Finders Keepers: Hiring and Retaining Bilingual Staff

September 19, 2012  •  10:00-11:30 am.

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HC Link
• Determinants of health

• Language and Culture

• Healthy Communities
Clients who receive services in their language follow advice and instruction move closely.
Service Providers who offer FLS can offer higher quality services
French language Services Act guarantees Francophones access to health services in their own language
Improved Population Health
Bilingual Organizational Culture

Provision Of French Language Services

Improved Health Of Francophones

Organizational Strategic Plan

Human Resources Plan

Bilingual Staff Hired
Objectives for today’s session

1. Understand the relationship between recruiting/retaining bilingual staff, building a bilingual organizational culture, and delivering French Language Services

2. Be familiar with techniques and tips to attract and hire bilingual staff

3. Understand how to avoid common pitfalls in recruiting and retaining bilingual staff
Recruiting Bilingual Staff

1. Assess your needs
2. Advertise & Promote
3. Assess Competency
Assess your needs

• What skills do you need to achieve your FLS objectives?
  – Designated position, or not?
  – What level of French?
  – French speaking or Francophone?
  – What can you compromise on?
  – English skills too 😊
Advertise & Promote

• It’s more than “bilingualism is an asset”
  – Post in both languages
  – Work your contacts & networks
Assess candidate’s competency

- Language
- Cultural competency
- Familiarity with Francophone stakeholders
Retaining Bilingual Staff

Two sides of the same coin
One side of the coin...

- Welcome workplace
- Collaboration
- Incentives
- Supportive of Partnership
- Policies & Procedures
- Tools

Environment supports working bilingually
The Other side of the coin.....

• Leadership
• Commitment & Accountability
• FLS Part of Strategic Planning
• Buy-in of all staff

Bilingual Organizational Culture
• Be flexible

• Be realistic

• Value your staff
Questions to ask...

- Are your French-speaking employees regularly asked to provide services to mostly Anglophone clients?
Questions to ask....

• Do your French-speaking staff have the French language tools that they need to do their work properly?
  – Professional tools
  – Documentation and forms
  – Language aids
Questions to ask....

- Do you ask them to translate or interpret on a regular basis, even if this is not in their job description?
Questions to ask…..

• Do you encourage your French-speaking employees to speak French amongst themselves in the workplace?
Questions to ask....

• Do you offer opportunities to your Francophone staff for training and professional continuing education in French?
Questions to ask.....

• Is the manager able to directly evaluate the quality of their work in French?
Questions to ask.....

• Do they constantly have to convince people of the importance of their work in order to be taken seriously within the organization?
Questions to ask....

• Does the job posting/job description accurately reflect what the employee is actually doing?
Resources
Resources

Working Together With Francophones in Ontario Part One: Understanding the Context

Working Together With Francophones in Ontario Part Two: Legislation and Institutional Support

How to Engage Francophones...When You Don’t Speak French!

Creating a Bilingual Organizational Culture
http://www.hclinkontario.ca/images/BilingualCulture.pdf
We are here to help!

www.HCLinkOntario.ca

- Plan and evaluate your program
- Build and expand your network
- Develop policy