). The integration and/or segregation of immigrants concern(s) policymakers and scholars who mentioned that, although “segregation and ghettoization is often associated with ethnic conflict,

**Information, language updating, career planning, lengthy and costly cultural assimilation – at financial or emotional levels, Canadian education and experience, positive attitude, personal strength, determination, and tenacity have been mentioned as specific ingredients for success.**

minority group criminality, and race riots” (Globerman, 1992: 216), the “Canadian society seems also to be adjusting and there is evidence of improvement in the areas of job discrimination and racism” (Globerman, 1992: 247). Finally, Canada’s practice of selecting immigrants based on the labor market criteria helped newcomers, “even if they are not always rewarded commensurate with their skills” (Globerman, 1992: 79).

“It is, of course, a truism that, aside from Native peoples, everyone in Canada today is an immigrant or a descendent of immigrants” (Tulchinski, 1994: 1). The Honorable Monte Solberg, PC, MP Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, publicly recognized in 2006 that immigration has been vital to Canada’s development and its history: “Hardworking people and their families have come to Canada from all parts of the world to share and contribute to this nation’s identity. Collectively and individually, they have made a contribution to the development of our economy, our society, and our culture”. In 2007, Minister Finley added that “too many newcomers can’t get jobs they have been trained for. That’s a terrible waste, for them and for the country. Today, we are delivering on our commitment to do something about it.” ([www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)).

From academia, however, Peter. S. Li (2003: 24–25) talks about “the tendency of Canadians to assign overwhelming importance to economic performance

when assessing the merits of immigration and the desirability of immigrants.” Li underlines the common approach in relation to immigration: immigrants should be allowed only if they can contribute to an economical increase and argues that this view “reduces immigrants to two legal categories: the more desirable selected immigrants who qualify as economic immigrants and the less desirable or self-selected immigrants who are admitted as family members or refugees” (Knowles, 2007: 245).

Li (2003: 25) notes that studies of tax returns indicate skilled immigrants who entered Canada before 1989 earned more, on average, than “Canadian tax filers,” while those who arrived after 1989 earned less, despite having more education and expertise. This paradox was highlighted in a Statistics Canada study that found the earnings gap between recent immigrants and Canadian-born men widened dramatically between 1980 and 2000. Although newcomers were arriving more skilled than ever before, they weren’t able to capitalize on their skills. In 1980, when differences in age and education were taken into account, recent male immigrants earned 17% less, on average, than their Canadian-born counterparts. “Twenty years later the gap had more than doubled in size, to 40 percent” (Knowles, 2007: 253).

### ***Official Languages and the Integration of Immigrants***

The ability to speak English or French is the leading determinant of immigrant integration in the Canadian society. For example, “we know that immigrants unable to speak either language have lower rates of labor force participation, higher unemployment rates, and lower incomes” (Pendahur and Ledoux, 1991: 35–39). Not speaking one of the official languages could severely diminish

integration chances. “It may even have the effect of limiting access to basic human rights” (Munro, 1989: 80–85). Moreover, it was found that immigrants without official language skills “are almost certainly destined for segregation and isolation” (Globerman, 1992: 223). Although “ethnic language retention is not by itself a measure of segregation”, “a common and unique language is naturally aid to ethnic solidarity and to the extent that original language retention and use declines it may be fair to assume that ethnic enclosure is also declining” (Globerman, 1992: 236).

### ***Undervaluing Immigrants’ Foreign Experience***

A strong topic resides in the tendency of Canadian professions and business to undervalue foreign work experience, usually refusing to recognize or appreciate academic credentials earned worldwide. “The immigration system needs to be tossed on its head and revamped,” British Columbia MP Keith Martin declared in 2002, after witnessing what foreign doctors had to endure to practice in Prince George, British Columbia, a place in a high need for physicians (Knowles, 2007: 253).

Upon arrival in Canada, most newcomers seeking to enter the job market are confronted by a form of Catch 22: an immigrant may not get a job without Canadian experience and cannot gain Canadian experience without a job. “This is the job trap, but there is light at the end of the tunnel” (Bayat, 2004: 146). The regulation of professions allows Canada to ensure the safety of the public by preventing those without adequate training from taking jobs where they would cause harm. “Licensing examinations are necessary,” especially for physicians, nurses, engineers and electricians, pharmacists, or lawyers (Bayat, 2004:

146). The registration process for regulated professions is different in each province and for each profession (usually, the requirements refer to proper translated and/or notarized documents, writing one or more examinations and retraining or upgrading courses). The assessment process “takes time and costs money” (Bayat, 2004: 149). In fact, University of Ottawa History professor Mark Stolarik claims that immigration officials “deliberately mislead these professionals by not warning them against the closed shops of many Canadian professions, especially medicine” (Knowles, 2007: 253).

According to the Conference Board of Canada, the frequent failure of Canada to recognize the qualifications of present-day newcomers robs the economy of as much as \$3.4 billion annually. In fact, by 2001, the unemployment rate for first-year immigrants “was 23 points higher than the national average” (Knowles, 2007: 255). To address the criticism, the Liberal Government, in the late 1990s, appointed “an independent three-member advisory panel to examine Canada’s immigration policy” (Knowles, 2007: 255).

### ***Canadian Human Rights Jurisprudence***

A lot of overqualified people—native-born or immigrants—do not get hired even though they successfully meet all posted requirements (Vambe, 2007). In March 2006, an environmental scientist from India, rejected for an entry-level job in his field, challenged the common HR practice of refusing overqualified applicants. Gian Sangha’s victory at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal asks recruiters and human resources professionals to be careful about rejecting job candidates they think are overqualified (Vambe, 2007). “When an employer...

adopts a rule against the hiring of overqualified candidates, it may appear to be ‘neutral’ in that it applies equally to all overqualified candidates (immigrant and native-born),” wrote tribunal chair Grant Sinclair.

Although the employer testified it no longer screens-out overqualified candidates, it did bring in a recruiting expert to defend the practice. Derek Chapman, an associate professor in industrial and organizational psychology at the University of Calgary, said screening-out overqualified candidates is a common method of finding the best candidate. People who are mismatched with their jobs are more likely to leave, to demand higher wages, and be difficult to manage because they may feel disgruntled about answering to people with fewer credentials, he told the tribunal. “What’s more, they’re more likely to experience anxiety and depression”, Chapman said (Vu, 2006: 4). The ruling sends a message to employers that they have “to develop hiring and promotion practices that are open, objective, and do not make assumptions about why a person is applying for a particular job,” said lawyer Harold Caley, a partner at the Toronto firm Caley Wray. Although this ruling is not necessarily binding on other cases, “if it is a well-reasoned decision, it will normally be followed by subsequent decision-makers,” Caley added (Vu, 2006: 4).

Paul Fairweather at the Vancouver law office of Fasken Martineau, however, criticized the decision for failing to look at whether the practice is a “*bona fide* occupational requirement” (Stewart, 2007: 45). He referred to Meiorin, a leading workplace human rights case involving a female firefighter who was dismissed for failing to pass a physical fitness test. “The difficulty that the Supreme Court had with that was not the fact that there was a standard, and frankly not the fact that the

standard would impact women more harshly than it would men,” said Fairweather. “The difficulty was the standard couldn’t be justified.” “If a rule is a *bona fide* occupational requirement, said Fairweather, it will withstand review regardless of what it affects” (Vu, 2006: 4).

In July 15, 2013, the Ontario Human Rights Commission established a new policy on removing the “Canadian experience” barrier stating that “a strict requirement for “Canadian experience” is discriminatory, and can only be used in rare circumstances” (www.ohrc.on).

### ***Anticipating the Future: Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century***

Several recent government reports have identified “the recognition of immigrants’ credentials as a priority for Canadian immigration and labour market policy” (Riddell, 2003: 622). There is also a study that investigates the human resources challenges of the Canadian Public Policing Sector responsible for national and provincial policing (PricewaterhouseCoopers et al., 2002). Recommendations concern the following priorities for change: increasing sector-wide efficiencies; improving the police services’ ability to respond to new and emerging types of crime; improving labor-management relations; and increasing funding and resources (PricewaterhouseCoopers et al., 2002). Then there are international concerns, as well. For example, an American study investigates criminal background checks in hiring practices in public sector agencies. It has been concluded that a background-check policy should be legally defensible, as long as it complies with state statutes governing the rehabilitation of criminal offenders (Connerley et al., 2001).

As regards human capital characteristics, Ritz (1998) states that education accounts for one half the differences in the earnings of new immigrants among major cities in the US, Canada, and Australia. Inequality in the labor market has increased over the past two decades, and new labor-market entrants in Canada have not fared as well as their predecessors (Beaudry and Green, 2000). More recently, Green and Worswick (2002) brought this finding to bear on the experience of successive immigrant cohorts. McDonald and Worswick (1998) found that weekly earnings of adult male immigrants of prime labor-force age who landed during the 1970s were influenced by the unemployment rate evolution in Canada.

The literature about the changing experience of new immigrants has identified a number of factors. Current literature points to changes in the structure of wages, with more recent entrant cohorts earning less than earlier cohorts with the same human capital (Waslauder, 2003). Wanner’s study (1998) of the returns to immigrants’ human capital in Canada found little support for the argument that widespread prejudice against ethnic minorities has led to economic discrimination, because immigrants educated in Canada receive returns to their human capital stock almost equal to native-born Canadians. He confirmed, however, that those educated abroad receive lower returns, and these returns vary systematically with the country of birth (Abdolmohammad, 2004: 14). Basran and Zong (1998) have also shown that due to the problem of transferring educational equivalencies and work experiences across international boundaries, the immigrant professionals have to take jobs for which they are over trained, resulting in a downward occupational mobility relative to the occupations held before emigration into Canada.

Stoffman (2002) addressed the question, “Who gets in?” The author suggested that question not be answered without using all the tools and information available to us.

“Let’s not answer on the basis of emotionalism and rhetoric, or on behalf of entrenched interests. We need to scale down the size of the immigration program and our expectations of what it can do for us. We need to liberate ourselves from the flawed policy that our government and its clients tell us what we need. It’s time to devise more modest, more realistic, and less hypocritical immigration and refugee policies. It’s time to return the immigration program to its rightful owners: the Canadian people”. (Stoffman, 2002: 192)

As was pointed out, the decisions we make now about what sort of people are admitted to Canada will determine the kind of country we will have 100 years from today; that is why it is so important for Canadians to know something about the history of Canadian immigration and the realities of the present-day immigration policy; only if we are informed about such vital questions can we truly be prepared to participate actively and intelligently in the continuing debate on the direction of Canadian immigration policy, “a debate which will have important consequences for Canada’s future” (Knowles, 1997: 204).

## Chapter Two: Methodology

The methodology to be employed in this study was quite straightforward. It involved conducting a set of 20 interviews with professionals who presumably have information about the challenges faced by the new immigrant professionals coming to Canada. Half the interviewees are directly involved in the recruitment of criminal justice employees. They form the Criminal Justice System group—CJS:

police officers, court managers, judicial officers, and federal and provincial government decision-makers. The other interviewees, most of whom belong to the Canadian educational system and who come from various communities, form the Non-Criminal Justice System group—NCJS.

All interviewees were informed about the purpose of the study. They were given the opportunity to ask questions related to this study and receive additional details. In addition, the interviewees were notified that excerpts from the interview may be included in this ongoing research and publications to come from this research, with the understanding the quotations will be anonymous. Finally, the interviewees reviewed the record of their answers and confirmed their accuracy. All interviewees signed a consent form as a prerequisite for interview.

The interview schedule to be used in the study was as per *Appendix A*. The associated interviews took 30 minutes to complete. In reality, since most of the interviewees showed a generous enthusiasm about the topic, often the time they allocated to answer was doubled. The individuals selected for these interviews were determined through a *snowball sampling* technique. That is, beginning with a list of ten interviewees presumed at the start point to be familiar with the immigration issues, other interviewees have been added upon the recommendation of initial interviewees. Specifically, each interviewee was asked if he or she could recommend one other person who would be an appropriate candidate to be interviewed for the study. As a result, the initial list of ten interviewees was doubled, as well.

Once the interviewees answered the questions, the results were collated and compared along emerging commonalities. By having the perspective offered by experts within the Canadian criminal



justice system and those offered by community experts on the topic of a better integration of highly specialized immigrant professionals into Canada, this study provides useful information generally to human resources strategists, especially to those in charge of human resources administration in the criminal justice system. Useful information is provided also to any potential immigrant professional who contemplates an amazing journey towards fulfilling the Canadian dream.

### Chapter Three: Findings *Interviewees' Experience*

The vast majority of interviewees worked or volunteered with immigrants. Ninety-five percent of all interviewees worked or volunteered with Skilled Worker Class or Immigrant Professionals, 60% worked or volunteered with Sponsored Immigrants, 50% with Refugees, and 25% with *other* categories of individuals, such as visitors and international students involved in adjusting their Canadian residence status. Under this "other" category, interviewees stated that in time, they met various groups of people with different professional or personal profiles, mentioning encounters with immigrants as victims or suspects of crime, staff, clients, and students. Divided by groups, 90% of CJS interviewees and all NCJS

interviewees dealt directly with Skilled Worker Class or Immigrant Professionals, while 70% of CJS and 50% of NCJS interviewees have worked or volunteered with Sponsored Immigrants. Also, 40% of CJS and 60% of NCJS interviewees dealt with Refugees; 30% of CJS and 20% of NCJS interviewees worked or volunteered with *other* categories of immigrants.

The majority of interviewees declared themselves as immigrants. Sixty percent of CJS and 100% of NCJS interviewees declared themselves as immigrants, arriving in Canada as adults or children and living in Canada between 10 and 60 years. Forty-five percent of the interviewees have worked or volunteered with indicated immigrant categories less than 6 years, 50% for 6 to 10 years, 30% for 11 to 15 years, 10% for 16 to 20 years or 21 and 30 years, and 15% for over 30 years. Per group, 70% of CJS interviewees and 20% of NCJS interviewees worked or volunteered with immigrants for less than 5 years. Thirty percent of CJS interviewees and 70% of NCJS interviewees worked or volunteered with immigrants for 6 to 10 years. Thirty percent of both CJS and NCJS interviewees worked or volunteered with immigrants for 11 to 15 years. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees dealt with immigrants for 16 to 20 years, and 21 to 30 years, as well. Finally, 20% of CJS interviewees and 10% of NCJS interviewees worked and volunteered with immigrants for over 30 years (see *Table A below*).

Table A  
Interviewees' experience in dealing with immigrant professionals

Interviewees	under 6 years' experience	6 – 10 years' experience	11 – 15 years' experience	16 – 20 years' experience	21 – 30 years' experience	Over 30 years' experience
CJS (10)	0	1	1	2	3	3
NCJS (10)	0	2	2	2	2	2
Total (20)	0	3	3	4	5	5

Fifty percent of all interviewees declared themselves as volunteers, and 45% declared themselves as community leaders. With respect to CJS interviewees, 90% of them mentioned different jobs that brought them into a direct relationship with immigrants: immigration officer, immigration consultant, employment consultant, Human Resources specialist, police recruiter, In-Court Activity manager, security recruiter, media consultant, news anchor, accountant for government bodies, lawyer, BC Supreme Court Master, government manager, police officer, CIC consultant, security trainer, Real Canadian Superstore manager, welfare officer, referral agent, program assistant in career services offered for immigrants, interpreter, counselor, engineer, settlement language program department head, dean of instruction, education department head, graduate research assistant, project manager, community leader, community member, church member, student advisory council member, and volunteer with various institutions or communities.

The vast majority of interviewees provided different and, often, cumulative services to immigrants. Eighty percent of all interviewees dealt with immigrants by assisting them with miscellaneous information, 75% provided references, 65% offered networking, and 60% helped immigrants fill out forms. Also, 45% of interviewees encountered immigrants working in areas of employment consultation or daycare, school, or university information; 40% when offered bank information; and 25% when provided job searching club information, and welcome services. Eighty percent of all interviewees performed *other* types of work. Under this category, interviewees mentioned information or procedures regarding governmental agencies, immigration applications, social insurance

number forms, Medical Service Plan applications, hiring, training, gaining a Refugee status, and job referrals. Also, they mentioned support through processing and mentoring in recruiting activity, legal advice, life skills coaching, personal counseling, interpreting services, cultural shock transition, integration advice, or any other kind of advice they have been asked to offer. Finally, other kind of work with immigrants mentioned by interviewees consists in offering cultural integration support through art—music, choir, lectures on Western civilization issues, theater, religious debates, and participation in fundraising actions or extracurricular activities within the educational system or community.

The majority of interviewees offered miscellaneous information and references, while the minority of interviewees helped immigrants with welcome services and daycare, school, university information. Divided by groups, 70% of CJS and 90% of NCJS interviewees offered miscellaneous information, while 60% of CJS and 90% of NCJS interviewees offered references. Also, 50% of CJS and 70% of NCJS interviewees helped immigrants fill out forms; 50% of CJS and 40% of NCJS interviewees offered employment consultation. Compared to only 40% of CJS interviewees who offered networking, 90% of NCJS interviewees declared they offered it. Similarly, 20% of CJS and 60% of NCJS interviewees helped immigrants with welcome services and daycare, school, university information, or other services. Also, 10% of CJS and 40% of NCJS interviewees helped immigrants with bank and job searching club information. Finally, 70% of CSJ and 90% of NCJS interviewees offered *other* type of work for immigrants (see *Table B below*).

Table B  
Type of work interviewees provided to immigrant professionals

Interviewees	CJS (10)	NCJS (10)	Total (20 = 100%)
Information	7	9	16 (80%)
References	6	9	15 (75%)
Networking	4	9	13 (65%)
Forms	5	7	12 (60%)
Employment consultation	5	4	9 (45%)
Welcome services	2	6	8 (40%)
Daycare, school, university	2	6	8 (40%)
Bank	1	4	5 (25%)
Job-searching club	1	4	5 (25%)
Other	7	9	16 (80%)

**Identified Steps towards Integration of New Immigrant Professionals and How Many New Immigrant Professionals Are Perceived As Their Followers**

Per total number of interviewees, 80% of them considered that knowing specific information about professional organizations and updating their language skills are the most important steps for the integration of new immigrant professionals. Seventy-five percent said that immigrants should know specific information about professions, and 70% declared that acknowledging or understanding the job market and *other* steps ensure the integration of the new immigrant professionals. Under this category, the interviewees mentioned steps such as a huge need for understanding and assimilating cultural behavior, acknowledging the customs and specific traditions of the new culture, not coming in conflict with the new culture, being easygoing, updating computer and profession-related skills, updating online research skills, identifying transferable skills, being adaptable, participating at each level (even an entry level), becoming

a team member, being yourself, practicing self-assessment and self-awareness, having the ability to learn and adapt quickly, and knowing specific community experience towards immigrant professionals' integration. Sixty-five percent of all interviewees appreciated that the most important step is to understand how to find a job, while 65% of them considered that knowing information about education in Canada is very important. Fifty-five percent of all interviewees appreciated that general information about Canada, how to update immigrants' professional knowledge or benefit from networking and becoming part of a network represent the most important steps. While 45% considered acknowledging the professional promoting system was the most important step for the integration of new immigrant professionals, 40% considered career planning the most important.

Divided by groups, 90% of CJS interviewees considered that knowing specific information about professional organizations represents the most important step to help an immigrant to integrate, while all NCJS interviewees considered updating immigrants'

language skills the most important one. Sixty percent of CJS interviewees considered the most important steps to know were specific information about Canada, specific information about professions, how to update immigrants' language skills and professional knowledge, and an understanding the job market. Fifty percent of them said the major steps for the better integration of new immigrant professionals were in knowing general information about Canada and *other* actions, while 40% considered that how to find a job, information about regulations across Canada, and knowing the professional system for promotion within a profession as the major steps. Finally, 30% of CJS interviewees considered career planning and networking and becoming part of a network as important steps towards integration. Ninety percent of NCJS interviewees considered the most

important step for the new immigrant professionals' integration were to know specific information about professions, to know how to find a job, and *other*. Eighty percent of them appreciated that understanding the job market and the benefits of networking and becoming part of a network were the most important step; 70% said that knowing specific information about professional organizations and education in Canada represent the most important step. Sixty percent considered that knowing general information about Canada and information about regulations across Canada are the most important step for the new immigrant professionals' integration. Fifty percent considered the most important steps for updating immigrants' professional knowledge were career planning and acknowledging the promotion system of the professionals (see *Table C below*).

Table C  
Steps towards integration of new immigrant professionals

Interviewees	CJS (10)	NCJS (10)	Total (20 = 100%)
Specific information about professional organizations	9	7	16 (80%)
Update immigrants' language skills	6	10	16 (80%)
Specific information about professions	6	9	15 (75%)
Acknowledge the job market	6	8	14 (70%)
Acknowledge how to find a job	4	9	13 (65%)
Specific information about education in Canada	6	7	13 (65%)
Benefit from networking and become a part of it	3	8	11 (55%)
General information about Canada	5	6	11 (55%)
Update immigrant professionals' knowledge	6	5	11 (55%)
General information about regulations in Canada	4	6	10 (50%)
Acknowledge the professional promoting system	4	5	9 (45%)
Career planning	3	5	8 (40%)
Other	5	9	14 (70%)

All interviewees offered insightful commentaries about their experience, such as the following excerpts. "Knowing general information about Canada must cover the new cultural environment." "To know information about regulations across Canada determines or creates appropriate behavior. To know specific information about professions is viewed as a requirement to make a good decision." "The individuals need specific information regarding licensing requirements, qualifications, and designations. Knowing specific information about professional organizations should be considered only after the new immigrant professionals have determined their career and education path, since career planning, together with the benefits of networking and becoming part of a network, are viewed as hugely important for immigrants' challenges." "There is a constant need to understand the professional practice as conducted in Canada, an aspect that may be more significant for some fields where practice differs markedly. Those who come from non-English- or non-French-speaking countries have the immediate and critically important task of learning the language to begin the integration process. This is viewed as vital in their initial first two or three years." Finally, "the new immigrant professionals are called to inform themselves even about merging with the Canadian mentality or lifestyle, entertainment, leisure time, or personal boundaries."

Asked the proportion of immigrant professionals who followed the pattern interviewees described above, based on the interviewee's respective experience, 25% of all interviewees answered between 5% and 15%, 20% chose equally between 16% and 20%, and 51% and 75%, and over 75%. Divided by groups, 30% of CJS interviewees appreciated that a proportion of 16% to 20% followed what

they considered the most important steps, and 20% of the interviewees said immigrant professionals followed the described pattern evenly under 5%, between 5% and 15%, and 51% and 75%. Only 10% of CJS interviewees considered that over 75% of immigrant professionals followed the interviewees' pattern. Thirty percent of NCJS interviewees saw that 5% to 15%, and over 75% of the immigrant professionals followed the preferred steps and 20% felt that proportion was between 51% and 75%.

#### ***Identified Obstacles That Hindered the Integration of the Immigrant Professionals***

Eighty-five percent of all interviewees considered that the immigrants' language skills represent the most important obstacle in the integration of the immigrant professionals. Seventy percent indicated *other* causes. They mentioned, for example, the need for securing a family income, uncertainty about the length of education requirements, the process to complete the upgrading of professional skills or language, or professional barriers arising from regulations and policies adopted by colleges and associations in recognizing credentials from foreign institutions. Also, the interviewees mentioned a lack of courses designated to fast-track immigrant professionals to upgrade their skills, poor orientation courses about what an immigrant can do for Canada, and what Canada is and can become for a newcomer. Insufficient funds and constant costs led to their taking fewer and fewer educational workshops, which in the long term would have a negative impact on the Canadian society. It has been said that having a well-informed pool of new Canadians, able to produce and contribute at full capacity, can benefit the Canadian economy tremendously. Others mentioned the rigidity

of the government and the professional regulations, or their antagonism. Not once did recruiters of foreign workers mention that Canadian embassies operate at very inconvenient times to process immigration visa applications.

With regards to the Canadian criminal justice system, managers involved directly in recruiting foreign workers mentioned the impossibility of checking their background, or how expensive and inefficient this process can become. Also, interviewees stressed there is not enough correlation between professional requirements and the academic programs offered by the Canadian universities and colleges; there is also a lack of cultural integration and clear access to behavioral codes and customs. They stated how important it is for new immigrant professionals to be flexible, to deal intelligently with a certain amount of frustration, and take care of their health. In addition, other obstacles seen were new immigrants' erroneous expectations, characteristics of economic time, and environment when they immigrated, lack of positive attitude, financial resources, courage, the capacity to put the professional past behind, ignorance on both sides, accepting low-paid jobs for undetermined periods of time, debts, or lack of readiness to accept the reality and merge with another culture.

A key element is the influence of the individual's character, which can either be an asset or an obstacle. Those determined to return to some form of work in their profession or start a new career are seen as much more likely to succeed as those who have less determination. An additional factor is the age of the immigrant. The younger the immigrant professional, the interviewees have found, the more likely she or he will establish work in Canada in his or her chosen profession. Younger people have more time to devote to the process; they are at

a stage of adult development where creating a career is very important. Older professionals may get discouraged by the effort and the costs involved in getting back to a career when the number of working years left are short.

Fifty percent of all interviewees considered that lack of specific information about professions, about professional organizations, or about the job market, represents the essential obstacle. Forty-five percent appreciated that the lack of specific information about education in Canada, the lack of information about how to find a job, and the lack of career planning hindered the integration of the immigrant professionals. Thirty-five percent of all interviewees considered that the immigrants' professional knowledge, the lack of information about how to benefit from networking and how to become part of a network, and the lack of general information about regulations across Canada represent the main obstacle. While 25% of all interviewees considered immigrant professionals' ignorance as one of the most important obstacles, 20% of them saw that a lack of general information about Canada represents the main reason for immigrant professionals' failure.

Comparatively, while 90% of CJS interviewees considered that immigrant language skills represent the main obstacle to their integration, only 80% of the NCJS agreed. At the same time, 70% of the CJS and NCJS indicated *other* obstacles. Forty percent of CJS interviewees found that lack of specific information about professional organizations is the main obstacle, while 70% of NCJS interviewees equally found as main reasons: lack of specific information about education in Canada, lack of specific information about professions, and lack of information about the job market. Sixty percent of NCJS interviewees considered the main

obstacles to be the lack of general information about regulations across Canada, lack of specific information about professional organizations, and lack of information about how to find a job and career planning. While 50% of CJS interviewees considered equally that lack of information about how to benefit from networking and becoming part of a network and the immigrants' ignorance are their major obstacles, 40% of CJS interviewees found that lack of specific information about professional organizations represent the milestone. Thirty percent of CJS interviewees answered that lack of specific information about professions, lack of information about the job market, lack of information about how to find a job, and career planning are the key obstacles. The same percent of NCJS interviewees found that lack of general

information about Canada and lack of information about professions are the main obstacles. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees considered that lack of information about how to benefit from networking and becoming part of a network or a lack of specific information about education in Canada represented the major obstacles. The same percentage of NCJS interviewees found that a lack of information about the professional promoting system was a major issue for the new immigrant professionals' integration. Finally, only 10% of CJS interviewees found that a lack of general information about Canada and a lack of general information about regulations across Canada hindered the integration of new professional arrivals (see *Table D below*).

Table D  
Obstacles that hindered the integration/evolution/success of the immigrant professionals

Interviewees	CJS (10)	NCJS (10)	Total (20 = 100%)
The immigrants' language skills	9	8	17 (85%)
Lack of specific information about professions	3	7	10 (50%)
Lack of information about the job market	3	7	10 (50%)
Lack of specific information about professional organizations	4	6	10 (50%)
Career planning	3	6	9 (45%)
Lack of information about how to find a job	3	6	9 (45%)
Lack of specific information about education in Canada	2	7	9 (45%)
Lack of general information about regulations across Canada	1	6	7 (35%)
Lack of information about how to benefit from networking and how to become a part of it	2	5	7 (35%)
The immigrant professionals' knowledge	4	3	7 (35%)
Ignorance	0	5	5 (25%)
Lack of general information about Canada	1	3	4 (20%)
Lack of information about the professional promoting system	0	2	2 (10%)
Other	7	7	14 (70%)

### ***How the Expectations of New Immigrant Professionals Are Perceived***

Interviewees were asked to categorize the expectations of new immigrant professionals. Fifty-five percent of all interviewees considered these expectations reasonable, 40% as unrealistic, and 35% offered the *other* category. They mentioned that if new immigrants follow the right path towards integration, their expectations are reasonable and if not, their expectations are unrealistic. "It very much depends on where they come from," others added. "Culture plays a big role in setting expectations. They are conditioned by their known cultural environment." "They expect to find what was advertised." "Some immigrants come without many expectations, ready to go to work in low-paid labor, even though they come as highly educated and experienced professionals," interviewees said. While 60% of CJS and 20% of NCJS interviewees considered that new immigrant professionals have unrealistic expectations, 40% of CJS and 80% of NCJS interviewees found these immigrants have reasonable expectations. Thirty percent of CJS and 40% of NCJS interviewees offered *other* categories, as well. No interviewees chose "no expectations."

Interviewees who considered immigrants' expectations unrealistic said it was due to the lack of information—none given and none requested. "Both parties should act more responsibly, because it is not enough to leave the home country and just get by when you get there. This is why a certain amount of money is required when an immigrant comes in Canada. Also, the Canadian Government cannot afford new burdens; that is why thorough prescreening is a must. At the same time, the newcomers expect a lot from the Canadian Government, but the resources to satisfy them are getting smaller and

smaller," an interviewee said. Another one added, "From the perspective of a new immigrant professional, I assume their expectations are reasonable. From my perspective, the vast expectations of the majority of immigrant professionals appear to be unrealistic." Another interviewee, however, said "I choose reasonable. There is every reason to believe that a foreign-born professional can find work in his or her profession. Those who want to do that have reasonable expectations in one sense. The other side of that question, however, deals with the individual's expectations about the personal effort and sacrifice required. Many come with an unrealistic picture of what the process involves. It requires an extensive amount of time and effort to establish a professional career in a new country. Many, I have learned, who have immigrated to another country for the first time, were unaware on arrival of what was involved and the time required."

### ***A Success and Failure Story Involving an Immigrant Professional***

The interviewees were asked to share a success and a failure story about an immigrant professional. Of the total number of interviewees, 90% of all interviewees offered success stories and 55% offered failure stories. Twenty percent offered stories that combine in them both success and failure. Eighty percent of CJS interviewees told success stories, and the same percentage of NCJS interviewees told failure stories. All NCJS interviewees, however, shared success stories. Ten percent of CJS and 30% of NCJS interviewees offered hybrid stories.

All of them are supporting details for interviewees' perspective about the topic. Most of them represented a celebration of those immigrant professionals who,



working hard and benefiting from all the necessary components, have succeeded in their spectacular Canadian integration journey; some of them offer devastating evidence for personal failure or resignation.

#### Stories shared by CJS interviewees

One example was a man with a police background who came to Canada after the end of World War II. Because of the economic climate in 1947, he had immediate access to the Immigration Department from where, decades later, he retired as a supervisor. The same interviewee remembered Honduras friends who, years ago, came as professionals to Canada. The wife went to English as a Second Language school and had a job as a housekeeper. The husband did not attend school; he worked as a laborer in construction until he hurt himself. He has not been covered with insurance through his job. They were overwhelmed. Finally, they returned to their country of origin.

Another example was a family that arrived in Canada in March 2007 from Lima, Peru. "She is of Chinese background and he is of Japanese descent. They are highly trained as pharmacists and had three drugstores in Lima." They came with four children and rented a three-bedroom apartment. She is working as child care attendant and he works in window and door manufacturing. In the evenings, they go to school to upgrade their pharmaceutical education. "They are very realistic and have a completely positive attitude. Yet, they have a financial advantage, coming with money from Peru, and a psychological one, since one of their children is already considered a promising Canadian ballerina."

Another interviewee talked about an Iranian-trained doctor who worked part-time as a security guard while

upgrading his skills to Canadian standards. The individual is once again a qualified General Practitioner, in the Vancouver area.

Also, a teenager who came from the former Czechoslovakia decided to go to school and, after a while, started to work. The interviewee added, "He lost his job, found another one, lost the job again. He went to school again. Today he is a drafting engineer, ready for retirement, one of the top drafting engineers in British Columbia. He took a lot of schooling for his profession, but especially for the language. He still has some accent, but his English skills are excellent."

Another family immigrated to Canada in 1994; the wife was an architect and the husband was a physics teacher. Their attempts to have their credentials recognized in Canada failed. The wife worked for an architectural firm "doing technical work," doing the work of an architect under the supervision of an accredited architect, who signed and applied his seal to her projects, and paid her proportionally less than half the value she contributed to the firm. The husband worked menial jobs for three years. After seven years of living in Canada, they decided to get Canadian education. The wife graduated from a business-associated master's program at the University of Victoria and currently works as a director of capital planning in the provincial government. The husband graduated with a master's degree in mathematics and secured a permanent position as a staff member at Camosun College in Victoria.

"The Canadian society itself is a mosaic of such stories. I met a neurologist from Eastern Europe who came to Canada in 1997. After struggling with her equivalence exams, she managed to get acceptance in the USA. She had to spend some time in Pennsylvania with her medical residency. After that she came

back to Canada and was recognized as a successful doctor, working with the BC Cancer Society. In the same vein, I know four similar examples that are very close to successful conclusion. I met a Russian surgeon who arrived in 1988 and ended up in depression, however, He hanged himself in a public park after three or four years, leaving behind two teenage children and a devastated ex-wife. He was in his mid-40s with a large portfolio in Russia.”

Another interviewee said, “I changed professions when coming to Canada, from geologist to accountant. I have done eight years of postsecondary education, six years of CGA studies, and two years for a Master of Business Administration. I was not able to use my previous profession to get a job. Therefore, I had to change professions.”

Another interviewee said, “Success has many levels. I remember an Indo-Canadian woman, 35 to 40 years old, applying to become a police officer. I saw the power of the women in her community. She had poor language skills; however, she was welcome to try to qualify and it was a sign of police openness, given her community history with the police where you do what your family wants you to do. Applying to become a police officer, this woman was involved in making a difference in police culture.”

“We have had several police officers recruited from the USA, United Kingdom, and one recently from India. All of them are very good police officers. The guy from India was an accountant. Postsecondary education, however, is not a crucial asset for policing as are other factors like morality, character, and records. He has been here for over five years and he works well. Even experienced foreign police officers need to go to our Academy, which is structured in three blocks. If the candidate does well, we can waive some parts of the usual training.”

“We just hired a Punjabi man who immigrated about two to three years before. He came as a computer technologist. His English was good. Now he is an excellent police officer. Last month we hired a police officer from Scotland. He had been with another police force for two years in Canada and with the Justice Institute for one year. For family reasons, he moved back to Scotland. After he resolved his problems, he came back and we hired him. He is an excellent police officer. Also, another former Los Angeles police officer hired here is, basically, an asset to our department. It is true, this one was the easiest to hire.”

#### **Stories shared by NCSJ interviewees**

“I remember an immigrant professional coming to Canada 14 years ago with his wife and 4-year old son. He had a doctorate degree in Physics. Being very motivated, he accepted a survival job as a pizza deliveryman, performing that job for over a year. With the first opportunity, he obtained an entry-level position as a technician with a company in his field. Later on, he was able to be recognized and obtain an engineer position within the same company. Today he is employed with the same company and has the responsibility of a manager.” The same interviewees added, “I know, as well, a dentist with over 16 years of experience in Eastern Europe who came to Canada and decided to pass the required exams to be able to work in his profession here. Each exam cost between \$7,000 and \$8,000. The individual passed two of the three exams. Determined to get her credentials recognized, she tried the third exam one more time, paying the necessary fees. The attempt was unsuccessful, however, despite a very good score. Her huge amount of debt on

credit cards combined with a minimal income overwhelmed this doctor who became depressed and abandoned the long-term plan.”

“I do not know if my story is a success or a failure. In 1998, I arrived in Canada with a PhD in Music and Education and a former broadcaster for a major public Romanian Radio-TV Corporation. Here, I started to work in sales for the lowest wage. After a year, I attended a two year program for teacher certification that I finished in one year. For that, I got a \$20,000 student loan. In 2000 I was starting to work as TOC (teacher on call) for three districts. After four months I got a permanent part-time contract and after 1 year, a permanent full-time position. Seven years were necessary to work at the level in which I was trained in Canada and ten years for my credentials to be recognized. I mention hundreds of hours that I dedicated as volunteer work. Today, I am a part-time faculty instructor with an American university and my PhD is still not recognized.”

Another story is about a Forestry engineer who in 1997 came to Canada with his wife and child. After one year of menial jobs, he started his master’s degree program in Forestry and became a research assistant. Finally, in 2007 he began his PhD program. The same interviewees remembered a teacher who immigrated here in 1992. For over six years, he took various survival small jobs. Between 1992 and 1998, he was a student trying to get some Canadian education. After that he ended up with a building-manager position; he became subject to depression and was strongly inclined to return to his country of origin.

“I remember a mechanical engineer who arrived in Canada six years ago with no English skills, but a very high desire to learn. For two or three years, he took low-paid labor jobs and English and professional courses that were focused

on his career, to help him transfer his skills as a mechanical engineer. He showed a very positive attitude and was very active in networking. With an active role in community church and a weekly networking group, he rapidly was able to understand a lot of Canadian specifics. Today he is an engineer with Kodak. As well, I remember a computer network engineer who arrived in Canada in 2003. The job market was very scarce in his field. His wife was a Math teacher with unrealistic expectations with regard to her employment choices. Their child needed daycare, which was quite expensive for them. As a result, she stayed home. He lost a contract after investing lots of money in tools, tools that were stolen overnight. They lost confidence in creating a life in Canada. They did not share their problems within the community. They simply left after one-and-a half years.”

“The best example I can provide is about a lawyer who arrived 12 years ago from Romania. After completing again a LL B and an associated Master’s in Public Administration, she started to work with BC Health Ministry after passing the Bar exam. Currently she is an Executive Director with the BC Government.” “I met, as well, a professor at one of the best Polytechnic schools in Romania, who immigrated to Canada eight years ago. Here he became a building manager, a position he holds even today.”

“I know a doctor from Iran who came here with his wife and two kids five years ago. He was told he needed to update his professional knowledge. In five years, he was not able to enroll himself, not even in one medical course, because of his age or his background or because there was a long waitlist. He does not work. His wife arrived as a nurse. She went back to school full-time four years ago. Now she is a nurse at the bottom level. When they arrived, his English skills were very good, but hers were poor. Right now, both of

them are fluent in English. I must admit I do not know an immigrant professional who got a higher position in Canada than he or she had in the country of origin, even though the individual got Canadian education. All of the immigrants, who succeeded however, went through formal Canadian education.”

“I personally know a software engineer who arrived six years ago with a wife, an engineer, as well. The recruiting for him was done in Europe for the IT field. He advanced in his profession. She, however, went to school to upgrade some of her technical skills to be fully functional in Canadian society. She still works under her initial qualifications.”

“One of my former students provides a memorable example of someone who has accomplished her professional dream but at some personal cost. An accomplished Polish research physicist and professor with a PhD, she arrived as a refugee with her husband who was also a professional, in 1982. Both were in their 30s. After completing a year of English language education in Vancouver, they both attempted to find work, but it was an incredibly difficult job market in the early '80s in Vancouver. She first found work as a hotel cleaner for a few months. Her husband delivered pizza. They soon moved to Toronto to find better work. There, too, she worked at numerous menial jobs for the first year. She was determined to return to her previous role as a university teacher. She first convinced a private girls' school in Toronto to hire her as a math and science teacher. She remained there teaching high school courses for several years, becoming fluent in English and adapting to the culture of education in Canada. Eventually, she was given a term instructor's position at a public university in Toronto. This happened nearly five years after her arrival in Canada. Despite her qualifications and teaching

experience, she had to struggle nonetheless to win a permanent position. The politics of obtaining a permanent job within a university are complex. After several years at that university and on the basis of her excellent student reviews, she finally received a permanent teaching position. She still instructs both mathematics and physics at that university. On two occasions she has been selected “Teacher of the Year” for her exemplary work and dedication to her students. Her story speaks to her talents, her strength of character, as well as the lengthy process involved.”

“I consider my own Canadian experience in becoming a professional in a new career as a successful one. I arrived in Canada 12 years ago as a Wood Processing Engineer. After five years I started the CGA program. Right now I am at CGA level 4. I started to work in this field one year after arriving in Canada. For over a year, I have been in a management position. Considering the fact that I came without professional experience at all, my story is a success.”

“My own story is a success and a failure one, as well. Twelve years ago, I arrived in Canada as a Wood Processing engineer. I was told Canada does not have an educational program for my field, at least not in British Columbia. I started a graduate program to get a re-qualification in sawmilling. Now I am a PhD student and a university worker, but I do not perform industrial work for which I was trained in my country of origin. The start was very difficult compared with my education and professional experience. I came as an engineer and I was paid with \$15,000 per year as a research assistant. No one in Canada with a Bachelor's degree gets that low a salary per year.”

### ***The Most Important Integration Factors***

Eighty-five percent of all interviewees considered that language as one of the

three most important integration factors for the new immigrant professionals. Seventy percent considered that positive attitude is a key factor, while 65% considered credentials recognition and transfer among the most important integration factors. Forty-five percent saw permanent residence and citizenship as a major integration factor, followed by 35% who found that to have foreign professional experience determines the integration. Thirty percent considered family the most important factor, while 25% considered that cultural differences and *other* factors—like positive attitude, informational help, knowledge, career planning, networking, and cultural assimilation through clear access to behavioral codes, customs, and personal strength—essentially affect the integration of the new immigrant professionals. Finally, 20% of the interviewees found the support of new arrivals' friends the major integration aspect.

Comparatively, 90% of CJS and 80% of NCJS interviewees considered language the key integration factor. Seventy percent of each group of interviewees found that positive attitude is the most important factor for the immigrants' integration. While 80% of NCJS interviewees considered credentials recognition and transfer the major issues, only 50% of CJS interviewees had the same view. In addition, 50% of NCJS interviewees viewed permanent residence, citizenship status, and the family as key aspects. Forty percent of CJS interviewees considered this status essential, while the same percent of NCJS interviewees said *other* major issues. Cultural differences were viewed by 30% of CJS interviewees as a key factor, while 30% of NCJS interviewees said the circle of friends of the immigrant professionals was the major integration factor. Cultural differences were chosen by 20% of NCJS

interviewees as an essential factor. Finally, 10% of CJS interviewees viewed the following as main integration factors: foreign professional experience, family, friends, and others.

#### ***Causes of the Gap between Immigrants' Previous Education and Recognition of it in Canada***

Forty-five percent of all interviewees considered the lack of evaluation of other education systems represented the major issue. As well, 40% observed that lack of information about other education systems and, at the same time, professional organizations' resistance determine a gap between previous education and its recognition in Canada. Thirty percent considered that different provincial regulations represented the major issue, while 20% found ignorance the key factor. Yet, 60% of the interviewees gave *other* reasons. Under this category, interviewees mentioned skepticism based on experience in dealing with fraud ("It is well-known that 80% of documents from Manila are fraud," one interviewee declared), ignorance, and arrogance ("Canadians have a superiority complex. Our arrogance is outstanding. It is a "British" standard," another interviewee specified). "There is an incompatibility between the Canadian educational system and whatever else is out there: individual motivation for gaining education, the approach of the concept, different attitude that determines different altitude," a interviewee mentioned. "They do not have control over the immigrant professionals although they know that in other places, like Germany and Great Britain, education is higher and better." "The system needs well-prepared professionals, but also assertive, courageous, persistent, never-give-up types of people."

Others saw in the communication skills of immigrants or in immigrants' references

and letters of support an obstacle that leads to rejection. One interviewee gave the following opinion, "Canada is frequently criticized because it does not extend recognition to education obtained in other countries. But I do not think the issue is portrayed accurately because it is not a simple one. Some people imply foreign education is not recognized in Canada, but that is not always the case. Also, it is important to keep in mind that there are more than 150 independent countries in the world, most of which have education systems; it is not an easy matter for a Canadian institution or employer to assess and recognize foreign professional education quality."

"The ease of recognition depends to some degree on what the immigrant is applying for and the type of education she or he has. Some professional degrees are readily transferable in terms of the quality, thoroughness, and applicability that they represent. Degrees obtained from universities outside North America, for example, are recognized in Canada but it depends on the purpose for which such recognition is requested. A law degree from Germany, for example, prepares a person to practice law in that country, but the preparation is not complete enough to practice in Canada and vice versa. Finally, it takes time to understand the system—how it is structured, and how it works. Even a Seattle-trained lawyer would have to study to re-qualify to practice law in British Columbia because the two legal systems are not fully compatible."

"I think that communication skills play a critical role in this recognition process. When a foreign-born professional is unsuccessful in obtaining a position, she or he may presume that her or his professional education was not recognized. All job searches are a marketing process and winning a job or opportunity depends on more than just

qualifications. How well was that individual able to convey his education using English? Was that person able to describe what he has studied and experienced? Was he able to convince the employer he had something valuable to offer? If an individual immigrant can explain accurately and in detail the nature and extent of his education and work experience and compare it to the Canadian equivalent, the person has a distinct advantage. This requires both good communication skills and knowledge of the work or education system to which the individual is applying. These take time to acquire. I have recently seen this in my program where I have worked with an Asian mathematician to get him through our program and to find employment. His qualifications are excellent and he has extensive teaching experience. He has not yet found a teaching position because he is not fluent enough in English to get over the job interview process at colleges to which he has applied. Employers need to have confidence in the communication skills of their employees in addition to their subject or technical expertise."

"Another important part of the acceptance or recognition process comes in the letters of recommendation that accompany the degree and transcripts. The recommendations from professors at university and graduate school helped move me to the next stage of education and employment in both the USA and Canada. The same was true for my wife who also immigrated to North America from Germany and attended university here. Transcripts and degrees are important, but so are personal letters and references, which affect the recognition process. Initially, an immigrant is truly a 'Stranger in a Strange Land,' as author Richard Heinlein phrased it."

Divided by groups, 40% of CJS interviewees expressed that professional

organizations' resist and, at the same time, different provincial regulations impede the recognition of previous education in Canada, while 30% found lack of evaluation of other education systems the main issue. Twenty percent considered that lack of information about other education systems represents a key factor and 10% found that ignorance is the determining factor. While no CJS interviewee found that protection of the Canadian educational system could be the main reason, 60% of these interviewees stated *other* issues.

Comparatively, 60% of NCJS interviewees saw that lack of information about other education systems, lack of evaluation of other educational systems, and *other* factors represent the causes of the gap between previous education and its Canadian recognition. Forty percent of NCJS interviewees saw professional organizations' resistance as the key factor, and 30% considered protection of the Canadian educational system and, at the same time, ignorance determine this gap. Twenty percent of these interviewees chose different provincial regulations as the main issue, while 60% of them indicated *other* causes.

#### ***Causes of the Gap between Immigrants' Previous Professional Experience and Recognition of it in Canada***

Fifty-five percent of all interviewees identified professional organizations' resistance as the main factor, followed by 50% who considered lack of information the main issue. Forty-five percent of interviewees identified lack of evaluation and, at the same time, *other* elements as the key factor, while 35% saw *no evaluation tools* as the major cause. Thirty percent considered that protection of local employability determines the gap, while 15% saw the main reasons were lack of

interest and the union's resistance, as well.

As *other* elements, interviewees mentioned local employers are less and less willing to reach out. "They just do not want to do it." "A highly educated and skilled immigrant presents a threat for a local worker who barely manages to finish high school. For the local employer, it is obvious that once the language barrier falls, including the idiomatic nuances or the "spoken" language, the skilled immigrant has a clear path to professional growth." Also, "there is a lack of specific professional terminology and there is hardship in achieving meaningful professional experience." Another element mentioned was reference to the difficulties of doing a background check, especially for hiring into the criminal justice system. Finally, one interviewee added, "It is difficult to generalize. When you consider a person for a job in Canada, you always have to make decisions on incomplete information, irrespective of where the applicant is from. I have found, again, that when an immigrant can communicate effectively, the question of experience diminishes somewhat, but not entirely. I think the central issue is one of familiarity with the individual who is applying. When someone comes to my school to apply for a teaching position, I look very carefully at his or her qualifications and experience. I am prepared to recognize experience gathered outside Canada. I need evidence, however, that the person is an effective instructor and that he or she knows how to handle the types of learners with which our instructors deal on a regular basis. One additional factor or element comes to mind. Professionals need to acquire local experience and knowledge of how things are done in Canada. In medicine, for example, it has been demonstrated that when foreign-trained doctors are given an "apprenticeship," such as experience with

a local physician, the process of qualifying to practice medicine in Canada is tremendously aided. Working alongside a Canadian professional for a year or 2 provides useful training focused on the specific needs of the immigrant in terms of technical and cultural knowledge and skills. Perhaps, Canada needs to look at ways of better linking foreign-educated professionals with local professionals, directly following their arrival." "It depends on the company; the way every person is marketing himself or herself, and whether she or he is a professional. People skills make an important difference, too."

Divided by groups, 40% of CJS interviewees considered that professional organizations' resistance and lack of information create this gap, and 30% of these interviewees saw lack of evaluation, no evaluation tools, and *other* elements as the key factors. While no CJS interviewee chose union's resistance as a major factor, 10% of these interviewees considered lack of interest and protection of local employability as the main reasons. Seventy percent of NCJS interviewees found professional organizations' resistance as the key factor, and 60% of them saw that lack of information, lack of evaluation, and *other* elements contribute essentially to this gap. Fifty percent of these interviewees identified protection of local employability as the key factor, while 40% found that *no evaluation tools* create the main issue. Thirty percent of these interviewees said that union's resistance is the major reason, while 20% stated lack of interest.

#### ***When an Overqualified Immigrant Professional is hired in Canada***

Sixty-five percent of all interviewees found that an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when, in a specific industry, the human resources dynamic is very high and in *other* occasions, while 35% found that only when low wage is

offered is an overqualified immigrant successful. Thirty percent considered that an overqualified immigrant professional is successful when basic skills are required and, at the same time, professional organizations are not involved. Fifteen percent said that an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when in-house training is provided. With respect to *other* occasions, interviewees have different thoughts. "They are hired if they meet the skill set, their attitude is positive, and they are willing to participate." "When the demand is so high, then we will hire everyone who can breathe. Moreover, I prefer to hire a highly educated immigrant who does not have a license to work for me and pay him or her less than I must pay a Canadian, being sure the immigrant will not call in sick, because he or she is motivated." "We hire immigrants if their attitude is positive." "A new immigrant professional is hired when she or he has a good understanding of the industry or a specific company's needs, and can make a meaningful contribution with a very short learning curve." "The new immigrants have more chances when government regulations are more flexible or not interfering." "I have hired as sales assistants, at a low wage, numerous lawyers, doctors, nurses, and engineers, all of them highly educated immigrants. Some of them have succeeded within a few years; more of them have been lost." "If you are a PhD immigrant professional, you are hired if they do not know your level of education. If you are at a lower level of education, then a low wage is offered."

Divided by groups, 70% of CJS interviewees considered that an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when, in a specific industry, the human resources dynamic is very high, 80% indicating *other* elements, as well. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees found that this occurs when professional



organizations are not involved. Ten percent found this happens when basic skills are required, and when, at the same time, in-house training is provided. No CJS interviewees chose "low wage is offered." Comparatively, 70% of NCJS interviewees said an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when low wage is offered, followed by 60% who found this happens when, in a specific industry, the human resources dynamic is very high. Fifty percent of NCJS interviewees considered that an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when basic skills are required. Fifty percent of NCJS interviewees indicated *other* elements, as well. Forty percent of NCJS interviewees indicated that this occurs when professional organizations are not involved, and 20% indicated that this happens when in-house training is provided.

#### ***When an Overqualified Immigrant Professional is not hired in Canada***

Forty percent of all interviewees considered that an overqualified immigrant professional is *not* hired when federal or provincial professional organizations are involved or when Canadian education is required. Twenty percent found that when a superior wage is offered, these immigrants are not successful in getting the job, while 15% indicated this happens when sophisticated skills are required or unions are involved. Sixty-five percent indicated *other* elements. "They do not hire new immigrant professionals when the candidates do not meet the required skill set, their attitude is not positive, and they are not willing to participate." "We do not hire them when their attitude to temporary jobs is arrogant; they live "outside the system." bring a negative energy, resist training, show poor language skills, and do not embrace change." "If the company senses the employee is not planning to

stay with it or often, if the immigrant does not have Canadian professional experience." Usually, interviewees stated that considering the job market, the new immigrant professionals have less chance to be hired if they do not meet the job requirements of companies perceiving these individuals as an improper match for the organization's culture." Others added, "It mostly depends on the hiring manager and her or his perception." A bitter opinion was often heard, however. "A new immigrant professional is not hired in her or his own field."

Divided by groups, 20% of CJS interviewees considered an overqualified immigrant professional *not* successful when federal or provincial professional organizations are involved, and, at the same time, when Canadian education is required; 10% said this happens when sophisticated skills are required. While no CJS interviewees chose "unions are involved" and "superior wage is offered," 80% of these interviewees indicated *other* factors. Comparatively, 60% of NCJS interviewees considered that an overqualified immigrant professional is *not* hired when federal or provincial professional organizations are involved and, at the same time, Canadian education is required; 40% said this happens when superior wage is offered. Thirty percent indicated that when unions are involved, the immigrant professional does not have a chance, while 20% said this happens when sophisticated skills are required. Fifty percent of NCJS interviewees indicated *other* factors.

#### ***The Best Integration Strategy for an Immigrant Professional***

Seventy percent of all interviewees answered that "information, planning, actions," "tenacity, ambition, persuasion," "upgrade language and education," and "networking" together represent the best integration strategy for an immigrant

professional. Thirty percent of them considered that upgrading the language and education is itself the best strategy, while 25% offered *other* elements, like informational help, patience, adaptability, assimilation of cultural differences, work history, positive attitude, self-assessment, self-awareness, and boldness in professional success. "Persistence can shape a good existence," a interviewee pointed out. "The new professionals' tenacity makes the difference. Of course, there is a huge need for 'mosaic' agencies to be developed to offer guidance to various categories of immigrants. The immigrants must be taught how to survive here and a special job market must be designed." Fifteen percent of the interviewees saw "information, planning, actions," and "tenacity, ambition, and persuasion" as the best integration strategy.

Divided by groups, 80% of CJS interviewees and 60% of NCJS interviewees considered that "information, planning, actions," "tenacity, ambition, persuasion," "upgrade the language and education," and "networking" together represent the best integration strategy for an immigrant professional. While 40% of CJS interviewees considered that to upgrade the language and education is the best strategy, 40% of NCJS interviewees preferred *other* as the best strategies. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees saw tenacity, ambition, and persuasion as the best strategy, while 10% considered that "information, planning, actions," and "networking," or *other* elements constitute the best strategy for an immigrant professional. Comparatively, 20% of NCJS interviewees considered that "information, planning, actions," and "updating the language" and "education" represent the best approach, while 10% saw "tenacity, ambition, persuasion," and "networking" as the best strategy. Finally, 40% of NCJS

interviewees selected *other* as the most successful approaches.

### ***A Different Approach for the Government Immigration Agencies, to Be More Effective in Dealing with a More Successful Integration of an Immigrant Professional***

Eight-five percent of all interviewees suggested a different approach for the government immigration agencies, to be more effective in dealing with a more successful integration of immigrant professionals, while 15% did not suggest a different approach. Comparatively, 80% of CJS and 90% of NCJS interviewees offered a different approach, and 20% of CJS and 10% of NCJS interviewees did not offer an alternative.

Several CJS interviewees pointed out their perspective. "The major issue in successful immigration is to be accepted quickly, to have a feeling of belonging in your new country. 'Ghettoization' does nothing to encourage successful settlement in Canada. Why do people who come from China live in Chinatown? The biggest factor is communication; the government should require a reasonable English–French proficiency." "Agencies should better plan with immigrant professionals in terms of the steps to bring professionals to Canadian standards and complete disclosure of labor market demand by profession and geographical region." "There is a huge need for an integrated approach to fast-track immigrant professionals to upgrade language, computer, and professional skills. There is need for providing relevant resources, access to language training, cultural information sessions, and interaction in the community. Government shall facilitate language education in a practicum scenario, a 'business or work' language." "For example, there is a huge need that accreditation of health professionals be done outside of

Canada.” “More funds for comprehensive orientation courses are required; more personnel and staff for follow-ups and fellowship are necessary; more coaching in the same vein is mandatory.” “There is need to negotiate and collaborate with professional associations and government regulatory agencies to eliminate some of the bureaucratic obstacles to recognizing foreign credentials and experience.” “Prospective immigrant professionals must be well prepared before they immigrate to Canada. The government must help the immigrant learn English and French, both spoken and written, in his or her country of origin, before emigration to Canada. Here, cultural competency courses are not done realistically. They must be offered by credible people. The ethnic aspect must be scrutinized, as well. Canadians are prejudiced because they have been forced to be so.”

NCJS interviewees added: “The different approach can start with stopping the misleading of permanent residence applicants when their application for immigration is processed. The fact that 300,000 people per year come to Canada proves that immigration represents a huge industry in Canada and misleading people should not prevail.” “There is a huge need for a realistic dialog and training of the steps to be taken before immigrating to Canada. The immigrant should have opportunities and choices in terms of settlement.” “A system to encourage employers to hire immigrants before they arrive in Canada must be put in place. To encourage immigrant professionals to rely on their integration into ethnic communities is detrimental to a true integration.” “There is no communication between CIC and the business and work environment inside of Canada. We advertise Canada and invite people here to show them afterward that they are not welcome.” “We need to do more research in gathering information related to credentials’ recognition and transfer,

standards, and degrees in the immigrants’ country of origin. Overall, there is a strong need for the existence of a grid of equivalencies between foreign institutions and job positions on one hand, and the Canadian counterparts on the other.” “We have to be better educated about how other countries are. For example, India has very, very good technical programs (software). According to an American lawyer, Eastern European countries offered exceptional lawyers. We are told by Canadian professional associations that our legal system is totally different compared to others. Is it really true? Who can, independently, assess these systems? Why does America recognize them better than Canada? Canada really needs immigrant professionals and advertises accordingly. The immigrant professional must go through the expensive, very expensive Canadian system, only to be disillusioned.” “The government should be more effective in assessing the skills of immigrant professionals.” “Governmental professional supervising should be done on an individual case basis.” “The government should advise and encourage the professional organizations to be less protective and more open to accept with newcomers.” “We must identify a better match between foreign education and professional experience and Canada’s needs.” “It is vital to inform applicants for emigration of the real process of integration stages, time required, and necessity for additional education or training.”

***A Different Approach for the Community, Professional and Private Associations, and the Media to be More Effective in Dealing with a More Successful Integration of an Immigrant Professional***

Similarly, 85% of all interviewees suggested a different approach for the community, professional and private

associations, and the media to be more effective in dealing with a more successful integration of immigrant professionals, while 15% did not suggest one. Comparatively, 80% of CJS and 90% of NCJS interviewees offered a different approach, and 20% of CJS and 10% of NCJS interviewees did not offer an alternative.

The CJS interviewees stated professional associations should have their own “mosaic” community, and successfully integrated professionals should share their experience with others. “Examples of success stories and examples of failure and lessons to be learned should be available anywhere.” Members from professional associations should clearly and directly provide the official requirements or the best strategy, as well. “They should assess new immigrant professionals and provide tailor-made services to speed up the integration process.” “The alternative can be offered by private agencies because there should be a ‘win-win’ relationship. A low or marginally paid government worker would never ever coach or teach a professional foreigner how to make more money than he or she makes. It is against human nature. The private for-profit agencies could solve this issue under the government idea.” Another idea was hiring overseas. “Thomson River University offers a two-year program in China and two-year program here for those interested in getting a dual degree. More testing overseas should be done. There are occupations under pressure based on critical shortages.” With regard to police officer recruiting, one interviewee stated, “We operate an intake test system that is not culturally competent. It does not allow for other cultures to excel. Our general knowledge test (i.e. Wonderlick Test) contains a comprehensive part formed by questions with a specific, very Canadian or North American phraseology. There is

a need for an immediate change. These tests are culturally not sensitive.” “The government does not help us. In terms of recruiting police officers from overseas, there is the issue of a background check that, sometimes, is impossible. There is a money issue, as well. We need to recruit more immigrants who are already living here. We still need, however, to send investigators to their countries to check them directly. To do this, we spend \$6,000 per person for a direct recruiting process in the United Kingdom, for example, while only \$900 is necessary to completely check a candidate here, if that is ever possible.”

NCJS interviewees demanded the application of a dynamic and realistic approach in presenting the facts about immigrating to Canada—a realistic dialog between and among professional organizations and federal and provincial governments, for a better understanding of the professional status and skills required after landing. Also, it should be an individualistic approach, case by case whenever possible, especially in the first year after arriving, it was suggested. “Professional associations assessing immigrants’ transferable skills should be prepared to suggest possible paths towards integration.” “Professional associations should be more open-minded.” “A better assessment of foreign credentials and professional experience is urgently required.” “You must know somebody to get your foot through the door. I do not see a lot of support from media towards immigrant professionals. I do not see that immigrant professionals even get enough respect from their field. Usually, the topic is perceived as boring.” “Linking professionals with opportunities for job internship and with other professionals may help. We need to provide examples, models of those who have been successful and explain how they were.”

***When Would Be the Perfect Time for a New Immigrant Professional to Start His or Her Integration Journey?***

Eighty-five percent of all interviewees considered the perfect time for a new immigrant professional to start his or her integration journey is before emigration and 10% considered this moment would be immediately after emigration. Five percent believed the perfect time for a new immigrant professional to start his or her integration journey would be a while after emigration.

Comparatively, 90% of CJS interviewees and 80% of NCJS interviewees considered that immigrant professionals better start their integration before emigration. "They must start to improve their language skills as much before emigration as they can." Similarly, 10% of both groups of interviewees considered the perfect time was immediately after immigration. Finally, while no CSJ interviewees saw "a while after immigration" as the perfect time, 10% of NCJS interviewees chose it.

***Does Canada Need Immigrant Professionals?***

Eighty percent of all interviewees agreed strongly that Canada needs immigrant professionals. Only 15% of them agreed somewhat and 5% neither agreed nor disagreed. It is interesting that all CJS interviewees agreed strongly, while only 60% of NCJS interviewees showed the same belief. Thirty percent of NCJS interviewees agreed somewhat and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed. "I think Canada needs professionals!" one interviewee stated. "Also, Canada needs to facilitate the employment of immigrant professionals." "It depends perhaps on the field. In some areas, maybe, there is a high need; others less so. It depends on the state of the economy and local conditions and needs, as well. Canada constantly deprives many countries of

their highly needed professionals. Canada's gain comes at the expense of those countries that educate their young people only to see them leave."

***Does the Current Immigration System, Based on Points, Work Well for Canada and for Immigrant Professionals, as well?***

Thirty percent of all interviewees disagreed somewhat or agreed somewhat with the idea that current immigration system, based on points, works well for Canada and for immigrant professionals, as well. Twenty-five percent of them disagreed strongly and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed, or agreed strongly. The interviewees added: "It is required, but it is not sufficient." "I disagree strongly, based on the reaction I see in immigrants. My taxi drivers are originally doctors. Something is really wrong." "The system is extremely slow."

Comparatively, 40% of CJS interviewees and only 20% of NCJS interviewees agreed somewhat, while 30% of both groups disagreed somewhat. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees and 30% of NCJS interviewees disagreed strongly, while 10% of both groups neither agreed nor disagreed. "I disagree strongly for immigrant professionals' perspective; I disagree somewhat for Canada's perspective." "I do not have knowledge of a different system as a comparison to the one in Canada. Therefore, I cannot assess whether the current system works well or not." No CJS interviewees agreed strongly, while 20% of NCJS interviewees did.

***Does an Immigrant Professional Have the Same Chances to be Successful in Canada as a Canadian Professional Has?***

Thirty percent of all interviewees disagreed strongly or disagreed somewhat with the idea that an immigrant

professional does have the same chances to be successful in Canada as a Canadian professional does. Twenty-five percent of interviewees agreed somewhat, while 15% of them agreed strongly. Comparatively, 30% of both groups disagreed somewhat, while 30% of CJS interviewees and 20% of NCJS interviewees agreed somewhat. Twenty percent of CJS interviewees and 40% of NCJS interviewees disagreed strongly, while 20% of CJS interviewees and 10% of NCJS interviewees agreed strongly. No one from all the interviewees chose "neither agree nor disagree." "Based on STATS Canada information, immigrants of all types outperform Canadians on average, but not until some 5 to 8 years after arrival," one NCJS interviewee declared. "Based on my experience, I agree somewhat. However, they may face prejudice and stereotype," one CJS interviewee added.

#### ***Interviewees' Additional Thoughts***

Asked if they have anything else to share related to the topic, 80% of all interviewees provided other associated thoughts and opinions, while 20% of them did not add anything. Divided by groups, 60% of CJS interviewees and all NCJS interviewees offered extra information related to the topic.

The CJS interviewees stated, "As a Canadian, it is important for me to hire the best person for a job regardless of any possible issue. I would never deny an opportunity just because the best applicant is an immigrant. Now it is time for competency strategy, not only skill focus." "Do not bring here people based on points; bring here people based on their ability." "Even the new immigrant professionals have some issues. They lost their sense of belonging and extended family, especially those who come from traditional societies. Immigrants are not always aware of the necessary

adjustments, for example, those who move from a Latin society to a British one. Also, some immigrants resist change. Instead of "my way is the best" attitude, the approach should be "Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar."

Another interviewee added, "For a local, it is frustrating to see that a foreign person, who barely speaks the language, right away suggests changes without having even a good understanding of how things here work first. Also, nobody has the time and desire to *babysit* a newcomer because it is a dog-eat-dog world, so sink or swim." "From this perspective, there are pros and cons about Canada. For the pros, our society is a multicultural one, less nationalist; there is room for everybody and we enjoy a stable political environment. We have a comfortable social system and help, if needed. There is freedom, yet too much freedom may create confusion. As cons, the orientation courses provided for newcomers are poor. Not enough courses are in place to satisfy the growing number of immigrants and the specific problems that can arise with them. The old legislation may not be able to deal with new problems, like the crime rate. Finally, there is a poor infrastructure."

"Canadian authorities have to admit that an easy way to deal with the shortage of labor in some sectors, like health care, education, and law enforcement, is to make it easy for immigrant professionals to obtain jobs in their profession." "We spend so much time celebrating the differences, which continues to create boundaries and walls, instead of identifying similarities and becoming a real community." "The immigrant can get help from agencies immediately when he or she applies to be a police officer, teacher, law enforcement officer, for instance, from another country. Unfortunately, the only way to have information from CIC is through an MP. However, we would like to see more representatives of other

countries in the police force, although cultural issues still must be overcome.”

The NCJS interviewees declared, “In today’s perspective of globalization and political and economical consequences, as well as the shortage of skilled workers, the integration process of immigrant professionals seems to improve. Unfortunately, Canada has underestimated the human potential whereas the United States is recognized as a major and useful importer of intellectuals.” “There is a huge need to improve the resources for evaluation of other educational systems. The embassies’ personnel should be realistic and honest about Canada’s population needs. Sometimes, the Canadian citizen does not understand that Canada still needs immigrants. The government should increase the awareness of the population about the necessity of immigrants. Immigrants are invited here. With that, some responsibilities certainly come.”

“There appears to be a stringent need for a closer and reciprocal look into both the Canadian society and the various societies of the immigrant professionals’ countries of origins in terms of credential recognition and transfer, cultural differences, behavioral codes, and forms of evaluation.” “Break down the vicious circle of the ‘Canadian experience required’—the Catch 22.” “With all technology available today, you would think there is a global world, but it is still very much differentiated by the borders.” “Canada should provide more information about the hurdles a newcomer may face during her or his professional integration here.”

“In looking back at my responses, I do not want to leave the impression that successful integration is solely the responsibility of the individual. People succeed not simply because of their own hard work and initiative, as important as those qualities are. People need personal

contacts and friends, people who can guide, assist, and provide an encouraging word, assistance, and advice. All of us achieve the most, I think, when we feel we belong.” “I am happy that someone considers this issue scientifically, starting research in this area. More inquiry about this topic will be beneficial for Canada.” “This topic seems to be so interesting and real,” another interviewee concluded.

#### **Chapter Four: Discussion and Conclusions**

Data collected from the interviewees brought insightful opinions related to the successful integration of immigrant professionals. All interviewees have considerable experience in dealing with immigrant professionals, not to mention their expertise in dealing with other categories of immigrants. As a result, the interviewees provided an in-depth view about this topic, offering clearer conclusions based on their long-term professional and personal involvement. The participants expressed thoughtful observations, best practices, success and failure stories, and different approaches, both at levels government and in private business, to better deal with the settlement of those professionals who immigrate to Canada. The two different groups—one formed by experts belonging to the Canadian criminal justice system, and the other with experts belonging to other levels of the Canadian society—brought to this study an opportunity to double-check the reality.

Gathering information about professional organizations and updating language skills have been identified by all interviewees as being the first major steps towards integration of new immigrant professionals. Divided by groups, CJS experts chose the first variable and NCJS experts chose the second one. Asked about the proportion

of those who followed their preferred pattern, the interviewees chose a reserved percentage. Both groups showed, however, that there is a major opportunity for the integration of those professionals who, by bringing self-awareness and self-sightedness, have a concrete chance to succeed. Following a proven model with infinite determination represents a basic recipe for integration.

The immigrant professionals' language skills represent the major obstacle in their integration, the interviewees concluded. Important supporting details have been added, however, especially by CJS interviewees. First, there is no doubt that, without reasonable language knowledge, a certain professional communication becomes impossible. The Criminal justice system experts view the language issue as an ongoing process and, certainly, not an insurmountable one. They better prefer in-house training based on professional scenarios and *ad hoc* terminology training, instead of diverse theoretical courses offered everywhere by the Canadian educational system. There is a huge need for a functional language, and not necessarily an academic and sophisticated one. The real proficiency is better offered by an internal input, efficiently achievable through different structures that must be put in place, like internships or fellowships, than a general assessment acquired usually by attending various colleges and university language courses. In other words, there is a huge need for a practical and direct integration of the new immigrant professionals into a professional environment where, in a shorter time and at minimum cost, the language skills can be improved spectacularly.

Second, not all immigrants come to Canada with a language challenge. It was seen, however, that even when the language is not an issue, there are still other major obstacles for new

professionals to emerge in the Canadian society that require a special analysis. For example, a positive attitude and a willingness to participate can make the difference. Finally, the language is a key factor not only in a literal meaning, but at a substratum level. It is not enough to obtain practical or theoretical language proficiency, if the message communicated does not match the culture of the Canadian professional environment. Therefore, an important issue is not only to communicate, but, more important, to know what is communicated. The nonverbal language becomes an integration factor, as well. One of the CJS interviewees offered an eloquent example of a former United Kingdom police officer who was hired in Canada as a police officer. He needed five years to adjust his professional behavior to Canadian standards, even though his language was not an issue at all. The interviewee explained, "We hired him. However, for years he used to react differently in diverse professional situations, saying always, 'This is how we did it in United Kingdom.' He exasperated us. And we pointed out, "Well, who cares?!".

The interviewees found that new immigrant professionals come to Canada with reasonable expectations. The criminal justice experts stressed that these expectations are reasonable if the new professionals follow a well-designed plan and do their homework before, immediately, and after their immigration. Not once was it suggested that a successful emigration requires time, personal strength, self-determination, and self-awareness. It is an ongoing process where observation and adjustment are continually needed. If the reasons for emigration are profoundly substantiated, then a successful emigration itself becomes easier and accomplishable.

Lack of evaluation of other educational systems represents the major obstacle in



recognizing foreign education in Canada, the interviewees concluded. They added different explanations to this fact, such as no evaluation tools, fear of fraud, ignorance, arrogance, or professional organizations' resistance.

It is interesting that the CJS experts considered professional organization resistance the major reason for less recognition of foreign education in Canada, while the NCJS saw the obstacle as lack of information about other education systems. Regardless of the explanation provided, almost all interviewees stated that, historically, foreign education itself is not easily recognizable in Canada, especially for hiring purposes. This reverberates as a cascade in the new immigrant professionals' life. They are forced to update their education. Moreover, if there is a decision about changing a career, the new immigrants are impelled to gain new education. All of these obstacles come although Canadian embassies are operated by highly specialized immigration officers who do an in-depth analysis, case by case, on all immigration visa applications. Intensively advertised, education is one of the major assets an applicant can present in the evaluation process. The credentials an individual who applies for this type of visa has acquired during his or her entire life are investigated in detail. The more education a potential immigrant has, the more points she or he receives to qualify for the immigration visa. A high mark on high education brings the emigrant closer to the desired Canadian society. Landing here, the immigrant discovers that his or her educational background is undervalued or, tragically, not considered at all. The usual explanation for this discrepancy between expectations and reality is a huge gap between the federal government requirements for an immigration visa and the Canadian

economic reality, where the federal or provincial government is forbidden to interfere. The federal decision-makers put in place different institutions across Canada, such as the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO), inaugurated on May 24, 2007, in Toronto, for assessing again, at another cost, what was previously assessed by other federal workers. The formal double recognition of foreign credentials, however, does not produce any useful effect for a new immigrant professional since his or her credentials remain in fact ignored or voided by the employers. Even the federal government will not consider the new immigrant professional appropriate for employment as a civil servant because any career at that level requires being in possession of Canadian citizenship and security clearance—impossible to be obtained by other means. As a result, foreign specialists like doctors, lawyers, law enforcement officers, social workers, nurses, guardians, and police officers, especially if they are not British subjects, are instantly stripped of their professional foundation, becoming unable to successfully compete for a place in their field. Ironically, across Canada they are called to meet all the requirements put in place by the various provincial and professional organizations, Canadian education being the first one on the list. To update their education, the new immigrants must carefully consider their time, finances, and energy resources. While the new immigrant professional is sub-performing in his or her struggle to survive and understand his or her new status, the shortage of professionals is tremendous in Canada. Moreover, it seems no other viable resources can be successfully envisioned or engaged. As the interviewees suggested, there is no time for superficial approaches anymore; there is time for viable solutions, considering the Canadian standards and the urgent needs of Canada, as well.

Professional organizations' resistance was considered the main reason why foreign professional experience is hardly recognized in Canada. The classic expression "Canadian experience" means, in fact, a verifiable experience with Canadian tools. It is a matter of trust. Even though immigrant professionals are recruited abroad based on their professional experience in addition to their education, after they arrive to Canada they find their professional background is not recognized or is barely transferable. It seems that a psychiatrist in Switzerland is not able to be a psychiatrist in Canada or a police officer in the United Kingdom is not able to be a police officer in Canada anymore. Also, it is well known that a lawyer from Australia is not able to be a lawyer in Canada. Remarkably, three representatives of people who work mostly with lawyers in Canada have been involved in this study: a British Columbia Supreme Court Master, a Real Canadian Superstore manager, and a security guard recruiter. The explanation for the diminished standing of immigrant professionals is that "different legal systems" are in place across the world. There are, however, unanswered questions: "How much different are these systems? What do lawyers in Germany and in Canada work differently? What is the percentage of their transferable skills and knowledge and how much time, money, and energy does the transfer take? Is it necessary to retake all the training to have foreign credentials recognized? Who assesses these differences and who validates these assessments?" the interviewees asked. The official response is offered by various educational or professional organizations, such as the National Committee on Accreditation from Ottawa, the organism that establishes educational and practice experience standards that must be met before an applicant (from the province of

Quebec or from outside Canada) will be considered to hold the equivalent of a Canadian common-law degree. According to their statistics, only foreign common law degrees are likely to be recognized, but their holders are required to challenge several Canadian exams. The door looks more open for those who graduated from a hybrid system (common law and Napoleonic Code) and more closed (0 certificates issued) for those who graduated with a degree based exclusively on Napoleonic Code, on which the legal systems of many European countries is based. As CJS interviewees often declared, it is the same vicious circle as with the foreign education issue. Professional organizations put in place a set of requirements that help those immigrants receive guidance if they want Canadian recognition as professionals in their field. In reality, for almost all criminal justice jobs, foreign professional experience counts less, if all. Moreover, they added, since different provincial regulations apply across Canada, even to transfer skills and competencies (mobility) within Canada seem to require imagination and complicated bureaucratic paperwork for Canadians and immigrants, as well. In other words, a British Columbia lawyer, for example, is not automatically allowed to work as a lawyer in Quebec or Ontario and vice versa. Under these circumstances, chances are low that professional organizations would better consider immigrant professionals. As a result, if an immigrant professional arrives in Canada with his higher education and professional experience negated, that person is unable to compete and be assessed for the job market. Basically, the individual is not a professional anymore and, from that perspective, should carefully reconsider his or her future.

Paradoxically, the same immigrant professional can be perceived as an overqualified individual, unable to use her

or his expertise within a system almost in crisis need of human resources at entry levels. Being forced to survive, this immigrant must choose between going back to her or his country of origin or in finding a niche to help him or her succeed in Canada. Even though an immigrant professional with a criminal justice background, for example, would immediately accept any entry-level position within the Canadian criminal justice system, this opportunity rarely occurs. It is common sense to think a psychiatrist would be able to perform nursing duties or a lawyer would be able to fulfill a legal assistant position. In reality, neither person would be called for an interview because he or she would be perceived as overqualified candidates on one hand, and under qualified or not properly qualified on the other. Basically, these people cannot demonstrate their education and skills because they lack Canadian credentials and experience. The interviewees felt that overqualified immigrant professionals are hired when the human resources dynamic is very high. Sales or security guard companies, where low wages are offered, are examples of businesses open to hire overqualified personnel. The interviewees also felt overqualified immigrant professionals are not hired when federal or provincial organizations are involved, within much more regulated and financially rewarded fields. In other words, in lacking Canadian education and experience, overqualified immigrant professionals are not hired at the bottom, middle, or top levels, especially in their field of expertise.

Insightful success and failure stories involving immigrant professionals have been provided by the interviewees. Information, language updating, career planning, lengthy and costly cultural assimilation—at financial or emotional levels, Canadian education and

experience, positive attitude, personal strength, determination, and tenacity have been mentioned as specific ingredients for success. Almost all interviewees emphasized the role of individuals and their resources against institutional intervention to the benefit of immigrant professionals as politically claimed, especially at the federal level. Those who succeeded in becoming professionals in Canada are perceived as notable exceptions: individuals with high potential in managing their attributes, able to overcome bitter years of sacrifices and frustrations at personal or familial cost. Criticizing less and acting more, these individuals successfully overcame the integration obstacles by frontally attacking each of them with tremendous ambition and unwavering persuasion. As a result, they became in Canada what they had been many years before in their countries of origin—at the time they were approved for immigration by the Canadian government—professionals.

The interviewees envisioned different approaches that would help government immigration agencies become more effective in dealing with a more successful integration of immigrant professionals. As professionals, the interviewees called for self-awareness, lucid policy, and an effective implementation of policies. Clear-sightedness is required to balance the urgent needs of the Canadian economy and the available resources, by clearly defining what Canadian standards mean, at personal and professional levels, and how they are achievable, Canada has the opportunity to better secure its position as an example of how people can successfully live and contribute in a multicultural society. At the end of the day, all government and nongovernment structures are defined by their workers—people who have the responsibility to better implement a coherent and pragmatic policy designed to increase

Canadian standards. More dialog between federal and provincial departments on one hand and community, professional and private associations, and media on the other would give Canada increased opportunities to be more effective in dealing with the integration of immigrant professionals.

The interviewees also strongly asserted that Canada really needs immigrant professionals. Interviewees from both groups, CJS and NCJS, constantly emphasized the huge and urgent need for highly specialized human resources for the diverse and demanding job market in Canada. Being asked if the current immigration system based on points works well for Canada and immigrant professionals, however, the interviewees expressed considerable reservations. Most of them were not comfortable with enquiring about what specifically does not work, mentioning only an unfortunate perception: the system is wrong. The interviewees understand the necessity of a prescreening process; they disagreed, however, strongly or somewhat, with regard to its current functionality and asked for a different immigration approach. Further, being questioned about whether an immigrant professional has the same chances to be successful in Canada as a Canadian professional does, the interviewees concluded they did not. Even though the new immigrant professionals do their homework before emigrating and, after arriving here, follow a good model towards their integration, their chances of being equally successful with their Canadian professional equivalents are low. Yet, any possible success that an immigrant professional might achieve in Canada, overcoming any kind of prejudice or stereotype, requires years of tremendous determination and personal effort to regain what she or he already had, compared with a Canadian

professional who was called only once to establish her or his professional accomplishments.

Ironically, there is a high demand for specialists in the Canadian criminal justice system and other fields, as well. All immigrant professionals, well-prepared by their countries of origin, represent a tremendous wealth ready to be used. As interviewees in this study maintained, companies do not seem to take advantage of the human resources that are being offered. A new management vision is necessary for assessing and transferring, at minimum cost, the new immigrant professionals' knowledge, skills, and competencies. To date, all those who have already been integrated into the job market, at their full potential, could represent a model for good human resources management, a model for maximizing the benefit of using immigrant professionals who are readily available to employers. As a result, the Canadian immigration policy ultimately will be fulfilled, the Canadian economy will be vigorously nourished, and the Canadian social order will be better established.

## **Chapter Five: Recommendations**

### **Recommendation #1**

Canada is one of the countries that host an immigration program, especially targeting immigrant professionals who can contribute to an increment of national standards. If decision-makers continue to implement the current immigration policy, then it is recommended that a better and more effective advertising process could be developed in all countries where the Canadian government operates through its immigration agencies. The reality of life in Canada should be fully illustrated, especially to all the immigrant professionals who are officially recruited because they want to become great

contributors with their finely tuned expertise. Best practices, success stories, and lessons to be learned should be part of the official information given to the immigrant professionals willing to start a new life in Canada. As a result, these specialists will be better prepared to embrace their challenging journey to move away from home and integrate into the new society, to the detriment of their countries of origin and the benefit of Canada.

### **Recommendation #2**

To do its job more effectively with foreign professionals, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) could create pragmatic and proactive immigration policies and integration practices, and not act as simple executants of already established policies and practices that tend to ignore the unique foreign professionals' needs. Finding the best approach to deal with immigrant professionals in matters such as permanent residence–citizenship, credentials recognition and transfer, foreign professional experience, and cultural differences issues is of paramount importance to prevent the demoralization and lack of utilization of these human resources. CIC could help significantly to develop Canada as an even more powerful example of a multicultural society where immigrants are encouraged to actively participate in producing a healthy legacy for the next generations.

Security and freedom are the cornerstones of Canada's open, democratic, and diverse society. To help maintain the social and economic well-being of Canadians and sustain Canada's place in the world, the government needs to ensure that communities, borders, and infrastructures are secure. To accomplish that objective, the new department of Public Safety

Canada (PS) was created on December 12, 2003, as a fundamental component of the government's efforts to better secure Canada's public security and safety. PS combines the former Department of the Solicitor General, the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness Canada, and the National Crime Prevention Centre. The Minister of PS is supported by a department and a range of agencies that form a strategic structure to enhance public safety. The six agencies include Canada Border Services Agency, Canada Firearms Centre, Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Correctional Service of Canada, National Parole Board, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It is important to understand that having such a diverse cultural heritage, Canada needs and will need to recruit foreign professionals to optimize services to these sectors of the population, especially in fields that encompass the criminal justice system. Understanding other languages and cultures are foundational capabilities that foreign professionals bring to Canada with them, and that can be better leveraged for Canada's own good (<http://www.ps-sp.gc.ca/index-eng.aspx>).

Curiously, there is an obvious discrepancy between the CIC's desire to welcome immigrant professionals and immigrants' real integration into Canadian society. Why? It is likely in part because the entire process is complex. Immigrant professionals must overcome any difficulties they have in understanding existing policies. Here are the primary challenges that immigrant professionals face.

- ✓ They must gain access to relevant policies.

- ✓ They must become capable of correctly summarizing and understanding existing laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.

- ✓ They must realistically assess and swiftly develop their English–French skills.
- ✓ They must assess differences between federal and provincial policies.
- ✓ They must decipher all specific, federal, and provincial regulations that apply to their profession.
- ✓ They must learn to be sensitive to cultural differences and to access the benefits of CIC, community, private consultants, or private programs.
- ✓ They need to correctly assess the complicated process of credentials' recognition, transfer, and upgrade.
- ✓ They must manage their integration in terms of time, financial resources, and perseverance, and take full responsibility for their integration.

Last, many immigrants, even some who seek employment in criminal justice fields, simply do not have the wherewithal, the English–French language development, or the perseverance to endure the rigors of such a process.

In addition to these challenges, the federal and provincial Governments may be reluctant to attempt to influence professional organizations' policies and regulations, to share information received during the immigration process, and to generate new ideas and identify best practices, programs, strategies, and initiatives to better help the integration of immigrant professionals after their arrival in Canada. The entire process is complex for all the governmental agencies, as well. They are not currently funded, staffed or equipped to support immigrants to the level required to optimize their successful integration. Government agencies could better implement existing programs to provide clarity about methods of overview, accountability, viability, and most important, sustainability. They could take action to emphasize the importance of interagency cooperation, key public partners, service providers, community involvement, and local strategic

partnerships to enhance immigrant professionals' integration. But they do not have the time or resources to do so. In the meantime, the Canadian criminal justice system needs qualified personnel immediately.

As a direct result of the above difficulties, there is ample evidence that the skills deficit still continues in the country, and that immigrants are underemployed and unable to contribute to their field. Finally, frustration and anxiety spreads among Canadians, immigrants, the criminal justice system, the public sector, and in private business environments because of the difficulty of finding qualified people to do professional level work, especially in the criminal justice system.

### **Recommendation #3**

Federal and provincial governmental structures are asked to re-assess current immigration programs, based on points given to foreign education and professional experience, because the Canadian society is still not prepared to recognize them. An in-depth dialog between government decision-makers and economic environment representatives is urgently required to be put in place. As an example of integration, the federal and provincial governments should start a hiring process directly targeting immigrant professionals who are able to make a difference. All government structures should encourage the private environment to pragmatically utilize immigrant professionals through programs that stimulate the creation of a specific job market for the individuals who are ready and willing to work. Better cooperation between and among government agencies is required. For example, immigrant professionals with a criminal justice background may easily become assets for the Canadian system

if the Immigration Department will share all information obtained abroad when the applicant for an immigration visa was investigated by federal workers. To avoid privacy issues, the candidate will be required to sign a consent form agreeing that his or information may be shared. Because credibility and a background check are issues for any criminal justice system, there is no more valuable information than data collected and processed by the federal workers abroad to assist tremendously the same or other government agencies for hiring reasons.

#### **Recommendation #4**

Canadian standards should be clearly defined and transparently enforced. While it is not possible to bring Canadian clones into Canada, it is desirable to import people willing to follow the Canadian standards. The government and the private sector should be specific in clarifying the Canadian expectations in terms the professional and personal emersion of new immigrants. Along with the immigration advertising process, Canada should advertise all the facts or reasons that lead to the denial of recognizing foreign education and professional experience. That reality should be disclosed in the name of accurate information. Professional organizations and media should better advertise worldwide all the requirements and necessary steps to be met and taken by new immigrant professionals wishing to gain their Canadian professional status. As a future approach, direct recruiting should be encouraged at both levels, public and private. General and special competencies and skill tests—for example, a polygraph test for those who aspire to work in the Canadian criminal justice system—should be put in place abroad to ensure direct contact between protagonists, employers, and possible

employees, from the very first moment of the process. As a result, employers will have the chance to clearly assess and recruit only the preferred candidates and the candidates themselves will have the chance to better understand how they are expected to perform. There is an urgent need for internal programs. Those should be developed. Addressed apprenticeships or fellowships and in-house specific training can help employers tremendously in recruiting and upgrading their knowledge of immigrant professionals already living in Canada. Those individuals are less costly in terms of the time and money involved and they can offer spectacular and quick results.

#### **Recommendation #5**

To better assist immigrant professionals in the process of their language upgrading, colleges and universities, in deep consultation with employers, are called to enforce special educational modules, using professional scenarios and specific terminology. Interviewees observed that recent immigrant professionals come to Canada with better knowledge of English than their predecessors had years ago. To become proficient in a second or third language, however, seems to be an ongoing process and certainly not one that can be achieved overnight. Employers are looking to find candidates who are able to speak and write English practically rather than academically. They feel job applicants sometimes miss in their language training a connection with real, daily language. “We do not necessarily need Shakespeare in our team,” one interviewee affirmed, “but we do need people able to effectively communicate using an operational language, a more functional one.” Decades ago, immigrant professionals faced a challenge in finding upgrading language courses which today

are offered everywhere. The next step for educational and professional decision-makers, however, is to quickly design a curriculum more able to address the needs of employers and immigrant professionals, as well. Usually, a new immigrant professional is a learner with a higher speed of assimilating knowledge and fulfilling requirements. A more pragmatic approach will rapidly bring valuable candidates to the point where they are ready to successfully compete in the job market. Credible cultural immersion workshops should be organized extensively, abroad and across Canada, to be available to all those immigrant professionals willing to participate and assimilate. Language refreshment courses also should be available. As a result, the new immigrant professionals' immersion into the Canadian social environment will become easier, natural, and less problematic. In-house training or other internal workshops or co-op programs will help, for language and cultural purposes, as well. Also, developing dual educational or professional programs, in Canada and abroad, will permit a more rapid and practical evaluation for those who assessed and those who are assessed at the same time and at minimum social cost.

#### **Recommendation #6**

The assessment of how immigrant professionals overcome obstacles during their Canadian integration can be initiated and constantly developed or maintained through an Enterprise-Wide Change (EWC) approach. Being fundamentally different from other traditional changes, EWC has a major structural impact; is strategic in nature; is complex, chaotic, or radical; is on a large scale; is system-wide; and occurs over a longer timeframe. As basic steps, a few questions must be answered. Where do

we want to be? How will we know when we get there? Where are we now? How do we get there? What other factors could change in the future environment that we need to consider (Haines et al., 2005: 66)? Approaching the issue from a helicopter perspective (5000 feet above the ground), it is easy to get a system view of an enterprise. Working on the system first, a very good leader gets a holistic view of the global economic and Internet village. Then, the same leader can work inside the system, bringing an intense commitment to the simplicity of execution, despite having to deal with the normal complexity inherent in wave after wave of change. With superior results, there will be dramatically better customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, department and agency satisfaction, and contribution to society and community (Haines et al., 2005: 281). As to the benefits of Systems Thinking—the tremendous force of an EWC—there will be a framework and a way to make sense out of life's complexities. All living things are systems. Using systems make it easier to learn new things, since a system's basic rules are simple and consistent. In addition, a better way to integrate new ideas within the systems context and a clearer way to see and understand what is going on in any organization and its environment will occur. Complex problems will become easier to understand, as will the interrelationship of parts and multiple cause-and-effect cycles. Other benefits of Systems Thinking include a new and better way to create strategies, to solve problems, and to make superior decisions while finding leverage points for change, keeping the outcomes and goals in mind at all times. Finally, this approach will provide a better language and a more complete and holistic way of thinking towards achieving an elegant simplicity (Haines et al., 2005: 281). There is a need for leaders to be able to change, to bring



a new and healthy approach that considers the nature of human beings with regard to immigrant professionals arriving in Canada. The extremism already expressed in the Canadian immigration literature—such as the elimination of the Skilled Worker Class from the immigration program—will be avoided and the usefulness of parts of the current immigration policy will triumph. Change leaders must be highly committed to the change initiatives to develop and exercise their leadership skills to bring about the desired change. Change leaders also must show concern for the individuals who will implement the change and the impact it will have on the lives of the individuals. Change leaders know how to explain who immigrant professionals are and why they are here. They must lead a EWC Leadership Team on a continuing basis. These leaders must be responsible, open-minded persons with a strong desire to apply all the latest modern systems that can transform an important government department into a truly powerful structure able to effectively integrate Canada in the worldwide system. They must be continuous learners, credible models, interested not just in *why*, but in *how*? They must pass *Leadership Skills Inventory* with *magna cum laude* (Anderson et al., 2006: 11). More important, they must care. In addition, these specialists must bring discipline and courage to ensure consistency, integrity, and focus of the entire enterprise to its strategic positioning in the marketplace, year after year. They also must bring persistence and energy over the long term to ensure superior results through a focus on both economic alignment of delivery and the cultural attunement with people's hearts and minds (Haines et al., 2005: 177). External consultants contribute with in-depth expertise, unbiased viewpoints, and experience that many organizations cannot afford on a full-time basis. Internal

consultants and support team members best understand the various functions under their purview. A combination of both internal and external support is required for the success of the proposed EWC (Haines et al., 2005: 114). Finally, all other parts of the department involved in dealing with Skilled Worker Class Immigration, like managers, supervisors, officers, and all other staff, must be able to become a major part of this great EWC plan. The success of the change can be evaluated by respecting the schedule, checklists, interviews, surveys, statistics, and other internal and external feedback—immigration consultants, experts, media, community leaders, and immigrant professionals. The success will be celebrated when the CIC's discourse and real world practices are better matched. Finally, the immigrant professionals themselves should better ensure their journey is seen as a personal Enterprise-Wide Change.

This research has been inspired and fuelled by a personal search for a niche in the journey for so many individuals and/or families towards integration as professional (unqualified–qualified–overqualified) Canadian landed immigrants. The integration experiences and stories of the CJS interviewees as well as the experience gained by the NCJS interviewees in dealing with immigrant professionals have been resourceful.

The story has been told in a neutral voice. The researcher has provided the details about the problem, the justification of methodology, the analysis of the data, and the realization of its conclusions. The narrator did not allow himself to become a participant even though he was aware of the anxiety, brought sometimes by the immigrant status, all during this project. He let the interviewees speak for him and for the category he is representing. Some of the participants in the study presented

within this work are immigrants themselves. The experience with this study may help them recharge their integration batteries. Other participants are in management positions. As such, their experience with this project could affect their ensuing working practices. The extent to which this will make a difference for the new people coming to Canada as well as for the existing immigrant professionals needs to be examined. And so a new journey may begin.

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## Appendix A

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. You have worked as:

- Immigration consultant
- Immigration officer
- Community leader
- Volunteer for immigrants
- Employment consultant
- Media consultant
- Other

If other, please specify:

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2. You have been in the above position(s) for:

- Less than 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- 21 – 30 years
- Over 30 years

3. Have you worked with:

- Skilled Worker Class or immigrant professionals
- Sponsored immigrants
- Refugees
- Other

If other, please specify:

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4. Can you describe the type of work you have provided for immigrants?

- Forms
- References
- Information
- Networking
- Welcome
- Bank
- Daycare, school, university
- Employment consultation
- Job searching club
- Other

If other, please specify:

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5. Can you identify the steps towards integration of new immigrant professionals?

- General information about Canada
- General information about regulations across Canada
- Specific information about education in Canada
- Specific information about professions
- Specific information about professional organizations
- Update immigrants' language skills
- Update immigrants' professional knowledge
- Acknowledge the job market
- Acknowledge how to find a job
- Career planning
- Acknowledge the professional promoting system
- Benefit networking and become a part of it
- Other

If other, please specify:

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6. From your experience, what is the proportion of immigrant professionals who followed the pattern you described?

- Under 5%
- 5 – 15%
- 16 – 20%
- 21 – 50%
- 51 – 75%
- over 75%

7. What were the identified obstacles that hindered the integration/evolution/success of the immigrant professionals?

- Lack of general information about Canada
- Lack of general information about regulations across Canada
- Lack of specific information about education in Canada
- Lack of specific information about professions
- Lack of specific information about professional organizations
- The immigrants' language skills
- The immigrants' professional knowledge
- Lack of information about the job market
- Lack of information about how to find a job
- Career planning
- Lack of information about the professional promoting system
- Lack of information about how to benefit networking and become a part of it
- Ignorance
- Other

If other, please specify:

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8. How would you classify the expectations of the new immigrant professionals?

- Unrealistic
- Reasonable
- No expectations
- Other

If other, please specify:

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9. Can you share a success/failure story involving an immigrant professional?

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10. Which one of the following list do you consider the most important integration factor?

- Credentials recognition and transfer
- Foreign professional experience
- Permanent residence/citizenship
- Cultural differences
- Language
- Positive attitude
- Family
- Friends
- Other

If other, please specify:

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11. What are the causes of the gaps between previous education and recognition of it in Canada?

- Lack of information about other education systems
- Lack of evaluation of other education systems
- Professional organizations' resistance
- Protection of the Canadian educational system
- Different provincial regulations
- Ignorance
- Other

If other, please specify:

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12. What are the causes of the gaps between previous professional experience and recognition of it in Canada?

- Professional organizations' resistance
- Lack of interest
- Lack of information
- Lack of evaluation

- No evaluation tools
- Unions' resistance
- Protection of local employability
- Other

If other, please specify:

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13. From your experience, an overqualified immigrant professional is hired when:

- In a specific industry the human resources' dynamic is very high
- Basic skills are required
- Low wage is offered
- In house training is given
- Professional organizations are not involved
- Other

If other, please specify:

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14. From your experience, an overqualified immigrant professional is *not* hired when:

- Federal or provincial professional organizations are involved
- Unions are involved
- Canadian education is required
- Sophisticated skills are required
- Superior wage is offered
- Other

If other, please specify:

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15. Can you describe the best integration strategy for an immigrant professional?

- Information, planning, actions
- Tenacity, ambition, persuasion
- Upgrade the language and education
- Networking
- All of the above
- Other

If other, please specify:

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16. Can you suggest a different approach for the governmental immigration agencies to be more effective in dealing with a more successful integration of an immigrant professional?

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17. Can you suggest a different approach for the community, professional and/or private associations/organizations, and media to be more effective in dealing with a more successful integration of an immigrant professional?

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18. What do you think would be the perfect time for a new immigrant professional to start his or her integration journey?

- Before immigration
- Immediately after immigration
- A while after immigration

19. All things considered, I think Canada needs immigrant professionals.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) disagree strongly
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) disagree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) neither agree nor disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) agree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) agree strongly

20. All things considered, I think the current immigration system based on points works well for Canada and for immigrant professionals, as well.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) disagree strongly
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) disagree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) neither agree nor disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) agree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) agree strongly

21. All things considered, I think an immigrant professional has the same chances to be successful in Canada as a Canadian professional has.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) disagree strongly
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) disagree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) neither agree nor disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) agree somewhat
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) agree strongly

22. Do you have anything else to share related to the topic?

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