

INCLUSION & DIVERSITY IN HEALTH & SAFETY



"In an era when construction firms and others are boosting diversity and inclusivity training, employers need to emphasize the value that immigrants bring to the workplace and make sure they are trained to work safely."



Dr. Basak Yanar

Associate Scientist
PhD, Organizational Behaviour, University of Toronto

WHY are we talking about Immigrant Workers?



The Skilled Trades Shortage - Canada

To keep pace with construction demands over the 2022 - 2027 forecast period, overall hiring requirements are 171,850 workers by 2027.



The Skilled Trades Shortage - Ontario

- Between 2022 and 2027, retirement 13% of the workforce will increase the recruitment requirements.
- A projected recruitment gap of some 18,000 workers that will need to be filled from outside the province's existing construction labour force.



The Skilled Trades Shortage - USA

In February of 2022, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) wrote,

"The construction industry will need to attract nearly 650,000 additional workers on top of the normal pace of hiring in 2022 to meet the demand for labor."



The Electrician Shortage - USA



Electrician Shortage Is Ongoing, Despite Growing Demand

By Lori Lovely

Twenty years ago, NECA predicted an electrician shortage. While demand for electricity escalates, the shortage of qualified electricians worsens. A January 2022 article by Border States notes that the primary underlying causes of this shortage include the lingering effects of the pandemic, experienced electricians leaving and fewer people entering the field. The Associated General Contractors of America also predicted that electricians are among the hardest jobs to fill.

According to the Pew Research Center, early retirement of electricians increased in 2020 and 2021, spurred in part by COVID-19. While that trend is slowly waning, by 2030, all baby boomers will reach age 65 or beyond, draining the pool of qualified electricians.

Compounding this exodus is the lack of interest in skilled labor among younger generations. More than 75% of high school and college students want to work in technology, and they are more likely to attend college than pursue a career in skilled labor. The desire for jobs with flexible hours and potential for remote work often steers them away from the trades.

The industry needs to do more than merely replace departing baby boomers. Because electricity consumption

is growing as technology focuses on vehicles, devices and buildings reliant on electric power, electrician jobs are growing exponentially.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects growth of electrician jobs by 9.1% from 2020 to 2030, which is higher than the 7.7% growth rate expected for all other occupations.

Of all the industries relying on electricians, construction could be hit the hardest by a shortage, because it already employs the highest number of electricians and the industry's expected growth rate over that same period is 9.9%.

Prepandemic job projections based on 2019 data predicted a need for 808,000 electricians by 2030. While the need continues, more recent estimates have dialed back that number to 795,700. Conversely, Rewiring America believes demand will increase, estimating that more than 1 billion machines will need to be installed or replaced in the near future.

In answer to the shortage, strategies such as recruiting at the high-school level, scholarships to vocational schools, apprenticeships and skilled labor staffing agencies are being implemented to encourage an influx of new electricians.



Role of Immigration - USA

- "America needs immigrants to solve its labor shortage."
- "(T)he biggest impact comes to industries like construction...."
- In addition, of the 10.3 million "open" jobs in the US; 377,000 of those are in construction.



Role of Immigration - Canada

In Canada, the Federal Minister of Housing, Ahmed Hussen, was the latest to address this issue:

"We know there is (sic) over a million jobs in Canada that remain unfilled, so we need immigrants, skilled immigrants to come in and help us fill these unfilled jobs and help us grow our economy."

The Minister also directly referenced *"building trades"* jobs.



Role of Immigration - Why the Concern?

Many immigrant workers are unaware of the three basic health and safety rights:

- The Right to Refuse,
- The Right to Participate, and
- The Right to Know.



Role of Immigration - Why the Concern?

1. The Right to Refuse, The Right to Participate, and The Right to Know,
2. Language Barriers,
3. Unfamiliar jobs and manual work (*outside of their expertise*),
4. Cultural Barriers (*Accident and Hazard Reporting*),
5. Regulatory Framework,
6. Training.



Immigrant Workers are at higher risk of work-related injuries - US

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) and the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOSH) report shows:

- The rate of fatal occupational injuries for foreign-born workers of all ages was 4.0 per 100,000, versus 3.7 per 100,000 for all workers.
- 20 - 24 years old = 4.8 per 100,000
- 15 - 19 years old = 6.1 per 100,000



Immigrant Workers are at higher risk of work-related injuries - Canada

- 80% of injured Montreal workers requiring rehabilitation are immigrants.
- The majority of cases involve immigrants compared to a decade ago when the majority involved Quebecois workers.



Medically treated injury rates are double in immigrant men

Recent immigrant men are:

Twice as likely to sustain workplace injuries that require medical care compared with native-born men.

Why do you think that is?

Do you think these injury rates are accurate?



Reporting

1. Do you think reporting is accurate? Why or Why Not?
2. What do you think may lead to issues in under reporting and accurate numbers?
3. What types of work do you think may contribute to higher injury rates?



Vulnerability Experienced by Immigrant Workers Results From:

- Exposure to Hazards.
- Cultural and Structural Barriers.
- Unfamiliarity with the risks they face on the job.



Vulnerability Experienced by Immigrant Workers Results From:

- Inadequate knowledge of OHS policies, procedures, and regulation framework.
- Lack of, or poor, safety training and regulatory infrastructure that protects their rights.
- Language differences is one of the most frequently cited barriers to safety. |



Small Business

Evidence suggests that smaller businesses experience a disproportionate burden of occupational injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.



Other Contributing Factors?

Other contributing factors contributing to greater risk include:

- Young Workers,
- Work in more hazardous industries,
- Working in smaller firms,
- Limited knowledge of or access to health and safety resources,
- Work in dynamic environments such as in construction,



Other Contributing Factors?

- Small business owners also may lack OSH knowledge,
- No return-to-work policies, poor post-injury administration,
- No safety training, and a lack of clear management guidance,
- Fewer than 20% of small business owners belong to trade associations (a potential source for OSH resources),
- Small businesses are more likely to hire workers who are at a greater risk.



Tailboard Talk (español)

Alma Vega, MSCN, RD



Understanding and Comprehension of Tailboard Talk

Reversing Vehicles and Equipment

- Hazards Include:
- Controls Include:



Safety Moment; From a Non-Construction Industry (Healthcare/Hospital)

We talked about people coming from different industries;
so lets try an industry about which we are not familiar.

by

Alma Vega, MSCN, RD



Safety Moment; From a Non-Construction Industry (Healthcare/Hospital)

Patient Handling

- Hazards Include:
- Controls Include:



Identifiable Health & Safety Gaps

- Resources in different languages,
- Resources in easier to understand formats,
- Training for newcomers (age and origin),
- Reluctance to speak up/fear to speak up,
- Cultural Awareness,
- Language Barriers,
- Preparation for entering workforce and sector,
- Others?



Let's Talk About Perception and Understanding

Culture and Language play a significant role in shaping and understanding. Being aware of these differences can help us communicate more effectively and respectfully across cultural boundaries.

- **Vocabulary and Semantics**
- **Perception of Time/ Urgency**
- **Body Language and Nonverbal Communication**
- **Values and Beliefs**
- **Stereotypes and Bias**
- Others?



Solution Overview

- Awareness Training (DEI),
- QR Codes,
- Health and Safety Mentorship Groups or Programs,
- Multi-lingual Health and Safety Signage,
- Multi-lingual Tailboard Talks,
- Follow-up (*questions*) to ensure comprehension,
- Eliminate the use of acronyms, technical terms (*where possible*), and advanced language,
- Collaboration with labour partners, Immigrant Welcome Centres, Placement Agencies, and Associations.



MOVING FORWARD 1

"It can sound like, 'Oh because this person is a new Canadian, they're risky,' but it's not them that are risky, it's the fact that workplace parties — employers, supervisors, even myself as a regulator — need to understand that when there's diversity involved, in order to make sure that the necessary awareness, training or knowledge is there, we might need to do a bit more than we normally do."

*Jules Arntz-Gray
Director, Training and Awareness Branch
Ontario Ministry of Labour, 2019*



MOVING FORWARD 2

Safety and Health Professionals will be better able to protect workers if they are aware of and account for these factors when designing and implementing safety programs and interventions.



Not Possible Without



Dr. Basak Yanar
Associate Scientist
University of Toronto



Kamakshi Ahluwalia
Marketing and Communications
Manager



Adam Crapsi
Health & Safety and
Labour Relations
Assistant



Vincent Duong
Senior Office
Coordinator



&
you



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