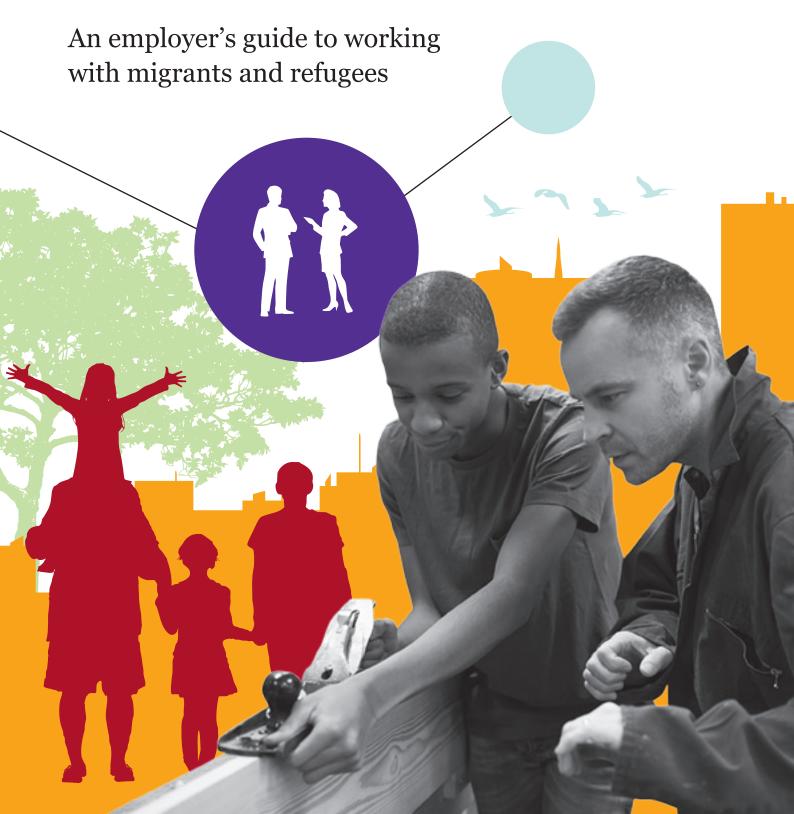


New Arrivals New Connections







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1. Making the connection

Migration is integral to Australia's economy and society. Most migrants and refugees have a strong desire to work and, through employment, make a valuable contribution to Australia. The Australian Government recognises many employers already benefit from the skills, international experience and diverse cultural perspectives migrants and refugees bring to the workforce. However, others may not be aware of the benefits or know where to find advice or support to take on a new migrant or refugee.

This guide provides some useful tips and resources to help you and your employees to understand each other better, in turn improving the productivity of your business.









Migrants and refugees bring considerable benefits to employers and businesses. These skills and experiences can help you, as employers and business owners, to enhance customer service, strengthen existing market share or expand into new markets, both in Australia and overseas.

Australia is a nation built on immigration. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than 28 per cent of Australia's population was born overseas¹.

The large and diverse workforce of migrants and refugees can help you to better reach your customers and grow your business by:

- harnessing the cultural diversity of your employees to better meet the needs of a diverse customer base
- strengthening existing market share or expanding into new markets, in Australia or overseas
- · being more innovative and creative, and
- helping you think of new ways of doing business.
- Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics data Estimated Resident Population in Australia — (Embargo Media Release March 2016).

Different viewpoints may bring unexpected benefits

New employees bring new viewpoints. Migrants and refugees bring international experiences and cultural perspectives, including new questions and new ideas about your business. These ideas can change the way you do business for the better.

Migrants are a large share of Australia's population and are not only potential employees, but also potential customers. A diverse workforce is better equipped to create products and services that meet the needs of a diverse market. A diverse workforce reflects the diverse customer base in multicultural Australia.

Enthusiastic, motivated and hardworking

Migrants have already shown their ability and willingness to adapt to new circumstances by packing up and moving themselves and their families to a new country.

When migrants come to Australia, they are highly motivated to work hard and participate fully in Australian workplaces and our society.

If they are refugees, they have probably also faced challenges most of us can hardly begin to imagine. Refugees are typically forced to flee their homes, keep themselves and their family safe in unfamiliar and potentially hostile environments, and deal with racism and discrimination.

Migrants' and refugees' resilience, enthusiasm and variety of experiences can make them valuable employees.

What employers say

Refugees bring with them strengths gained from surviving difficult situations — determination, motivation, creativity, a thirst for knowledge, a willingness to work hard, and the desire to build a new life for themselves and their families.

NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors



Our refugee employees have shown great dedication and determination to their work and a surprising synergy with the region, originating from rural farming backgrounds themselves. As evidence of the success, about 150 members of the Karen community are now living in Nhill and have made a valuable contribution to sporting clubs, churches, schools, the country fire authority and Luv-a-Duck.

Based on our experience with Karen refugees and other migrants, we encourage any employer to embrace this opportunity and make a difference.

Luv-a-Duck





ANZ is committed to fostering workplace diversity and ensuring all our staff achieve their fullest potential. Through a refugee employment programme, our partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, enables us to reflect the diversity of our customers through our staff.

The participants are highly courageous, resilient and overwhelmingly engaged with ANZ. The programme enables ANZ to build a workforce that can connect with our diverse customer-base through language and cultural understanding. Also, employing refugees has delivered other benefits to our business, such as motivating other staff involved in the programme.

About 80 per cent of refugees who have been taken on by ANZ through the programme have been retained in their jobs. This is very similar to the average recruitment strike rate for candidates who have more advantages.

ANZ



3. Employing migrants and refugees

You may already employ migrants or refugees, or may be keen to explore this further. In case you're not sure about who is a migrant or refugee, here is some guidance.

Everyone who has a visa to live permanently in Australia is a migrant. It does not matter if they were granted their permanent visa before or after they arrived in Australia.

Migrants can include people who are:

- skilled migration visa holders
- family members of people who hold skilled migration visas
- joining their Australian spouses, parents, children or other close family members under the family migration program
- refugees who hold a permanent visa.

Find out who can work with the Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system.

If you are not sure if the person you plan to employ is able to work in Australia, check out VEVO (managed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection):

See: http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/visas-and-migration/visa-entitlement-verification-online-(vevo)

More information about employing legal workers is also available:

See: http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Empl/Empl/employing-legal-workers

Who can work in Australia?

All migrants can work in Australia

Anyone who has a permanent visa, whether they were granted the visa in Australia or overseas, can work in Australia, subject to relevant employment laws which apply to all working Australians.

Refugees and humanitarian entrants can work in Australia

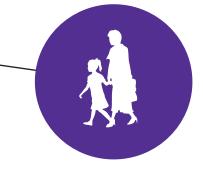
Anyone who has a Protection (subclass 866) visa or a Refugee or Humanitarian (all subclass 200s) visa can work in Australia.

Some temporary residents can work in Australia

Some, but not all, temporary visa holders can work in Australia. Work rights depend on the conditions of their visa. People with temporary visas are known as 'temporary residents' and are not migrants. Their visas let them stay in Australia for a period of time only and may restrict their work rights, such as how many hours a week they can work or a maximum length of time with one employer.

Examples of temporary residents who can work include working holiday-makers (often known as backpackers), students and some temporary protection visa holders. Temporary residents are covered by Australian employment laws.





4. Engaging with the community

As an experienced employer, you already recognise the valuable contributions your employees make and know how important it is to your business, that your employees are motivated at work. There are many resources available in the community that can support you in recruiting and retaining migrants and refugees in your workforce.

Talk to someone with experience

If you employ or are considering employing a migrant, there are many organisations that can provide advice and support.

Try partnering with an organisation experienced in working with migrants. These organisations can advise on how best to introduce new migrants into your business and can help other employees connect with them. Some of them also offer post-employment support. For example, try contacting your local:

- community-based Migrant Resource Centre (MRC)
- settlement service providers
- council or chamber of commerce
- community organisations, such as refugee support groups
- jobactive provider
- Neighbourhood Houses and Centres (provide social, educational and recreational activities for communities)
- unions.

Your personal contacts can also be a useful source of information about organisations in your local area that can provide support and advice.

5. Supporting employees

Most migrant employees want to contribute, are motivated to adapt to life and work in Australia, and just want to be treated the same as any other employee. The following ideas can help you maximise job satisfaction, productivity and retention. You are probably already doing many of these things for your employees.

Keep in mind your business might be your new employee's first experience of an Australian workplace. While they are still building their confidence, they might need your support in understanding your expectations of them, your business and administrative processes and practices.

Every staff member has regular supervision — once a month at minimum — and that's where lots of the cultural lumps and bumps will get negotiated. You will have to be more intuitive with migrant staff, not waiting for things to fall apart. Doing informal check-ups so that supervision is not just that one hour — I think this is critical.

Employer, community health organisation, Victoria



Arrange a mentor or buddy

Invite an experienced employee to mentor the new starter to provide ongoing support in resolving practical and cultural issues. Mentors can explain how things are done in your workplace and help to manage different approaches and expectations.

A mentor can also explain Australian slang and include the migrant employee in workplace social activities. A good mentor is often someone who has something in common with the new employee, such as children of similar age or similar interests.

Being a mentor can also be a great opportunity to extend to existing employees who may be seeking more responsibility and are ready to 'step up'.

Provide information on how your workplace operates

Make sure your new employee knows how the workplace operates, even if this might appear to be obvious. For example:

- any collective agreement you have in place and what it covers
- hours of work and when breaks are taken
- leave entitlements
- if uniforms are worn and how these are maintained
- any other clothing issues, such as what can or must be worn for safety reasons
- lines of reporting and supervision
- record-keeping requirements
- the significance of fire alarms and fire drills.

Explain workplace health and safety

Before starting work, make sure the new employee understands any health and safety issues in the workplace. You should also outline what responsibilities they have as an employee and you have as an employer.



Some tips to help with cross-cultural communication

Give practical demonstrations and encourage questions

Show the new employee how a task is done and then ask them to try it. In some cultures, it is considered rude to ask questions or admit you don't know. Encourage the new employee to ask questions if unsure. This may help with understanding.

Give clear instructions in writing

Consider giving important instructions in more than one way. This may be in person, in writing and/or with pictures (where appropriate). This can give a common point-of-reference and help to build confidence.

Check understanding with open-ended questions

Check the employee has understood by asking questions that cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.

Speak clearly

Remember some people, including native English speakers from countries other than Australia, may have trouble understanding the Australian accent.

If English is not their first language, you can help by speaking directly, clearly and simply. Slow down and pause more often than you would normally.



Explain jargon and colloquialisms

Even if English is the first language of your new employee, they may be unfamiliar with Australian jargon, informal language and colloquialisms. This may be a challenge, particularly for those who are new to working in Australia.

Be aware of the extent to which jargon, particularly technical jargon, is used in your workplace. You can help to explain the essential expressions.

Also keep in mind common Australian expressions may be misunderstood, for example, 'bring a plate' has often caused embarrassment to a new arrival who has dutifully turned up with an empty plate. Expressions such as 'this machine is cactus' and 'he really spat the dummy that time' are readily used in the workplace, but not necessarily understood by someone who has grown up elsewhere.

For some people, casual swearing may also be seen as aggressive or provocative and new employees may not be sure how to respond. You can help by being aware how this might affect your employees.

If it appears your new employee is baffled by the sense of humour and the jokes of your other employees, have someone help them out. A buddy or mentor can be of great assistance.



We recognise training doesn't stop once employment begins and some barriers can take time to overcome.

We have demonstrated ongoing commitment to improving the employability of our workers through activities, such as organised literacy programs.

Southern Meats, Goulburn

Adult Migrant English Program

Many migrants are eligible for English language tuition under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). This program offers free English language courses, including distance, night and weekend classes where available.

Encourage your employee to talk to an AMEP service provider about their potential eligibility.

Further information is available at:

http://education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0

Translating and Interpreting Service

If you need help explaining complex information, such as health and safety standards and procedures, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).

TIS National is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Phone: 131 450

For more information visit: https://tisnational.gov.au/





6. Building understanding

A workplace which values cultural diversity raises productivity through higher rates of staff morale and retention.

New migrant employees may have different ways of behaving and relating to other people than may be usual in an Australian workplace. Taking the time to understand a migrant or refugee worker and helping them understand you can reduce 'culture shock'. This will help migrant employees to focus their time and attention on work that benefits your business.

Consider the following statements by some migrant employees about the way they work and how they compare to practices in your own workplace:



I am usually quiet in meetings until I am asked to speak.

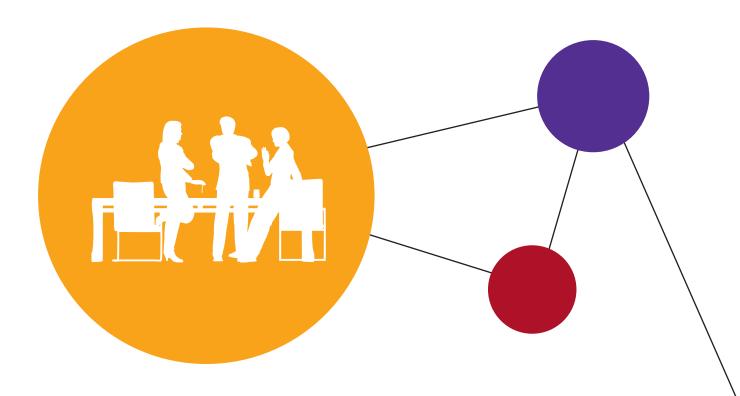
I like to know exactly what the rules are and I will stick to them to get the job done.

I like to know who is in charge and who the most senior person is.

What do migrants say?

I think it is rude to ask my boss questions or question their decisions. I like to know exactly what I have to do and that my job is secure.

I will work hard and stick by my employer.



Have you considered diversity training?

Diversity training is a way of equipping your managers and supervisors and other employees with the skills, knowledge and sensitivity to provide support to a diverse workforce.

A diverse workforce is not only about people from different cultures who speak different languages. Diversity encompasses employees of different genders, ages, races and work style, as well as people with disabilities.

Using the 'diversity' approach can involve:

- giving people a chance, or a 'fair go'
- creating supportive team environments
- ensuring comprehensive induction for new employees
- providing appropriate training to all staff and supervisors
- seeing advantage in workplace diversity
- being flexible in how the workplace operates.

This is likely to reap benefits for you across your entire workforce, regardless of the cultural backgrounds and life experiences of your employees.

Cultural awareness and empathy

Australia's workforce is shaped and enhanced by diversity and the contributions of those from culturally diverse backgrounds. Australians celebrate and acknowledge a wide variety of events, many with cultural and religious significance. It's important to consider opportunities for employees to acknowledge cultural diversity in the workplace and participate in activities of cultural significance. Recognising cultural diversity in the workforce creates a positive workplace culture that's inclusive and responsive to the needs of all employees.

A calendar of religious and cultural events can be found at:

https://dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia/government-building-social-cohesion/calendar-of-cultural-and-religious-dates

Many businesses choose to support national Harmony Day on 21 March. Harmony Day celebrates Australia's cultural diversity by fostering inclusiveness, cultural respect and a sense of belonging for everyone, with the message 'everyone belongs'. You can find more information at:



What other employers say

For more information about diversity training, visit the Diversity Council of Australia website at: https://dca.org.au/

For more information, contact your local Migrant Resource Centre (MRC).

Cross-cultural training is mandatory for our staff. I think it creates a sensitivity to their situation and highlights key cultural differences. For example, looking people in the eye and what that means in different cultures; what respect looks like; the importance of time management; checking emails first thing in the morning so you know what meetings you've got on. Key things we take for granted, but are done in very different ways.

Employer, financial services, Victoria

To maximise the effectiveness of the workplace, it is very important for us to be flexible, to identify what an individual can contribute and earnestly try to accommodate that.

For example, the restaurant had a young woman from Ethiopia who wanted to work on the floor, but was not good at reading customers.

She struggled to make coffees on the coffee machine. We realised that Ethiopia has the oldest coffee-making ceremony in the world, so we asked her to perform Ethiopian coffee-making ceremonies for customers. People love it.

[We're] not highlighting what [employees] don't have, but highlighting what they do have.

Founder, Lentil As Anything



7. Further links and resources



Below are more useful links to help support you.

jobactive

jobactive is a free government service that can help you to identify suitable prospective employees. Your local jobactive provider can give you customised support to meet your business needs, including:

- candidate screening and short-listing
- pre-employment skills training and work-related equipment for job seekers
- support while new employees settle in.

You may also be eligible for financial incentives, such as wage subsidies, if you recruit through jobactive.

See: https://jobsearch.gov.au/ and https://www.employment.gov.au/ jobactive-help-employers-find-staff for more information about how jobactive can help employers find staff.

The Friendly Nation Initiative

The Friendly Nation Initiative is a business led strategy that seeks to increase employment, mentoring, training and internship opportunities for refugees and humanitarian migrants with a particular focus on people arriving under Australia's Humanitarian Program.

Several iconic Australian businesses have already signed to participate in the program and have committed to various initiatives, from offering to donate clothing and unpaid mentoring for refugees to placements in their businesses to provide real work experience and an introduction to Australian corporate and working culture.

If you would like to become involved in the Friendly Nation Initiative please contact the Migration Council Australia at **info@migrationcouncil.org.au**

Improving English

If you think your new employee would benefit from further English tuition, there are various options open to them. You can find information on the Adult Migrant English Program and Skills for Education and Employment program at http://education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0

Many Vocational Education and Training centres, Neighbourhood Houses and Centres also offer a range of English as a Second Language and conversational English classes.

Community organisations

There are a range of community-based organisations that can help you to engage migrants and refugees. You can also visit the Australian Local Government Association at http://alga.asn.au/ or access a list of Neighbourhood Houses and Centres at http://anhca.asn.au/

Free Translating Service

The Australian Government provides a Free Translating Service to new permanent arrivals, select temporary residents and returning Australian citizens.

Through the service, eligible clients can access free English translations of up to 10 personal documents, including identity records and education and employment certificates.

The service is available within the first two years of visa grant or arriving to settle permanently in Australia.

You can find more information at https://dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/settle-in-australia/help-with-english/free-translating-service





Other useful publications and websites

Refugee Council of Australia's publication titled What Works: Employment strategies for refugee and humanitarian entrants (June 2010) surveyed employers and employees to explore what works in supporting the transition to employment of refugees and humanitarian entrants.

See: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt/2010-Employment.pdf

Snapshots from Oz

Snapshots from Oz provides information on key features of Australian settlement policies, programs and services available for humanitarian entrants.

See: https://dss.gov.au/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/settlement-services/snapshots-from-oz

The Settlement Journey

The Settlement Journey publication describes the personal journeys of a number of migrants to Australia and key learnings that support successful settlement outcomes.

See: https://dss.gov.au/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/syrian-and-iraqi-refugee-crisis/the-settlement-journey

If you want ideas about combating racism and creating an inclusive workplace, visit the **Racism. It Stops with Me** website.

See: https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/

