

BRIDGING THE

Employment Gap

Working in Employment everyday gives you a unique perspective on the trends and patterns of employment in Niagara during the best of times. The last year plus has certainly not been the best of times, in case you didn't notice. Now, with our economy reopening after a challenging 16 months of COVID-19 fears and ever-changing protocols, keeping our family and community safe are top priorities. Here, at Employment Solutions, we are witnessing a unique trend of jobs not being filled as fast as they used to in Niagara.

Depending on who you talk to, this could be happening for many reasons. From an Employer's perspective it could be; "people don't want to work", "they are dependent on CERB now" or "they are confused on the protocols from the different levels of Government". On the flip side, a Job Seeker's perspective could be something completely different; "I will just get laid-off again during the next wave", "not enough pay and hours" or "concerned about the health risks of work during a pandemic".

And the fact of the matter is that all or none of these factors could be a reason for job postings in Niagara not being filled. Every Employer and every Job Seeker will have a different list of concerns to be addressed and needs to be met. It is no different than any other relationship we have in our lives. Both parties need to feel appreciated, cared for, and that their contributions matter.

With all the changes happening in our world, Niagara has been left with an employment gap. The key to bridging this employment gap is going to be Trust and Creativity; basic fundamentals of any great relationship. Here is some advice on how Employers and Job Seekers can start building that bridge to close the employment gap in Niagara.

Trust

Employers – In your job postings, be up front with the actual hours and pay for the role you are hiring for. State the safety protocols you have in place to keep people safe from COVID-19 and other pandemic related risks. Including a simple introductory paragraph about how your work environment is superior, fun, and most importantly safe can do so much in building trust in a new relationship with a potential employee. Trust that pay isn't always the be all and end all, everything counts in large amounts when looking for new employees.

Job Seekers – Job Seekers need to be ready to trust Employers and be open minded to new roles and responsibilities and ever-changing processes due to COVID-19 protocols. Rebuilding an economy is challenging. Understand that hiring during uncertain times is just as difficult as job searching at uncertain times. Be open and fair in your communication during the searching and hiring process to build trust. Do your homework on the Employers you are applying to, but refrain from being an overly critical grader.

Creativity

Employers – Providing information for applicants is crucial during this time. Give applicants a true picture of what the job will be like and what your organization is like. Reach out to Employment Solutions or Employment Ontario Offices in Niagara to set up an online Informational Session for potential applicants. Informational sessions create a non-pressure environment for Job Seekers to ask questions and get a real feel for the job and for you as an Employer. As well, consider creating a video facility tour of your business and posting it on YouTube. The link could then be included on every job posting, allowing the applicant to see what the business and position is all about.

Job Seekers – Job websites are not the be all and end all. Applying to job postings is not a speed race activity. Draw up your list of the top five employers you want to work for. Reach out to them with a well-crafted resume and cover letter for that specific employer via email, LinkedIn or other Social Media. Job posting or not! Do your follow-ups a week later to prove that you are genuinely interested. Generic resumes and generic cover letters will get you generic results. Don't be afraid to use the phone and talk directly to Employers to sell yourself. You won't get through to everyone, but might get through when it counts.

In closing, this is a very exciting time in Niagara to be finding new employees and starting new jobs. Let's pack away our worry and look at the remainder of 2021 like it truly is... a big honking opportunity for everyone involved. If you are an Employer or Job Seeker looking to bridge that employment gap here in Niagara, please call Employment Solutions today at 905-788-3751 or 289-488-1800. Our services are free and our results are long term. It's time to get a job and it's time to hire.

Let's Bridge Together,

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