

# Cultural Diversity In the Canadian Workplace



Diversity in Canada is on the rise and rising fast. According to Stats Canada 2011 data, 20.6% of the Canadian population was foreign born with the vast majority living in 4 Provinces: Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta. Furthermore, just under 20% of the Canadian population identified themselves as a 'visible minority' (19.1% or 6,264,800) with 30.9% indicating they were born in Canada.

## **What The Numbers Tell Us About Diversity**

According to a 2008 report from the HR Council, *Increasing Ethnic Diversity in the Non-profit Sector Workforce*, a survey of the non-profit sector, a whopping 89% of employees identified themselves as 'white or Caucasian' and only 6% as a 'visible minority'.

According to The 2012 Employment Equity Act Annual Report the LMA (Labor Market Availability) of visible minority individuals in Canada was 15.3% in 2011. Reporting on diversity in federally regulated private sector employers this report demonstrated overall positive news. According to the report 18.2% of the federally regulated workforce was comprised of visible minorities (18.0 in permanent full-time and 19.2% in permanent part-time). These private sector employers included: Banking (28%), Communications, (16%) Transportation (12%), 'other' (10%) (other included nuclear power, warehousing, finance, public administration, equipment manufacturing, wholesale trade, entertainment and recreation). However, their representation in management positions was 6.7% (LMA was 8.7%). Despite this visible minorities were well represented in this sector.

The LMA of Aboriginal person in Canada is 3.1%. However, their representation within federally regulated private sector employers was below their LMA at 2.0%; Banking (1.3%), Communications, (1.7%) Transportation (2.5%), 'other' (3.5%)

These two reports paint an interesting picture of increased representation of cultural/racial diversity in some areas of the Canadian workplace.

## **How does your organization stack up in diversity?**

Diversity in your organization may or may not stack up statistically based on the LMA in general but it could be worth exploring if your workforce is representative of the LMA of a culturally diverse workforce in your geography. There is data available in

each Province and in your local geography to allow you to determine how diverse your organization happens to be in comparison to your population.

In today's marketplace diversity or lack of diversity will be noticed. If your organization is not representative of the diversity of your community you may miss out on an opportunity find a great new hire or increase your business bottom line.