

**Welcome  
to  
Language Barriers to Employment  
Faced by Internationally Educated  
Professionals (IEPs)**

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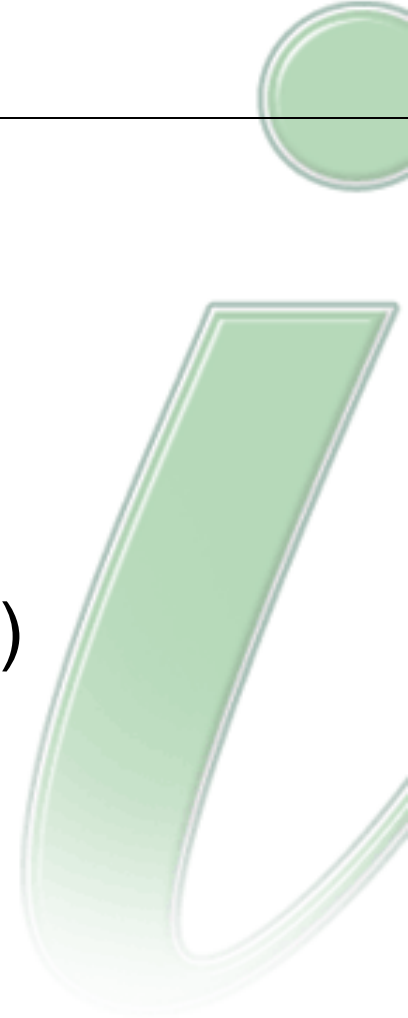
**Progress Career Planning Institute**

**[www.pcpic.ca](http://www.pcpic.ca)**



## Outline

- Setting the stage
  - Immigration
- Introduction
- PCPI's Research Studies (2007 & 2009)
  - Objectives of the studies
  - Findings
- Conclusion



## Setting the stage

- Canadian population is fueled by immigration. In 2008 Canada welcomed 519,722 newcomers, the largest number to date
- It is estimated that by 2011 almost all labour force growth will come from newcomers
- Countries ranked high on migration to Canada are: China, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines
- Canada looks to skilled immigrants to address skill gaps
- Despite their credentials and skills, “in 2006, the national unemployment rate for these immigrants was 11.5%, more than double the rate of 4.9% for the Canadian-born population.” (Statistics Canada)

## Introduction

- Connotations can create confusion when immigrants have a good command of the English language; they may use a word that has a slightly different meaning to them than it does to us.
- As Canadians we place a lot of emphasis on the words we choose to convey our message and this becomes a challenge for IEPs

## 2007 Study

### Objective:

Assessment of employers' workforce planning approaches and tools associated with IEPs' integration into Canadian labour force

### Overview:

Employers were provided with four statements related to the challenges and barriers encountered in recruitment. Trends and results were analyzed based on their responses of agreement or disagreement.

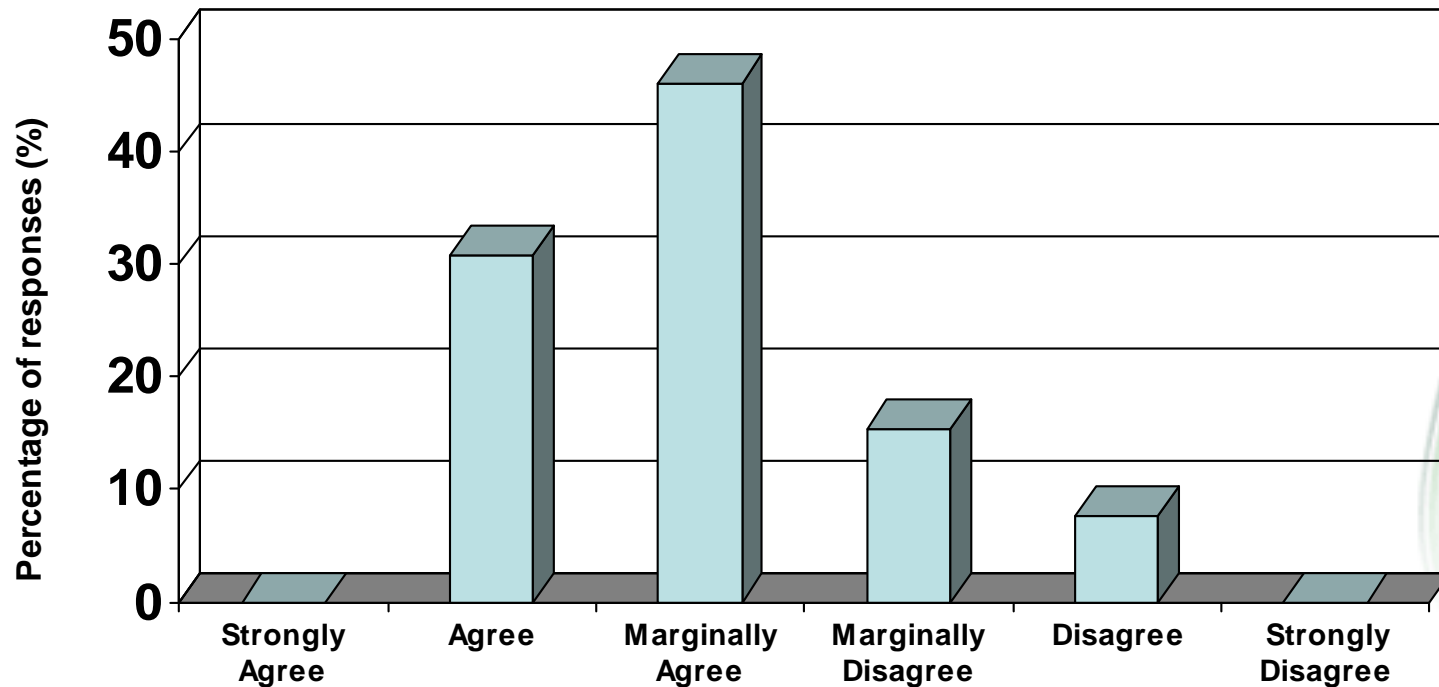
## 2007 Findings

### Employers' responses to statements reflecting their organization's recruitment activities:

- Recognition of IEP foreign credentials
- Canadian experience
- IEP behaviours not in accordance with Canadian norms
- IEP language and accents

## 2007 Findings

**IEP language and accent are pressing challenges to effective recruitment of IEPs in our organization**



## 2009 Study

### Objective:

Report on the experiences and perceptions of employers and IEPs as it relates to the recruitment, retention, integration and advancement of IEPs in their occupational fields.

### Overview:

Employers and IEPs were asked to respond to surveys questioning their perceptions with regards to best practices for hiring IEPs and the challenges they face

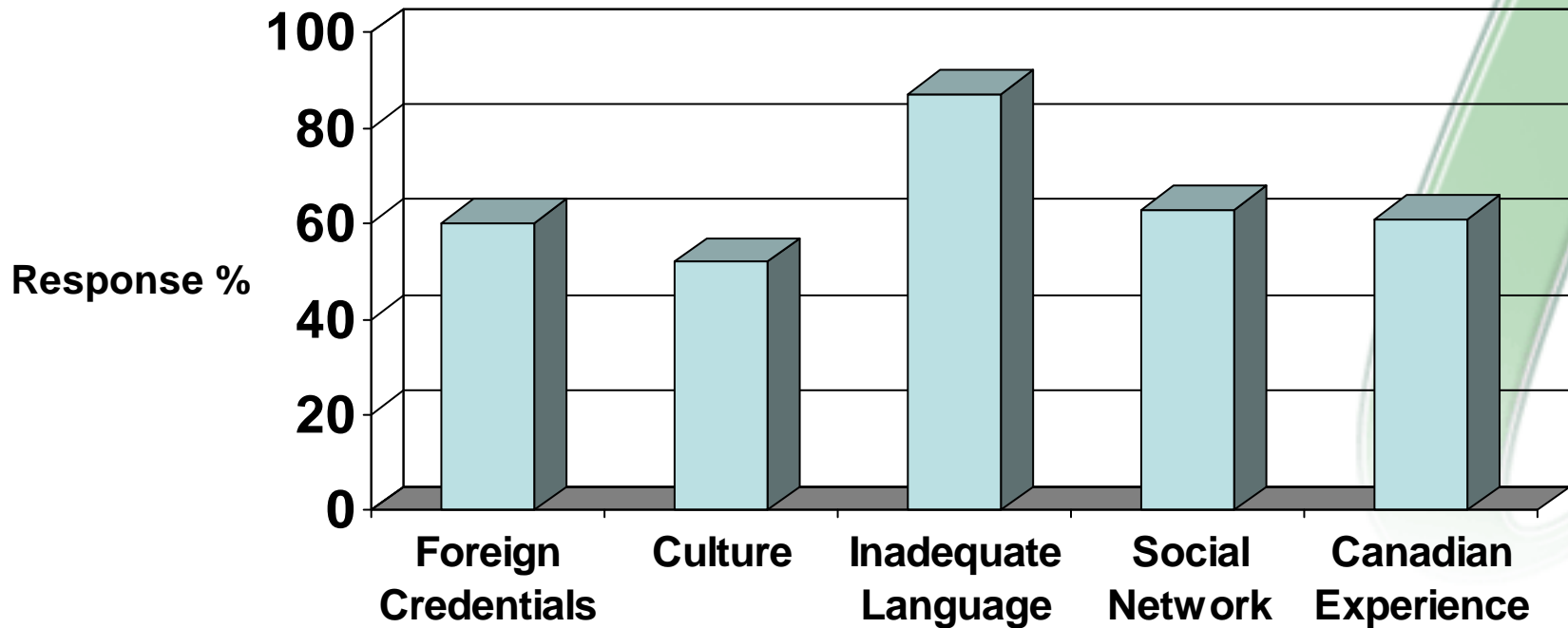


## 2009 Findings

- Almost all Canadian businesses today have positive attitudes towards hiring IEPs
- Only a minority have special policies and programs in place
- Employers cite barriers to IEP effectiveness as:
  - lack of Canadian experience
  - insufficient understanding of Canadian culture and habits
  - lack of interpersonal network
  - foreign credentials
  - inadequate language skills

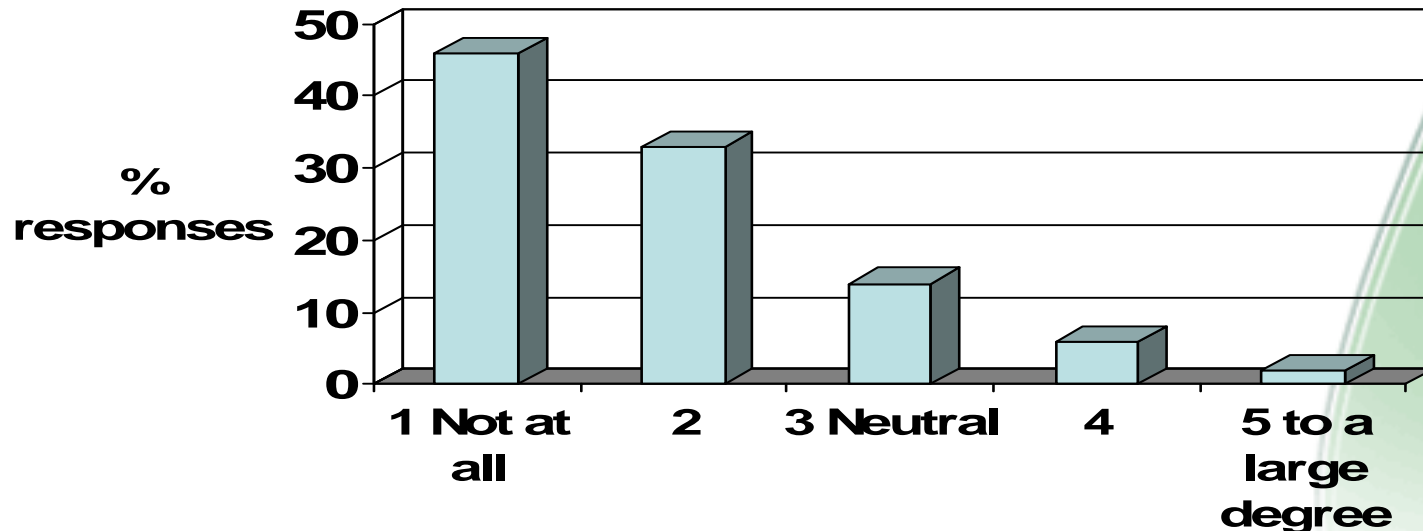
## 2009 Findings

### Barriers to IEPs' Employment According to Employers



## 2009 Findings

### IEP Responses to Language as a Barrier to Employment



IEPs were asked: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement... I have communication problems (e.g., language –barrier)

## Conclusion

- In both studies, inadequate language skills were cited by employers as a key problem in integrating immigrants into the workforce
  - 77% in 2007 study
  - 87% in 2009 study
- In the 2009 study, IEPs did not perceive language as a key barrier

## Implications for Government Policies & Programs

Governments should explore:

- How support for ESL programs could be made more helpful to businesses hiring IEPs
- Easy to use and readily accessible self-testing methods for IEPs to evaluate to some extent their own language limitations

Thank you for the  
opportunity to share  
some of the findings of  
our research studies.

