palette
skills

Upskilling
Canada:

How to unlock our highly skilled workforce to build
a more inclusive economy.

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About Us

Palette Skills is a national nonprofit whose purpose is to help Canada's most innovative companies access untapped talent by creating a rapid upskilling system that connects new talent pipelines to high-demand roles.

Palette Skills is a leader in developing industry-led upskilling programs which drive a more globally competitive and inclusive economy. Powered by a consortium of national business associations, leading academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations, Palette Skills works to catalyze a network of partners to adopt new best practices in industry-led upskilling approaches. Incorporated in 2017, Palette Skills is hosted at the University of Toronto and funded in part by the Government of Canada.

Executive Summary

The race for talent is on, and it is global. Tightening demographics, increased demand and seemingly limitless mobility through virtual work are increasing the competition in an already highly competitive battle to attract skilled workers. In Canada, we have an advantage in this race for talent given our already highly skilled workforce, our robust and accessible education systems, and our open and effective immigration system. We need to maintain this advantage by continuing to invest in these strengths.

However, Canada has held this advantage for some time, and yet the challenges emanating from employers around talent continue to persist. It is clear that having a skilled workforce alone is not enough to solve the talent crunch and succeed in the future economy - there also need to be ways to connect these workers to jobs, ensuring we are fully utilizing the skilled workforce we have. While Canada has undoubtedly succeeded in the first part of the equation, when it comes to connecting talent to the market, we have consistently struggled. For too long, policymakers have made the assumption that with the right skills, workers will be hired for high demand jobs. But the evidence shows that simply isn't true.

Take, for example, mid-career workers. Canadians over 45 made up 40-50% of long-term unemployment from 2015-2020. Despite this, managers who hire older workers are happy with their performance, and find older workers often perform better than their younger counterparts. In fact, managers reported that 87% of their employees aged 45 or older were good, if not better, than younger cohorts.[1][2] Given that so many companies are looking for workers with maturity, the ability to work in teams, and experience in making difficult decisions, it's not surprising that these workers are valued by their employers. The contrast, however, between unemployment levels and job performance reveals systemic biases in hiring for this demographic that have no basis in data or reality.

It's clear this problem is complex and is deeper than just a skills gap - it's about human behaviour and how decisions are made. It's as much about understanding risk, trust and confidence in the hiring process as it is about developing new digital or soft skills.

At Palette, we have been studying this challenge for the past five years, testing new approaches to bringing talent to the market that employers trust, and gaining insights on how to design upskilling programs that result in high demand jobs in fast growing sectors. Our model for designing industry-led upskilling programs that transition workers from declining or precarious roles into high growth industries consistently generates a close to 90% job placement rate for workers, compared to traditional training programs which generally range between 50-75%. [3]

The purpose of this paper is to share Palette Skills' perspectives on the complex issue of talent for the future economy, how we have tested and developed new approaches in job-focused program design, and what we have learned over the years in doing this work. Part of our mission as an organization is to develop new practical approaches to deploying solutions that better connect employers and job seekers and to share those insights across the skills ecosystem.

In this paper we lay out our tactics around program design specific to increasing job placement, as well as the underlying theory of change guiding our approach. We believe to succeed in the global race for talent, we must look beyond the skills gap, examine the underlying assumptions and biases being made about workers, and build new pathways to unlock untapped talent, turning job seekers into workers for the employers who need them.

Introduction

Talent will fuel the future, but only if you can find it. In Canada, innovative companies struggle to grow and transform their businesses because they can't find the talent they need. Despite significant investments in workforce development and skills training over the years, the talent challenge described by employers has continued unabated. The reality is Canada has one of the most highly skilled and educated workforces in the world. Across the OECD, Canada ranks second from the top in the percentage of people with a tertiary (post-secondary) degree.

Our country has an abundance of skilled workers - the key resource necessary to build a thriving knowledge economy.[4] This begs the question, how can we have one of the most highly skilled workforces in the world and still lack skilled workers? Until now, we have been operating in a paradigm of talent scarcity, but what if that simply isn't true? What if the real problem rests with how the market identifies and assesses talent?

Henry Ford famously said, "if I had asked my customers what they wanted, they would have said 'a faster horse'." Customers are great at describing the problems they experience, but when it comes to solutions, their perspective is limited to what they know. In the case of finding skilled talent, employers know they face a challenge filling job vacancies quickly with qualified workers. Assuming the root of that challenge is a lack of skilled talent overlooks our existing highly skilled workforce. To avoid building a 'faster horse' solution, we need to think differently about this problem.

This paper shares what we've learned about how employers make hiring decisions and how we have used that information to build new and effective pathways for individuals to transition to high-demand careers and fully leverage their skills.

"If I had asked my customers what they wanted, they would have said a faster horse." - Henry Ford

Beginning with a critical analysis of how the problem of skills and talent is framed, this paper will highlight the principles underpinning Palette Skills' upskilling model, and provide a perspective on the future of labour mobility in Canada.

We envision a new national system of upskilling and job transition support. We believe that if Canada is to rise to its full potential, we need to build an approach that engages a multitude of partners nationwide, aligning their work to focus on the goal of enabling individuals and employers to thrive in the new economy.

Meet Brandon.
Brandon dropped out of college to support his family and spent the next 10 years bartending, while thinking about what to do with his future. His co-workers and friends told him that he'd be great at sales, but with no background, education or network in sales, he had no idea where to start. He joined Palette's SalesCamp program in 2019 and was the first person hired out of the program. Brandon landed a full-time business development role at an e-commerce company in Toronto. Six months after starting, his employer reported they "could not be happier" with his performance. Three years later, he is still there.

The current landscape
Constant economic disruption

Everyone needs to feel there is a place for them in the future economy.

The Canadian economy was already undergoing radical changes due to the disruptive forces of automation and climate change when the world shut down as a result of COVID-19. While some sectors experienced a net gain as the result of the pandemic, sectors such as tourism, accommodation, hospitality, and retail sectors were adversely affected, with low-wage workers, women, and racialized workers being hit the hardest. Beyond the impact to specific groups of workers, the pandemic revealed Canada's heavy reliance on global trade, resource exports, and manufacturing. All of these areas experienced significant disruption, as supply chains around the world were thrown into chaos.

Over two years into the pandemic, we are getting a better picture of how these early challenges are cementing themselves into Canada's economy. First, remote work is here to stay—not just in Canada, but globally. This means that Canadian workers have more employment opportunities, and employers have a wider talent pool they can hire from. At the same time, it also means that employers will be competing for talent not just among other Canadian companies, but with international companies too. Second, Canadians are leaving low-wage, precarious jobs in search of more stable careers. And third, investments in automating technologies in domestic firms are accelerating, which is only enhancing the shift in demand for highly skilled workers.

The ability of companies to emerge from these transformations successfully will hinge on whether they can attract the workers they need, when they need them. On a broader level, the resiliency of Canadian society to maintain social cohesion will hinge on whether ordinary Canadians can benefit from economic gains brought by the changing economy. Disruption in the economy often produces innovation and growth, but it also results in chaos and instability in people's lives, whether this is experienced as job loss, or through increasing costs of living. This was evident in the fallout of the Great Recession, where those attempting to enter or re-enter the labour market faced lower wages, slower career progression, and slower wage growth. Additionally, this period saw an increased risk of full time work replaced with precarious work, and increases in mental health challenges as a result of financial insecurity.[6][7][8] Canadians will be able to tolerate and embrace this looming disruption only if they can maintain a sense of economic and social stability throughout this period of transition.

Everyone needs to feel there is a place for them in the future economy. But without transition pathways to new employment, more and more people will find themselves stuck in declining industries with fewer and fewer options.

To make certain that Canada remains resilient and adaptable, and that Canadian workers can benefit from change and innovation, governments and industry must focus on building accessible and inclusive opportunities for all.

Policymakers and business have to recognize that equity and inclusion, and economic competitiveness are not two ends of a spectrum which must be balanced against one another. This kind of thinking fails to see that instead, equity and competitiveness are the key elements of a continuous loop, where the strength of one feeds into the development of the other. Building solutions based on this kind of thinking is a challenge many countries are currently trying to solve. It is a challenge that Canada is already well positioned to lead.

In 2019, Palette launched its first upskilling program - SalesCamp - as an attempt to move beyond talking about what should be done to support cross-sector worker transitions, and to begin proving what can be done. Since then, we have launched two additional programs - Advanced Cybersecurity and Digital Agriculture.

Mid-career workers left behind

Canadians over 45 made up 40-50% of long-term unemployment from 2015-2020. And yet, managers reported that 87% of their employees aged 45 or older were good, if not better, than younger cohorts. For those mid-career workers who have switched jobs, 74% felt training was key to helping them land a job.[13]

An inequitable landscape

The Canadian economy today is neither inclusive, nor equitable. While it is true that this has been the case for a long time, these tendencies were exacerbated by the pandemic and are persisting as Canada's economy recovers. In recent months, unemployment rates have reached record lows, fully recovering to pre-pandemic levels.[9] However, these gains are not being felt equally among all population groups. In particular, racialized Canadians, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, women, and mid-career workers are being left out of this recovery. While individuals from these and other groups are looking for work, they are experiencing barriers to finding employment. The result is chronically higher unemployment rates among Canadians who most need to get ahead.[10] [11]

The dynamics of Canada's inequitable recovery are complex, and impact different groups in particular ways. For example, while the unemployment rate among men and women is the same at 4.2%, there is a significant gap in participation rates between genders, indicating that women are dropping out of the labour force.[12]

Meanwhile, Canada's largest population demographic are people aged 45 and over. As the economy recovers, we know that workers from this group are being left out of the tightening labour market as a result of employer biases. Research shows that employers assume that older workers are less productive, don't have the right skills, or may not be willing to learn new skills. As a result, employers overlook older workers not just for job opportunities, but for promotions and training as well.[13] [14] [15]

An international study of employment of workers over 45 found this problem in other jurisdictions as well, but in Canada, workers over 45 accounted for around 45-50% of long-term unemployment between 2015 and 2020.[16] Despite this, managers who hire older workers are happy with their performance, and find older workers often perform better than their younger counterparts.[17] This contrast between unemployment levels and job performance reveals systemic employer biases that have no basis in data, and that go against what we know to be true.

Employer biases extend beyond who a person is when they present themselves at a job interview, and include a person's employment history. Individuals who attempt to transition into jobs in new sectors struggle to have their past experiences and skills recognized. When hiring, employers tend to look for the specific skills required in the role, but generally assume these skills can only be learned inside a particular sector or industry. This creates a barrier for anyone with transferable skills from a different industry who is seeking to transition into a new career. Worse still, these and other assumptions can be hard-wired into hiring processes when they are programmed into Applicant Tracking Systems that automatically reject candidates lacking what is deemed to be sector-relevant work experience.[18]

These inequities have not changed significantly in decades, despite substantial investments in skills development, employment support, and newcomer settlement services.

That they continue to persist despite a tightening labour market points to broader structural and systemic issues giving rise to these and other negative hiring behaviours on the part of employers. The impact of these biases is not only harming job seekers, but employers themselves, and the Canadian economy more broadly. Over one third (36.9%) of all businesses surveyed cited the recruitment of skilled employees as their top obstacle over the next three months.[19] This challenge presents a significant cost to individual businesses—one that adds up to a major drag on Canada's GDP, productivity, and competitiveness. After all, we know that when companies don't have the talent they need, they are more likely to turn down business or delay fulfillment of orders.[20][21]

A survey by the BDC found that firms struggling to fill roles are 65% more likely to to be low-growth businesses.[22] Another study by the CFIB found that over half of respondents stated that a shortage of skilled labour limits their ability to increase sales or production.[23] The aggregate impact of employers not having access to the talent they need is huge. In 2015 the unrealized value of job vacancies in the Canadian economy was $15 billion, and by 2020 this rose to $25 billion.[24]

A new way of thinking

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The problem of underutilization

For well over a decade, researchers and policymakers have analyzed the challenges of mismatched supply and demand for talent. Framing this problem as a skills gap—whether they be technical or professional skills—has resulted in a number of major policy responses, including adapting university and college curricula, expanding co-op and experiential learning, and developing new continuing education offerings. Beyond these domestic approaches, the federal government has developed new programs, such as the Global Skills Strategy, to attract skilled newcomers to fill Canada's talent gaps.

A highly skilled workforce is only a market advantage if you know how to use it. Ensuring Canadian companies fully utilize this workforce requires recognizing both the existing skills an individual has and their potential for applying those skills in new and different ways. Benefiting from a skilled workforce in a rapidly changing economy requires a dynamic mindset that appreciates the boundless capacity people have to learn and adapt to new environments and their desire to grow when properly supported.

The cost of an underutilized workforce is a double-sided drag on productivity, where on the one hand, companies aren't tapping into the skills they need to grow their businesses, and on the other, Canadians aren't unlocking their full economic and human potential.

Managing risk
in the hiring process

To better understand this apparent market failure to connect worker supply with employer demand, we focused on understanding how employers make hiring decisions. We conducted dozens of interviews with fast growing and innovation-focused companies, and quickly learned that for many of them, hiring is experienced as a risk management process. The cost and consequence of bad hires, combined with limited internal capacity to build new processes, means that employers tend to rely on traditional methods of recruitment and evaluation that favour sector experience and referrals.

Once we understand the operating environment of smaller, innovation-based companies as minimizing risk, we can get a better picture of the talent challenge. In our surveys and interviews, we tried to discover how employers approach the challenge of talent acquisition, and the metrics they use to determine success. The first question we asked was: "what makes you decide to hire someone?" We spoke with dozens of companies, and we learned that across all industries, smaller and fast-growing companies were qualifying talent against the same general standards:

- Are they able to hit the ground running in a company of my size, in my sector, and with my growth rate?

- Do they have a growth mindset, and are they eager to adapt and learn as we grow?

Focusing on SMEs

Canada's economic growth is powered by small and medium sized businesses.

SMEs make up 99.8% of businesses in Canada and between 2014 and 2019 accounted for 61.2% of net new job growth.

Any solution to the talent challenge must work first and foremost for SMEs, who have less recruitment capacity and a lower risk tolerance for poor hires than larger corporate players.[25]

- Do they have the foundational competencies and skills to do the job successfully?

We quickly realized that although almost every company had similar standards, very few had an effective or systematic process for determining whether candidates actually had the traits employers said they were looking for. As a result, employers were relying on basic indicators such as sector-relevant work experience, recent credentials, or trusted referrals.

In effect, these are the proxy indicators that employers unconsciously use to measure attributes like a growth mindset, or the ability to hit the ground running, in addition to other skills.

The problem is that these indicators are flawed. For example, possessing a credential does not mean that candidates have the practical experience employers are looking for.[26] Similarly, employees hired on the basis of a referral don't always outperform non-referrals.[27] Finally, using industry experience as an indicator in emerging industries leads to a smaller pool of candidates, because fewer people have worked in that sector. The over-reliance on these and other traditional indicators is creating an inflated sense of scarcity in the talent market, thereby increasing the challenges and costs employers face in securing talent. Many companies intuitively know this, and are open to different approaches and tools, but few have the time, capacity, or risk tolerance to develop better ways of acquiring talent.

Our findings indicate that the primary challenge for both workers and industry when it comes to job placement is a structural bias against hiring non-traditional workers, and employer's assumptions that hiring such workers exposes them to risk. This bias contributes to chronic inefficiency and underutilization of talent within the labour market, and explains why many employers continue to believe there is a skills gap or a talent shortage.

The challenge, then, is not simply about how to build a skilled workforce, but instead how to create the systems and structures necessary to rapidly redeploy talent across sectors as the supply and demand for talent shift. Solving this issue is imperative for the growth of an inclusive and productive Canadian economy, and for workers in other sectors facing disruption from automation, recession, or the global pandemic.

An issue of talent acquisition

To build a solution to the problem of talent acquisition, it made sense to us to adopt the best practices in product design. This meant putting ourselves in the shoes of employers to understand how they experienced the problem. From the perspective of an individual employer, the challenge isn't so much a skills gap as it is an issue of talent acquisition. Employers are focused on finding and acquiring the skilled workers they need, when they need them.
As a result, any solution to the challenge of an inequitable or exclusionary labour market must first and foremost solve this basic business problem for employers.

Viewing the problem through the lens of talent acquisition, we see two key requirements necessary for an effective solution:

- the ability for hiring companies to connect to skilled talent when they need it, and;
- the ability to qualify that potential candidates can do the job successfully and quickly.

By framing the talent challenge as one of talent acquisition, it is clear that effective solutions must provide a strong quality assurance system to vet and validate job candidates, and this has to happen outside of traditional and proxy indicators such as sector-related work experience. It's also clear that any solution must have a robust go-to-market strategy that brings job candidates to the employers who are

> "It actually makes it easier, from an employer partner perspective, to know that there's been a lot of filtering coming through already, and because of that relationship, it actually saves time, therefore money, on the employer side… I've definitely interviewed people [from SalesCamp] that I wouldn't have interviewed on application alone."
>
> **-SalesCamp Employer Partner**

looking for them. With this provisional picture of what a solution looks like, short-cycle upskilling becomes the perfect vehicle for developing a pipeline of talent that employers can connect with, particularly because it includes a quality assurance process by which employers can qualify and de-risk talent.

On a broader level, this kind of solution increases cross-sectoral labour mobility, and optimizes the productive value of Canada's abundant human resources while at the same time providing a way for job-seekers to overcome traditional barriers when seeking new career pathways.

How upskilling
is different

As a result of both our research and our practice, Palette Skills has developed a model of leveraging Canadian skills potential that we call upskilling. The model works because we reframed the issue from one of skills to one of jobs. As a solution, upskilling is effective because it is based on a holistic design approach that not only considers the skills required for a job, but also, how job seekers navigate the job search process and the biases and misperceptions they face along the way.

This is where it is important to differentiate between "upskilling" and "training". The primary difference lies in the outcomes they seek to achieve. Training is about teaching someone new skills to help them gain new knowledge. A trainee may leverage those new skills to move into a new job, but from the perspective of the training provider, the desired outcome is that the trainee has learned something new.

Upskilling is about helping move someone into a new job. While learning new skills is undoubtedly a core part of that process, so is gaining the professional acumen needed to succeed in a new industry, and successfully navigate the job search and interview process to land a new role.

To design an effective upskilling program, it is not enough to think only about the skills that need to be learned. Instead, it is critical that such a program takes into account the entire experience and thought processes an employer goes through to hire someone.

Once you understand that customer journey, the goal is to build an integrated program that addresses each of those challenges along the way, resulting in a viable and job ready candidate that an employer will feel confident about hiring.

Palette's model
for upskilling

Our model works so well because we start by understanding what standards an employer wants a successful candidate to meet, then reverse engineer a process to achive that.

With a fuller understanding of the nature of the skills problem, as well as of its root causes, Palette Skills has built out a successful upskilling solution that we've applied to several different career paths. Part of the reason our model works so well is because we design our programs with the general standards that job candidates need to meet foremost in mind. And as we've seen, another reason for the success of our programs is because they take a holistic approach to skills development, and prioritize job placement as the primary metric of success.
Key components of Palette Skills' upskilling framework include:

Demand-driven:
Program areas are selected based on demand from employers. A demand-driven strategy is essential to ensure jobs are available for participants once the program is completed.

Rapid delivery:
Programs should be delivered in the shortest time possible and launched as rapidly as possible. Palette's programs currently range from 1-8 weeks in length and have all been launched in under six months.

Employer-led:
Programs should be collaboratively designed and employer-led. This means that before program design begins, employer partners have been identified, and are guiding curriculum development to ensure a mix of technical and soft skill training.

Experiential and industry-integrated:
Industry needs to be embedded into delivery of the program itself, either through guest lectures, panel discussions, case studies, networking events, and other activities.

Potential-focused recruitment:
Admissions are designed to evaluate a person's potential to succeed in the field, and not their previous accomplishments. This ensures that programs are tapping into untapped potential labour markets, and not replicating existing barriers within the ecosystem.

Robust job placement support:
Integrated job placement support through a robust go-to-market strategy to ensure participants have the opportunities, support and motivation they need to successfully navigate the job market. This could include structured job readiness programming, individual or group coaching, additional employer networking opportunities, etc.

From theory to reality

Over the past three years, Palette has used this model to help over 500 individuals transition into new careers. Our programs succeed because they are based on an innovative theory of change. Palette believes that upskilling works because it builds employer trust in the process, at the same time as it works to enhance participant self-confidence. These are both key ingredients underpinning the success of all our upskilling programs, and need to be actively considered at every stage. We achieve these outcomes by engaging employers early in the design process so they will have confidence in the program. This participation, as light or as heavy as it may be, resonates with employers, and assures them that this is an industry-driven experience. On the other side of the ledger, we focus on building participant self-confidence in their abilities through learning by doing, personal reflection, and group activities. This lets our participants know that our programs are also designed for them in a holistic way. The sense of self and community these activities help foster keep participants focused and resilient in the career transition process.

> "In general, everyone assumes that transitioning your career is impossible and that you would be stuck looking for jobs for years and not find the right place. At SalesCamp, I was inspired by the diversity of students and their backgrounds. From teaching to driving to customer service, we had a huge amount of diversity in our team which inspired me to focus on my strengths just like everyone."
>
> **- SalesCamp Participant Cohort 11**

In 2019, Palette launched SalesCamp, a one week intensive bootcamp, co-designed with employers and targeting workers coming out of retail and hospitality sectors with strong sales skills, but no tech experience. Over the first week, participants learn the basics of B2B sales, interact with employers in panel discussions, and participate in interactive activities designed to showcase their skills and talents. The week culminates with a networking day that gives employers the opportunity to connect with participants, and learn more about what they have to offer. Following the intense one-week bootcamp, participants continue to receive job search support through one-on-one career coaching sessions, and additional workshops on topics such as navigating the hidden job market, salary negotiation, and how to leverage social media, including LinkedIn. SalesCamp makes hiring easier for employers. Our rigorous admissions process gives employers confidence that our participants are ready to hit the ground running, and have the right skills and capabilities.

The program design gives employers the chance to see talent in action, particularly through in-class activities and networking days. While job placement is our number one measure of success, we know that is not the only benefit of the program. Participants consistently reference the confidence they gain—both in themselves, and in their ability to communicate their value to employers—as well as the sense of community the program provides as a major program benefit.

With the proven success of SalesCamp, we decided to apply the model to another career path in the tech industry. In late 2020, and in partnership with the Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Science, Palette launched the 8-week Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Program, designed to transition individuals with underused quantitative analysis backgrounds into advanced threat analysis roles in cybersecurity fields. Similar to SalesCamp, the program builds in numerous opportunities for participants to connect with employers throughout its eight week duration, including panel presentations, risk presentations, and a final networking day.

In Spring 2022, Palette launched the Automation and Digital Agriculture Specialist program, in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan. This 8 week program covers a range of topics, including soil management, precision agriculture, agronomy, business management, big data, and job readiness. The program is delivered through a mix of lectures, employer site visits, and plenty of opportunities for participants to showcase their skills to employers and get hands-on experience, including participating in the 24 hour Ag Tech Start-Up at the Canada Farm Show, and workshops on drones and soil. The first cohort of the program is scheduled for completion in early Fall 2022.

Our experience testing, iterating and proving new models for cross-sector career transitions for untapped workers into high demand careers tells us that, with the right understanding of the problem and a well-designed model, it's possible to adapt our domestic workforce to address the talent needs of the future. Mobilizing new pathways for workers to leverage their transferable skills ensures they meet their full potential, addresses the talent challenge and crucially, results in a more fully utilized and productive workforce across Canada. This innovative model is repeatable, scalable, systematic, and embraced by both employers and job-seekers.

> "The [Digital Agriculture] program is helping me gain knowledge about Western Canadian agriculture as a newcomer and how precision agriculture applications are applied. I'm gaining hands-on experience with various platforms that will be necessary for the industry."
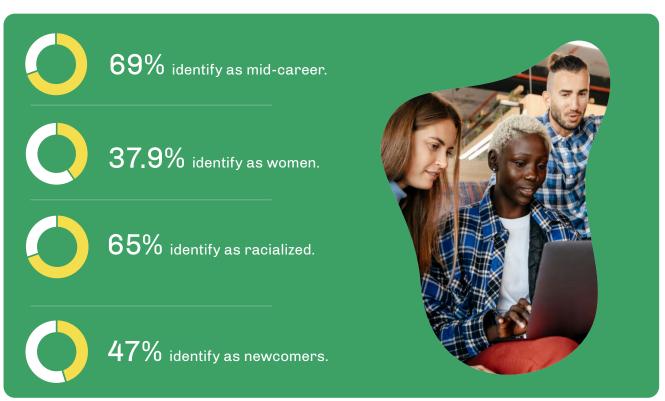>
> **- Digital Agriculture participant, cohort 1**

Employment outcomes:

88.6% of participants secure a job within 6 months.

39% receive a promotion within 18 months.

74.5% of hiring employers are SMEs.

196 employer partners engaged.

Participant facts:

69% identify as mid-career.

37.9% identify as women.

65% identify as racialized.

47% identify as newcomers.

A vision for
the future

The key for building a truly resilient society that can adapt and thrive in the uncertain future is one that finds a way to strike a balance between constant economic disruption and enduring social stability. At Palette, we envision a future where all people and businesses can reach their full potential. We believe that with the right support, people have a boundless capacity to grow.

This balance must allow for rapid, dramatic changes to the economy that at the same time, does not undermine individuals' confidence in their daily lives. Canadians need to know that whatever changes lie in store in the next century, they will not only experience a net benefit, but emerge stronger. Building systems that fully utilize the incredible potential of all Canadians, while ensuring they benefit from economic gains will be the cornerstone of this future, resilient society.

This future is not so far away. To help usher it in, Palette is taking the insights, models, and lessons we've learned over the past five years, and working with partners across the country to develop a new talent system that enables cross-sector career transitions through employer-led upskilling. We're not alone in testing new models - organizations across the country are taking on this challenge, and looking at how they too can be part of the solution.

Upskilling workers at the scale and speed the country requires demands an ecosystem-level approach that leverages existing post-secondary institutes, the employment and community services sector, industry associations, and other enabling partners to contribute to solving this challenge. As we scale this model, Palette will continue to drive innovation and continuous improvement in the system through experimentation, research and knowledge sharing.

We have established ourselves as a leader in this space by taking an action-oriented approach to proving what is possible, and converting our vision into reality. We have gone beyond conventional thinking about who can do a job with a proven model that is delivering results now.

We are working with organizations across Canada that understand the challenge, and are excited to find new and innovative ways to solve it. As we scale, our growth will be focused on supporting an entire ecosystem of upskilling programs across the country, delivered in partnership with organizations that share our vision. In doing so, we will help Canada establish itself as a global leader, and demonstrate to the world that it's possible to build an equitable, inclusive and prosperous future.

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