

Supporting migrant staff improves business

Migrant employees from a wide range of cultures come to New Zealand with a wealth of experience and high expectations of their new life here. How quickly and well they settle into your workplace can determine how quickly that translates to your bottom line.

Auckland Chamber of Commerce Employment Division Manager Penny Smith says the connection between helping employees settle into the workplace and productivity is the same whether your employee is a migrant or not. 'New Kiwis' and their employers can experience some initial workplace settlement problems and it is important both are aware of the support available to them.

"Migrant employees come to New Zealand with valuable skills, but do need support to settle in. Even workers from cultures similar to New Zealand, need guidance and assistance.

"This may be as simple as helping with colloquial language or understanding how to interact with managers and team members, or may be wider including ensuring support systems are in place for the employee's wider family."

Smith said initial results from the recently conducted New Kiwis Survey 2012 showed that there were still issues with migrant workers finding it difficult to settle in and, in some cases, returning back to their home country.

"Employers can prepare for the arrival of migrant workers to ensure they settle quicker. The ongoing benefit is lower staff turnover and greater productivity."

For the past 12 years, Auckland Chamber of Commerce has worked with the New Zealand Government assisting new migrants to settle well and stay in New Zealand and a range of resources is available to help employers develop settlement plans for migrant employees.

Key resources can be found on The Employer Hub www.immigration.govt.nz/employers.

These include:

- Information on Settlement Support New Zealand – with offices across Auckland and New Zealand, they can assist with every aspect of the settlement of your New Kiwi and their family
- A Welcome That Works – DVD on how to assist new migrant staff settle quickly and feel welcome
- The Employer Toolkit – handy flip cards to help prepare for the workplace challenges
- The Newcomers Guide – a companion to the Employer Toolkit to help new migrant employees understand and navigate differences in their previous experience and the NZ workplace culture

Auckland Chamber of Commerce also offers a range of practical support and resources including:

- www.newkiwis.co.nz – source local and global talent on line or with our support
- Online Employer information centre – linking to related support services
- One-on-one help
- Upcoming 'How To' employment seminar – Managing a Diverse Workplace to Maximise Productivity
- Upcoming training course – Boosting productivity through effective communication

Contacts: Sheeam Achmat, Employment New Kiwis Liaison (09) 375 3929

Settlement Support New Zealand
0800 SSNZ4U (0800 776 948)
www.ssnz.govt.nz



EMPLOYER TOOLKIT – CHECK THE LIST

BEFORE YOUR MIGRANT EMPLOYEE STARTS

- If necessary, arrange for someone to meet the new migrant on their arrival in the city/town
- Assign someone to act as a 'buddy' or mentor
- Ensure you have a clear written job description or list of tasks to give to the new employee
- Consider writing a simple staff handbook detailing the staff structure and roles, lines of communication, hours of work, timings of breaks, use of internet/email and telephone
- Prepare the new employee's office/ workstation and/or equipment
- Inform existing employees
- Find out about the values and work styles of the new migrant employee's culture
- Consider flexible work hours for the first week to allow the new employee to organise their home life in New Zealand – you may like to put together a pack of suggested schools, doctors and other useful information

FIRST DAY AT WORK

- Welcome your new employee
- Meet with immediate supervisor
- Introduce to 'buddy' or mentor
- Introduce to team members
- Take a tour of the workplace and own workstation/office
- Give them the prepared written documents about the job and the workplace
- Show how to use important equipment
- Explain any workplace etiquette e.g use of kitchen, paper recycling
- Set up regular meetings, especially in the first month, with both the migrant employee and the 'buddy' to help with settlement into the workplace

NEXT DAYS

- Arrange any on-the-job training
- Official induction
- Introduce to any social activities for your migrant employee and family
- Ensure the family is aware of and connected to Settlement Support NZ to help with their wider settlement needs