

# Supporting Young Immigrants in the Finnish labor market and working life

*Practical guideline for Job seekers and Employers*



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# To the reader

**This guide has been created to support both immigrant youth and employers in building better pathways to employment in Finland.** Applying for jobs and starting a career in a new country can be exciting but also challenging. Immigrant youth bring valuable skills, motivation, and fresh perspectives to workplaces, but they may also face obstacles such as language barriers, unfamiliar job application practices, or adapting to Finnish work culture. The purpose of this guide is to provide clear and practical instructions to make job searching and recruitment easier, fairer, and more successful for all parties involved.

**The content of this guide is developed through collaboration between the Vamos Career team and their clients via workshops and group coaching sessions.** Through discussions and shared experiences, we aimed to make the material as useful and applicable to everyday life as possible. One of the most important goals was to highlight the perspectives of those young people currently going through the employment process themselves, as their feedback and experiences are crucial for understanding the topic and helping future job seekers. By amplifying out these voices, we also seek to strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding between young job seekers and employers.



## **PART 1:**

# **Guidelines for Job Seekers**

**Searching for a job in Finland can  
feel difficult, but with good  
preparation, you can succeed.  
Every application you send is a  
new opportunity.**

**Be patient and keep moving  
forward..**



# Where to Look for Jobs?

- **Follow up the most frequently used websites:** Työmarkkinatori, Duunitori, Oikotie, LinkedIn etc.
- **Employment Services:** official support, job postings, and training.
- **Social media:** social media and community pages often share for example part-time or seasonal jobs.
- **Company websites:** many jobs are advertised only directly by the company.
- **Seasonal jobs:** apply early (summer jobs usually in January–March).
- **Volunteering or internships:** good ways to gain experience and make contacts.

*Use different channels at the same time. The more places you search, the better chance you have.*



# How to Write a Good Job Application?



- **Start with a short introduction:** *Who are you? Why do you want this job?*
- **Give examples of your skills:** not only “I am hardworking,” but *“I organized activities in a youth camp and learned teamwork”*.
- **Use short and clear sentences.**
- **Ask a friend, teacher, or coach to check your text.**
- **Mention any certificates you have:** hygiene pass, driving license, safety card, first aid card, etc.
- ***Always connect your skills to the job, show why you are the right person.***

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# Creating a Strong CV (cv = Curriculum Vitae)

- **Keep it short and effective:** usually one page, maximum two page.
- **Write:** contact details, education, work experience, language skills, other skills and certificates.
- **Add references:** former employer, teacher, or volunteer supervisor (always ask permission).
- **Add hobbies or volunteering** if they show responsibility or teamwork.
- **Use a simple layout with clear headings.**
- **Include a photo:** friendly, professional photo (optional but useful in Finland).
- **Adjust your CV for every job:** focus on experience that matches the role.
- **Supporting with a video CV:** short video introducing yourself (2-3 min max) can also work, especially in customer service jobs.

*Keep your CV updated. Every new skill or job experience is worth adding.*



# Keeping Track of Your Applications

- **Make a list or use a notebook/spreadsheet. Write:**
  - Company name, job title, date you applied, contact person, status (waiting, denied etc.)
- **Write down deadlines so you don't miss them.**
- **Following your progress helps you stay organized and motivated.**
- **Do not hesitate to apply to the same/similar position and work-place again.**

*Reviewing your list can show which type of jobs give more replies.  
This helps improve your strategy.*



# Preparing for Interviews

- Practice a short self-introduction in Finnish: name, background, why you applied.
- Learn something about the company before the interview.
- Prepare 1–2 questions to ask (shows motivation).
- Be polite, listen carefully, and arrive on time.
- If you don't understand a question, it's okay to ask: *“Could you please repeat?”*



***Practice makes you confident, the more you prepare, the calmer you will feel.***





# Understanding Finnish Work-culture

- **Respect and equality** are very important, everyone's role matters.
- **Punctuality:** always be on time for work and meetings.
- **Clear communication:** ask if something is not clear.
- **Initiative:** Finnish employers like when you show responsibility.
- **Conflicts:** talk openly with your supervisor if problems appear.

*Respect, honesty, and punctuality are the keys  
to trust in Finnish work-culture.*



# Where to Get Help if Needed?

- Ask your supervisor first about problems at work.
- Trade unions give advice about rights and working conditions.
- Local NGOs and organizations can give career help, language support, and advice.
- For legal or safety issues, contact legal aid services or, if serious, the police.

*Do not stay alone with problems. Asking for help is not a weakness.*



# Networking – Making Contacts

- **Use LinkedIn:** you can send short, polite connection requests.
- **Join** different immigrant associations or professional networking groups.
- **Visit workplaces** and ask politely if they take open applications.
- **Invite someone** for a short coffee meeting to learn about their work.
- **Take part** in local events, volunteering, or hobby groups.



*Many jobs in Finland are found through contacts  
and every new person you meet is an opportunity.*



## PART 2:

# Guidelines for Employers

Hiring young immigrants is an opportunity to grow your team and your company. With the right support, you can gain motivated employees, fresh ideas, and a stronger workplace culture.



# Making Recruitment Easier

- Write job ads in clear and simple Finnish. Add an English version if possible.
- Explain clearly which skills are required and which are only preferred.
- Reply to all applicants, even if they are not chosen. This builds trust.
- In interviews, first introduce the workplace and daily routines before asking questions.
- Use a few minutes of small talk at the start to help the applicant relax.
- Avoid very strict language demands if not absolutely necessary.
- Show interest in the applicant's potential and motivation, not only their past experience.

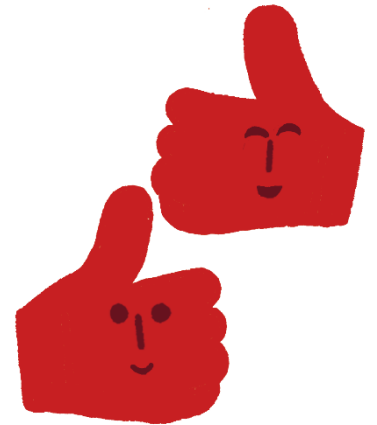
*Clear communication during recruitment makes the process fairer and encourages more applicants.*



# Helping new employees to feel welcome

- Provide instructions both verbally and in writing.
- Also, explain the “unwritten rules” (coffee breaks, holidays, traditions etc.).
- Pair the newcomer with a mentor or buddy for support.
- Ask for feedback on about how orientation went.
- Encourage colleagues to be friendly and open to questions.

*Feeling welcome in the first weeks often affects if the employee will stay long-term.*



# Supporting Language Learning

- Use simple Finnish at work. Repeat or explain if needed.
- Allow English when possible / necessary, but encourage Finnish step by step.
- If possible, offer access to language courses, especially work-related.
- Create short bilingual guides (Finnish–English word lists for tasks).
- Celebrate small progress, cheer when the employee tries speaking Finnish.
- Encourage colleagues to help by speaking clearly or ensure that employee understands slang.

*Every small word learned at work makes the employee more independent and confident.*



# Potential Benefits of Hiring Immigrant Employee

- Usually highly motivated candidates / workers / professionals.
- Fresh perspectives and creative problem-solving.
- Cultural diversity improves teamwork and understanding.
- You may reach new customers and markets, especially international ones.
- Builds a positive company image as an inclusive employer and fostering multicultural work-environment

*Diversity in the workplace is not only social responsibility, but also smart act.*

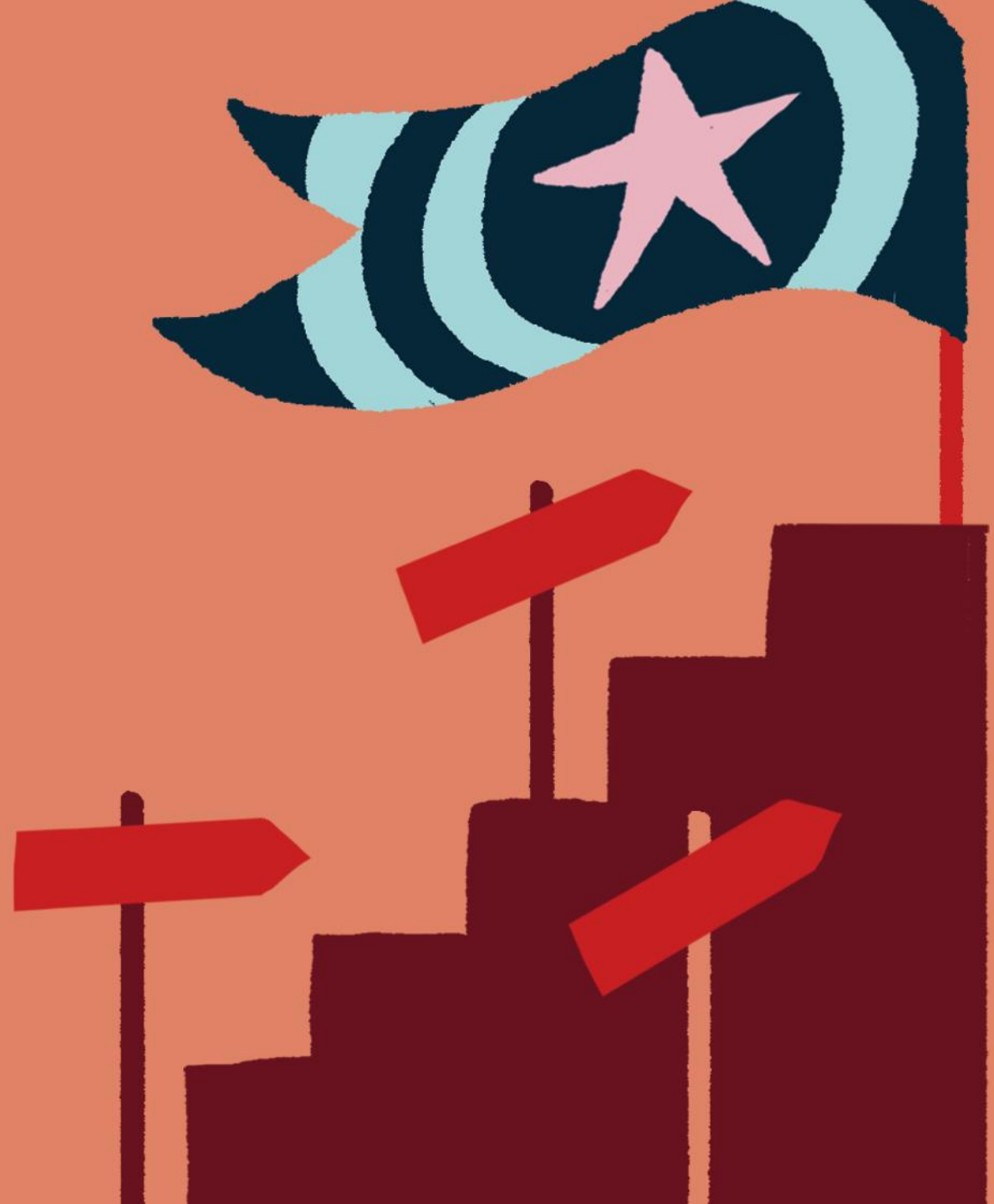




## PART 3:

# Guidelines for Both – Transition and Orientation

The first few months in a new job are very important. This is the time when trust, confidence, and teamwork are built. Both the employer and the employee share responsibility to make the smooth start and successful orientation.



# Early Challenges

- Learning new tasks, and systems can feel challenging.
- Meeting new colleagues and adapting to the culture may feel stressful.
- Misunderstandings can happen, especially because of language use.
- It takes time before one feels completely confident in a new job.

***Be patient. Orientation is a process, not a one-day thing.***



# How to Make Orientation Work Well?

- **Employers:** give information step by step, not all at once.
- **Employees:** take notes during training to remember details.
- **Encourage open questions:** There are no “stupid questions.”
- **Use visual aids:** pictures, videos, checklists...
- **Repeat important instructions:** make sure they are understood.

**The best orientation is simple, clear, and repeated until it feels natural.**



# Mentoring and Peer Support

- Pair the newcomer with a buddy or mentor. Potentially similar backgrounded employee would ease the process and give an actual support.
- Arrange short check-in meetings during the first weeks.
- Create chances for informal socializing, like coffee breaks or shared lunches.
- Provide peer support whenever possible.
- Encourage two-way learning: let newcomers also share their culture and ideas.

*A good mentor can make the workplace feel like home much faster.*



# Cultural Awareness

- **Employers:** explain that Finnish communication is usually direct but respectful.
- **Employees:** be honest if you don't understand. Asking is always okay. Communication culture in Finland might be different than homeland, do not take it personally or overthink.
- **Talk openly** about religious or cultural practices if person observes them and needs time for it.
- **Both sides should agree on mutual respect and reliability.**

*Respecting each other's background builds trust  
and avoids small misunderstandings*



# Long-Term Support

- **Employers:** offer training and growth opportunities.
- **Employees:** show initiative, ask for new tasks when ready.
- **Organize team-building activities that promotes multiculturalism.**
- **Provide regular feedback:** what is going well, what can be improved.
- **Keep communication open. Problems can be solved early.**

*Long-term success comes from continuous learning and open dialogue.*



# Shared Paperwork Checklist

To avoid confusion, both the employer and the employee should check these documents:

- Signed work contract
- Tax card
- Bank account details for salary
- Social security number (if needed)
- Degrees and certificates required for the job (hygiene pass, safety card, first aid, etc.)
- Residence permit / work permit (if required)
- Criminal record (if required)
- Rights and benefits



**Go through the checklist together before the first workday.  
It avoids stress for both sides.**



# Vamos Career-tiimi Kuopio, 2025



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