

A long-exposure photograph of a highway at night, showing vibrant light trails in yellow, orange, and red. The trails curve through the frame, creating a sense of motion and energy. The background is dark, making the light trails stand out prominently.

DUAL CAREER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Designed & Supported by.
**The Spousal Employment
Working Group**

A project of Kingston's Workforce
Development & In-migration Strategy

November 2018



Executive Summary

The Dual Career Support Program is an unparalleled, made-in-Kingston solution that provides tailored services to support the integration of newly relocated partners into the local community and broader workforce. The program was designed with the following objectives in mind:

- ❖ Establish partner needs early in the recruitment process;
- ❖ Support newly relocated partners in obtaining meaningful employment;
- ❖ Tap into the 'invisible' job market through connections to opportunities with other participating employers; and
- ❖ Ensure connections to post-secondary institutions are in place for partners wishing to pursue or advance their academic education.

Accompanying spouses and partners will receive comprehensive assistance from a Dual Career Support Coordinator upon referral by a participating employer, helping to establish a personalized career action plan based on their specific career goals and supporting their integration into the local community. Support from the Dual Career Support Coordinator will be provided on a confidential basis, and can be accessed at any point along the recruitment or onboarding journey within 6 months of the relocation. Eligibility extends to partners of candidates at any level, from early career professionals, to senior level or C-suite executives.

Relocation is often a family affair. Professionals make career decisions based not only on their own job offer, but also on partner work availability. Prospective candidates, new hires and relocated employees expect a fluid professional and lifestyle transition for them and their families. Yet most employers do not have the resources or community connections within their onboarding and HR complement to provide support to new hires and their partners as they seek to become established and integrated in their new community. Relocating partners face significant upheaval, including financial challenges as well as emotional challenges as they leave family, friends and their former life behind, and as they face unknown factors about an unfamiliar place they must now call home.

Attraction and retention of talent in Kingston are at the forefront of this initiative. Supporting the career and lifestyle needs of partners is an important piece of an ever more challenging recruitment puzzle. When a new member of your team and their family become involved and feel at home in their community, they are far more likely to remain energized, engaged, and committed to your organization.

Background

Effectively supporting the career development and community integration of relocating partners is a significant challenge faced by employers across Kingston. Moving towards the community's vision of Kingston employers working together as 'one', the endorsement of the Workforce Development & In-migration Strategy by Kingston City Council served as the first collaborative call to action. This marked the conclusion of a 15-month effort to design a comprehensive workforce development strategy for the Kingston community, involving more than 150 participants representing a cross-section of employers, employment services and job seekers. In late 2017, the Strategy transitioned into its implementation phase, with the overarching goal of attracting, developing and retaining a productive workforce.

The City of Kingston has since facilitated the process of bringing community leaders together to identify challenges and opportunities, and translate strategy into action through the establishment of a central Strategy Implementation Office (SIO). Under the direction of a community-based steering team and driven by the City's SIO, seven working groups have focused their efforts on developing and executing initiatives in key areas of workforce development and talent attraction, including strategic human resource approaches, inclusive workplace practices, labour market data analytics, employment branding, tapping into potential streams of future talent, supporting dual careers (spousal employment), and establishing pathways for launching and/or advancing careers. As a result of the dedication of 70+ community leaders representing 31 organizations and institutions from across the city, the seven active working groups have held a combined 35 action-oriented meetings over the past ten months.

The Spousal Employment Working Group, comprised of key HR leaders from large employers across Kingston, was tasked with developing tailored resources to support spouses and partners of incoming new employees on their journey to productive members of the Kingston community. As a short-term solution, the working group has established a network of key HR leaders and employment services to support the recruitment and establishment of dual careers, breaking down the silos that previously existed.

As part of a more sustainable and comprehensive effort, the group has endorsed the concept of a dedicated dual career support service, aimed at providing tailored services to support the integration of newly relocated partners into the local community and broader workforce.

Needs Analysis

It often takes two. More and more Canadian families with children are relying on dual incomes as an increasing number of women opt to join the workforce. The number of Canadian families with two employed parents has almost doubled in the last 40 years—from 1.0 million to 1.9 million families, from 1976 to 2015.

Employers must accept that relocation is a family affair. Professionals make career decisions based on whether work is available for their partner. Kingston employers have emphasized the need for a holistic family-based recruitment and onboarding approach in order to attract and retain top-talent. As heard repeatedly throughout the initial strategy consultations, the perceived lack of job prospects for relocating partners serves as one of the largest roadblocks to recruiting and retaining highly skilled or specialized candidates to Kingston.

Prospective candidates, new hires and relocated employees expect a fluid professional and lifestyle transition for themselves and their families. Despite these expectations, most employers do not have the resources or community connections within their onboarding and HR complement to provide support to new hires and their partners as they seek to become established and integrated in their new community. Relocating partners face significant upheaval, including financial challenges as well as emotional challenges as they leave family, friends and their former life behind, and as they face unknown factors about an unfamiliar place they must now call home. The needs of relocating partners are often lost among other priorities within the recruitment and onboarding processes. As a result, partners regularly find themselves underemployed, 'stranded' without work, or stalled in their career.

Dual Career Support

The Dual Career Support Program is an innovative, made-in-Kingston solution that provides tailored services to support the integration of newly relocated partners into the local community and broader workforce.

Dedicated Dual Career Support Coordinators are assigned to each relocating partner upon referral by a participating employer at any point during the recruitment or onboarding process to provide confidential and personalized support. Through an individual assessment and needs analysis, the Support Coordinator will gain a thorough understanding of the needs of their client, and connect them to the resources or opportunities that best fit those needs.

Following an in-depth consultation, partners will gain access to comprehensive support through:

- ❖ career guidance and professional support in navigating the regional job market;
- ❖ access to the 'invisible' job market through connections to opportunities with other participating employers and a working inventory of short-term contract jobs to help partners jumpstart their entry into the workforce;
- ❖ strategic networking opportunities with top companies, higher education institutions and organizations in the region [80% of jobs are obtained through networks];
- ❖ comprehensive resume and cover letter reviews, and assistance with online networking resources (i.e., LinkedIn);
- ❖ support in developing effective interview skills and techniques;
- ❖ access to remote work space locations and opportunities;
- ❖ social networking opportunities facilitated through access to a dedicated "Meet Up" group (app) for recently relocated partners;
- ❖ introductions to potential volunteer opportunities;
- ❖ connections to post-secondary institutions for those wishing to pursue or advance their academic education;
- ❖ connections to resources for immigration/visa issues; and
- ❖ opportunities for training and re-training.

Establishing spousal needs early in the recruitment process is the key to successful integration. Partner considerations can range broadly from children's resources, medical conditions, and elder care challenges, to general interests and hobbies. Support Coordinators are able to ask and answer the questions that human resource staff cannot. They focus on establishing both social and professional networks, and providing ongoing resources for a smooth transition into the Kingston community.

Pre-hire Services

Connecting to a Dual Career Coordinator during the recruitment stage can help to address critical decision factors. The Support Coordinator can answer questions confidentially, discuss concerns, and listen to needs related to family, lifestyle, and career that come naturally with a relocation or reassignment. The service aims to provide a unique hands-on approach that empowers the partners of potential candidates to make the best decision for their career and family. A pre-hire consult allows them to become better informed of their options by proactively providing resources and an additional perspective. It also often serves as a pre-cursor and introduction to the full slate of partner services available. During the decision-making period, Support Coordinators are also able to dispel misinformation about life in Kingston at an early stage, and ensure there is continuity of support should the partner accept their job offer.

Strategic Interviews

Together, the Support Coordinator and accompanying partner will create a customized strategy to actively identify job opportunities for meaningful employment. Part of the process includes strategic interviews with local hiring managers within their industry, helping to foster connections and networks they otherwise might not have access to. This 30-minute strategic interview is *not* a job interview – it's designed to provide access to job search elements such as navigating potential job openings, possible referrals to colleagues, and invaluable professional networking. These interviews are a powerful tool in helping partners to establish their professional identity in Kingston.

Eligibility

Eligible participants include the relocating partner of a candidate who has been offered a position, recently accepted a new position but has yet to relocate, or has recently been on-boarded as a new hire at your company or institution.

Eligibility extends to partners of candidates at any level, from early career professionals, to senior level or C-suite executives.

Partners must be willing to conduct an active job search, using the Dual Career Program as one source of information.

Logistics

The support coordinator will be housed at the KEYS main office (182 Sydenham Street), but will meet with individuals at their convenience anywhere in the City. During the pre-hire period, the coordinator can be accessed in a virtual space. In fact this early connection will be encouraged so that initial planning can begin prior to the arrival of the potential hire.

Value Proposition for Employers

The most important asset of any organization is its people. When employers invest in the professional and personal development of new, recent, or relocated hires and their families, the returns are multifaceted and enduring. Failure to provide sufficient partner resources immediately increases the risk of flight, and only increases as frustrations build and time without support goes on.

Turnover costs employers – big time. The expenses associated with additional recruitment and operation vacancies far out-class those associated providing holistic and proactive support. Time, resources, hiring costs, salary - the costs can be upwards of three times their wage. There are a number of factors to be included in the “real cost” of turnover:

- ❖ Industry benchmarks indicate that recruiters typically charge ~\$4,000 per full time hire, or 15-25% of the first year’s annual salary ($\$40,000 \times 0.15 = \$6,000$);
- ❖ Time-costs related to hiring a new person (interviewing, screening, etc.);
- ❖ Cost of onboarding a new person (training, management time) - over 2-3 years, employers are often investing 10-20% of an employee's salary or more in training;
- ❖ Lost productivity as a result of a new hire taking 1-2 years to reach the productivity of an existing person;
- ❖ Impact on workplace culture: Lost engagement as a result of other employees seeing high turnover and disengaging/losing productivity as a result;
- ❖ Customer service and errors: in other words, new employees take longer and are often less adept at solving problems (in healthcare, for instance, this may result in much higher error rates, illness, and other very expensive costs (which are not seen by HR)).

Replacement costs can vary greatly depending on a number of factors, but as a simple rule of thumb:

- ❖ Entry-level employees – between 30% and 50% of their annual salary to replace.
- ❖ Mid-level employees – upwards of 150% of their annual salary to replace.
- ❖ High-level or highly specialized employees – approximately 400% of their annual salary.

Attraction and retention of talent in Kingston are at the forefront of this initiative. Supporting the career and lifestyle needs of partners is an important piece of an ever more challenging recruitment puzzle. When a new member of your team and their family become involved and feel at home in the community, they’re far more likely to remain energized, engaged, and committed to your organization.

It's important to note that participating employers will also have an unprecedented opportunity to leverage access to a pool of top talent, rich in diversity, with a predetermined commitment to stay and work in the Kingston community. In bringing regional, cross-industry employers together, the program is able to leverage resources, make connections, and create networking opportunities that don't currently exist in the Kingston area.

By becoming a partner employer, you're sending a clear message to prospective candidates: you're committed to providing an unmatched level of support in the transition of new candidates and their partners, with dedicated, exclusive access to tailored resources.

Cost Structure

- ❖ Two year subscription, valued at \$20,000;
- ❖ Service exclusively offered to 10 participating employers;
- ❖ Limit of 20 referred clients per employer over the period of the contract

Measures of Success

Evaluations of the service provided to participants will be conducted at regular quarterly intervals, both formally and informally. The program is centered on providing an exemplary client experience, ensuring participants' expectations are continually exceeded. Results will be measured in accordance with the participants' advancement toward obtaining a job in their field of work and social integration into the community. Quarterly check-ins with participating employers will be conducted to ensure the program continues to provide significant value and return.

The success of any job search depends on many factors, include timing, the fit between a candidate's credentials and employer needs, and the flexibility of the candidate with respect to salary level, responsibility, and willingness to commute. Career searches are most successful when the partner takes initiative. Partners are urged to conduct an active job search using the Dual Career Program as one source of information. The partner may also benefit from seeing his or her first job in the area as a transitional career step.

Endorsements

[will list the members of the Spousal Employment Working Group upon their review and endorsement]