



LONDON ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

## LONDON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WORKFORCE ACCESS AND ASSISTANCE

The success of the London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) in attracting new business and the growth and retention of existing business is founded on access to a skilled and quality workforce. In late 2003 the LEDC acknowledged the importance of workforce to their mission by creating a portfolio for Workforce Development and hiring a Director of Workforce Development to devise and implement a local strategy to ensure companies have access to sufficient qualified and experienced workers.

### THE LEDC ASSISTS LONDON BUSINESSES BY:

#### **CONNECTING** your company to:

- ✓ Local colleges and training institutes with graduates who are ready, willing and able to fill the positions available. For example, the University of Western Ontario has a strong engineering program, Fanshawe College conducts programs in manufacturing technology and associated disciplines and the city has a number of private technical colleges;
- ✓ The various employment sector agencies in the City of London working with the un- and under-employed jobseekers;
- ✓ International workers who are prepared to locate in London on Temporary Work Permit or Permanent Residency applications;
- ✓ Apprenticeship, co-op and internship programs;
- ✓ Recruitment organizations and HR specialists.

#### **PROMOTING** job vacancies through:

- ✓ Business Workforce Briefing sessions which provide information to recruitment, training and employment sector agencies on vacancies, skills requirements and application process;
- ✓ Group advertisements with other organizations seeking employees in similar job fields;
- ✓ LEDC website work opportunities information.

#### **WORKING** with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to ensure labour market needs are met through:

- ✓ Assisting with information on any special HR requirements or limitations based on contractual arrangements;
- ✓ Seeking interventions to assist in urgent local workforce needs;
- ✓ Help reduce red-tape and assist in reducing certain wait times.

**LINKING** your organization to the local training institutes to help ensure programs are in place or customized to accommodate the organization's skills needs.

**ASSISTING** with integration of non-local employees into the local community through:

- ✓ Introduction to various agencies and networking groups;
- ✓ Information on neighborhoods, housing, schooling and cost of living;
- ✓ Settlement assistance and contacts to the many support organizations within the city.

Since its creation in 2003, the LEDC Workforce Development portfolio has made significant progress in addressing local and area labour force issues. September 2004, marked the release of the Workforce Development Strategy for London.

The report outlines four key strategies and a range of activities which will help meet the challenges of an aging workforce and a declining birth rate. This includes developing programs and incentives to keep older, more experienced workers in the workforce; increasing the skills of existing workers; and increasing immigration and developing more effective methods for assessing and training immigrants to get them on the job more quickly.

To date, community response to the progress and initiatives of the workforce development portfolio has been positive and supportive. We are proud of the fact that London is one of the first, Canadian cities to proactively approach the issue of workforce development before it becomes a critical issue that affects the economic growth of our city.

*"All the research tells us that attraction and retention of skilled workers will be the greatest challenge facing employers in the next 5 to 15 years," says John Kime, LEDC President and CEO. "Our goal is to positively and proactively influence the development of the London workforce in the most effective way."*

**Statistics: London Census Metropolitan Area, 2005:**

Population 15 yrs & over:	373,800	
Labour Force:	260,400	Participation Rate: 69.7%
Full Time	197,700	Employment Rate: 65.0%
Part Time	45,400	
Manufacturing	38,200	
Unemployed	17,300	Unemployment Rate: 6.6%



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