



A resource for skilled immigrants.
An opportunity for America.

There are more than 65 million displaced people in the world today, the highest number on record. As a result of this global crisis, refugees have had their lives and careers interrupted. They have left so much behind—but they have brought their **education, skills, experience** and **talent** to the U.S.

You have responded to the national Call to Action to address the refugee challenge, and to lead in opening opportunities to this vibrant talent pool. Upwardly Global provides the following guide to assist your staff in assessing talent and creating a welcoming environment for new hires. Upwardly Global can also provide additional tactical assistance as you incorporate refugees into your workforce.



Recruiting

Make your online job application more international:

Application drop-down menus have an option for foreign degrees and former job locations outside of the U.S.

Tap into sources of non-traditional talent such as your local refugee resettlement agencies and **Upwardly Global**.

Recruiting depends on networking. Encourage your employees to volunteer with organizations like **Upwardly Global** where they will meet refugees with professional backgrounds.

Educate your front-line recruiting team! Refugees have full work authorization and do not require VISA sponsorship.



Screening

Reconsider your standard “red flags” on a resume:

While a gap on a resume is often considered a negative, a refugee’s career has experienced an unavoidable interruption.

During the interview, briefly familiarize the candidate with U.S. culture and your company’s hiring process.

Interviewers may need to repeat or rephrase a question, especially during a phone screen when it’s harder for the candidate to read body language.

Embrace the value that a low-skilled job—what we call a “survival job”—can bring to a refugee candidate’s skill set and acclimation to U.S. culture. A newly arrived refugee will often start working well below their skill level in order to meet basic life needs for their family.

Redefine “overqualified.” A healthcare or legal professional will not immediately be licensed to practice in the U.S.

“In the U.S. we are vocal about our strengths and accomplishments, and I want you to be comfortable telling me about your strengths and achievements.”



Hiring

Consider implementing the “Rooney Rule” — for every candidate slate, you include at least one minority. That can be a refugee.

Contact references who are abroad by e-mail or through LinkedIn.

Educate your HR and hiring managers on refugee immigration paperwork. For instance an I-94 is the work authorization document a refugee receives prior to their green card.

Sometimes job requirements arbitrarily set immigration status requirements that are not necessary for the job or company.

If a position asks for citizenship status, find out if permanent residency is actually sufficient.

Be aware that requiring citizenship is an EEO violation if the position does not require it for legal purposes.

Involve immigrant **employees** that your company has hired in the past when screening, recruiting, and hiring refugee and immigrant talent.

Refugees and immigrants may speak near-perfect English, or they may have a learning curve. They will learn on the job!



45% of refugees are college educated.
Migration Policy Institute



Inclusion

Create on-the-job **training** including internships or apprenticeships for refugee candidates. Give them an opportunity to perfect their English, learn U.S. business culture, and acclimate to their new role in a supportive short-term position. You'll have the option to hire them, and you will also have provided that valuable first U.S. job for their resume.

Assign a **mentor** for refugees joining your organization.

It's tough to be new at any job, imagine tackling a new country, language and professional culture as well!

If there is a commitment to hiring refugees specifically, **consider a budget set-aside** for the initiative as an addition to HR and diversity budgets. Assign accountability to a senior level person with the clout to make it happen.

Engage new employees by asking to hear their stories—maybe you'll be inspired to share your own family's history.

Establish **employee resource groups** for New Americans (people who have been in the U.S. for 5 years or less).

Upwardly Global

is an award-winning national non-profit organization that works to eliminate employment barriers for skilled immigrants and refugees.

We have a proven track record of integrating immigrant professionals into the workforce and assisting employers with leveraging this global talent pool.

To learn more about partnering with us, contact Rebecca Tancredi, Vice President of Programs, at rebecca@upwardlyglobal.org.

www.upwardlyglobal.com